

Open Academy Update 2 December 2022

Dear Parents, Carers and Students

Welcome to this week's newsletter.

This week I would like to focus on our Christmas as it has seen the start of Advent.

Advent is a Christian season of preparation for the Nativity of Christ at Christmas which then marks the start of the Christian year. As we are a Christian ethos school, this is a significant time for us, as we use the example of Jesus to shape our approach to supporting our students through their education.

We are a rare thing, being one of only around a dozen or so Christian ethos schools in the country. We benefit greatly from being part of the Church of England's education work as we are part of the Diocese of Norwich Education and Academies Trust (DNEAT) who support and encourage us in our work to deliver an inclusive education.

In practice, being a Christian ethos school means that our community benefits from Mark, our chaplain, who is there for any member of our community – staff, students or parents at times of need. He regularly, through assemblies, shares the good news of the bible and helps students to understand the world and when required, understand their spirituality. It also means that everything we do reflects and builds our strong Christian values, which we rehearse daily to give students the ability to make good choices for themselves and our community.

Most significantly, we strive to see every member of our community as the blessing that they are. Even though sometimes the blessing we receive may not be obvious we may receive the blessing of patience in difficult circumstances. I might even reflect I received the blessing of humility thanks to our Ofsted visit, but, whatever the situation and whatever we try to do with it, we aim to use these ideas to do the right thing. Yes, we are human and make mistakes, but we continue in the knowledge that we will find forgiveness!

The season gives us the opportunity to explore faith with the students a little more obviously than normal and I am delighted to say that Reverend Janet, at our local church, St Francis, has agreed to host Year 7 for a traditional service of lessons and carols at St Francis on the morning of Thursday, 15 December. We will make the short walk over to the church and then enjoy singing carols and hearing the readings that make up the Christmas story with an opportunity to reflect and pray in the tradition Christian way. I hope your child will enjoy this opportunity, as previous experience tells me that nothing gets people in the Christmas spirit like singing carols together.

From that point of view, we hope to welcome everyone into the academy for an evening of carols and Christmas encouragement on Wednesday, 14 December at 6.30pm. This annual well-loved and attended event will see parents, staff and pupils come together to enjoy a Christmassy evening of company and carols. Please do come along if you are free – it will be great to see you at this lovely event.

Finally, I need to remind you that as always, the academy closes to students at 12.30 on the last day of term – Friday, 16 December. Students will have break as normal and those who have free school meals will be able to collect a packed lunch at break time. We will register the children before dismissing them at 12.30. I will send a letter next week to inform you all as a reminder.

So let the advent season begin. I will be getting on with decorating the house for Christmas this weekend, and as I do, I will be reflecting on the amazing generosity and spirit of the community I am so fortunate to be part of here at Open. In the end, Team Open Mo raised £600 for men's health charities – doubling our target – all of which will go to support men's health charities and awareness raising for prostate cancer, testicular cancer and male mental health. (Please do have a look at the Movember website to find out more about these conditions).

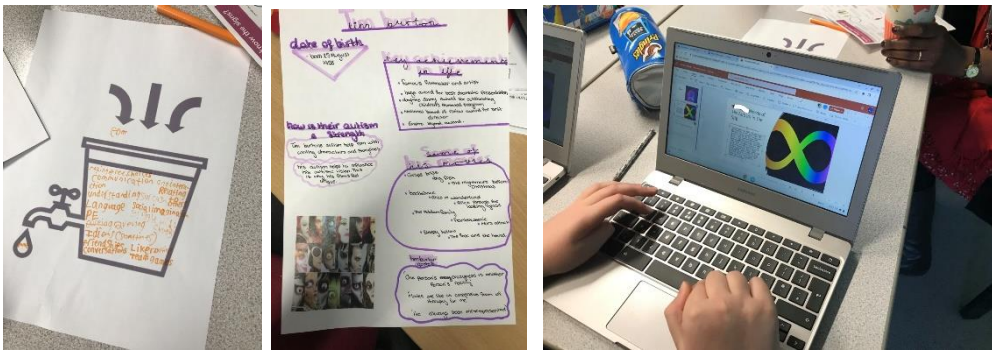
However, it never stops, needs are continuing in these challenging times, so please do pay particular attention to the request from Miss Trail later in this newsletter regarding sponsorship for our sports team's

kit. If you can help either personally or from your business point of view, we will be delighted to hear from you.

As Mark would say as we receive more and more donations for Christmas hampers this year - your generosity as a community is truly a gift!

Jon Ford
Principal

1. Autism Ambassadors



Well done to all who attended the Autism Ambassadors course this week. It was great to see the students sharing their experiences and developing their understanding of the stresses and anxieties autistic people face. We will be extending the Autism Ambassadors course to the wider school in the new year.

At Open, there are many students who are autistic. The aim of the course is to develop the relationships between those who are neurotypical and neurodiverse and to develop the pupils' understanding of the stresses autistic people experience.

If parents/carers are interested in learning more about autism by attending an information afternoon/evening, please can you email us in the SRB (Special Resource Base) srb.lead@open-academy.org.uk

Mrs Day
Assistant SRB Lead

2. Uniform Donations

We would be grateful if you are able to donate any uniform that is in good condition, but no longer needed. Thank you.

Mr Ward
Vice Principal

3. Year 7

Another great week for the Year 7s. They are approaching the end of their first term at secondary school! The overwhelming majority seem settled and are progressing really well. May I take this opportunity to remind parents that leggings are not allowed to be worn as school trousers or beneath skirts please. As the weather turns a little colder it may be that students need an extra layer on; this can be base layers underneath their shirts or a school jumper only please.

Please see a message from Miss Trail regarding the Year 7 girls netball team:

A big shout out and congratulations for our Year 7 netball teams. The girls were outstanding in their first ever fixture representing Open Academy and showed great teamwork, resilience and fair play. Open Academy was the only school to have entered two Year 7 teams, which I'm super proud of and is very

promising for the future too! All students have been working super hard in after school netball club and it paid off. Thank you to all parents who came and supported the students, it was lovely to see you all there. Congratulations to all students, the PE team are very proud of you! - Miss Trail.

A big well done to our Top 5 LEARNT Point achievers this week:

Ciaran D	59
Sav M	50
Samuel R	46
Amy J	46
Austin L	42

Mrs Clayton (Head of Year)
Mrs Roberts (Assistant Head of Year)

4. Year 9

As we draw towards the festive period and the holidays, it has been fantastic to see that the vast majority are working hard and still pushing themselves to achieve. We appreciate that people are tired towards the end of the term, but keep pushing yourselves to achieve your best right up until the holidays.

Below is the special praise for hard work, commitment and progress this week:

- A shout out to Warren M and Alex P for good red folder work in German – Mrs McEvoy, German;
- A shout out to Tyler P for his fantastic work in lessons - Miss Moy, Science;
- Jacob M for making a really good effort in recent lessons. Lauren S for working hard to be more independent and resilient in lessons – Mr Crawford, History;
- Liam K for doing an excellent homework in English and Lola B for her intoxicating creative writing – Mr Edwards, English;
- I'm really proud of how well Warren, Dato, Areen, Liam, George and Alex worked on their devised piece of physical theatre and how competently they were able to show this to the class. Also to Viktoria for being able to work so well with a variety of different people. Well done guys – Mrs Ormosi, Drama;
- Lily-Anna N, Tyler P, Max L for continuing to engage well in learning during maths lessons and Latifa C for answering the most questions in class – Mrs Power;
- A big shout out for the Year 9 netball team who performed amazingly on Monday in their first ever fixture as a team. The girls showed great teamwork, resilience and enthusiasm throughout all games. Congratulations girls, I'm very proud of your hard work! - Miss Trail, Physical Education;
- Shout out to Harvey N and Kacie W who have been showing an awesome attitude in maths recently and doing some great mathematical constructions – Mr Bradshaw, Head of Maths.

Enjoy your weekend, and keep up the good effort.

Mr Crawford and Ms Whitwood (Heads of Year)
Mrs Lamb (Assistant Head of Year)

5. Year 10

Learnt points: The current tally for this week is:

- RPH – 88 (An improvement of 42 – Fantastic effort)
- NST – 71 43 (An improvement of 28 – Great effort)
- AED – 77 29 (An improvement of 48 – Amazing effort)
- ABL – 67 36 (An improvement of 31 – Super effort)

Attendance: Current attendance for Year 9 is 91.60%. A small decrease of 0.21% from last week. If your child is not in school please send in evidence (this could be a photograph of the medicine given).

Late to learning: This week Year 10 have missed a total of 358 minutes of learning due to being late to their lessons. This is an improvement on last week, but means many will be catching up in a late detention tonight. 11 Year 10 students have truanted lessons or turned up excessively late to their learning. Well done to the 95 students who have continued to access all the learning available to them at Open.

Uniform: Although the vast majority of students are getting this right we need to ensure that all are. Please can you ensure that your son/daughter leaves for school in the full correct uniform. Leggings are not school uniform. Thank you again for your support in this and again the vast majority are fantastic.

Fantastic Students:

The science department took a group of Year 10 girls to the John Innes Centre for the annual Women of the Future conference. They were lucky enough to hear from some amazing women in STEMM and our students came out buzzing and inspired to look into progressing into STEMM A level courses, degrees, and even careers. A wonderful day had by all. Please see Mrs Molloy's item below.

It is now less than 24 days till Christmas and only 2 more weeks of this half term. It has flown by and the year group has continued to be fantastic and resilient throughout. Lots of progress has been made and will be shown in the first report, which will come out after the Christmas break. Thank you for your continued support from home, it really shows in the students at Open.

Mr Pickup (Head of Year)

Mrs Smith (Assistant Head of Year)

6. Drama



On Monday, 28 November the Year 10 GCSE drama class were treated to a 3-hour workshop from visiting drama practitioner Sam Webber. Sam, who is based at The Garage in Norwich, gave them a fast paced and energetic introduction to devising using the techniques of Frantic Assembly. The workshop culminated in a whole class performance which applied some of the techniques learnt.

The students worked really hard throughout the session and were a credit to the school, impressing him with their knowledge and creativity. When asked to sum up the workshop experience, students felt it had been fun, educational, inspiring, awesome, but tiring!

The Garage is a hub for the performing arts offering courses in dance, drama and music from as young as 2 all the way up to Level 4 qualifications.

To find out more about what they offer please have a look at their website <https://www.thegarage.org.uk/>

Mrs Ormosi
Teacher

7. Science



The science department took a group of Year 10 girls to the John Innes Centre for the annual Women of the Future conference.

We were lucky enough to hear from some amazing women in STEMM and our students came out buzzing and inspired to look into progressing into STEMM A level courses, degrees, and even careers.

A wonderful day was had by all.

Mrs Molloy
Teacher

8. Year 11

The countdown is on before Christmas now with only two weeks left at school.

Dates for diaries include:

Students have a formal assembly at 2 pm on Thursday, 8 December and will be given their PPE results. They do not have to open them in front of their peers and parents evening will follow on Tuesday, 13 December.

It is also Christmas Jumper Day next Thursday, 8 December. Contributions will go towards Save the Children charity. Students are expected to wear full uniform if they do not have a Christmas jumper/top and school uniform on the bottom half please i.e. trousers and skirts.

Christmas dinner will be on Wednesday, 14 December in school.

Our top achievers over the past couple of weeks are: Tommy B, Scarlett B, Josh C-S, Angelos C, Mia C, Lisa K, Charlie P, Hayden P, Harry R, James S, Tommy T, Jonas K, Dalia R and Owen M. Well done to you all and the whole year group for gaining a huge amount of achievement points, especially this week now the PPE exams have finished.

The Year 11 football team have a cup football match after school on Monday, 12 December against Hellesdon High School who knocked us out of the cup last year!

Enjoy the football this weekend.

Mr Lambert (Head of Year)
Mrs Roe (Assistant Head of Year)

9. Library



Christmas Library Competition

We are currently running a competition asking students to design a Christmas ornament with a book theme!

Students can collect a template and hand in their design by Thursday, 15 December for your chance to win a prize!

10. PE Sponsorship



The poster features the Open Academy logo at the top. Below it, the text 'We Are Looking For SPONSORSHIP' is written in large, bold letters. Two hands holding megaphones are on either side of the text. Below the main title, it says 'THE PE DEPARTMENT ARE LOOKING FOR A BUSINESS TO GO ONTO THE STUDENTS' BRAND NEW FIXTURE KIT.' This is followed by a list of what is included: 'Your business logo on all boys' and girls' new fixture kits.' and 'Your business logo on our website and around our sporting facilities.' At the bottom, there is a box with the text 'Interested? Please contact shannon.trail@open-academy.org.uk' and an image of a blue and white striped football jersey.

openacademy
We Are Looking For SPONSORSHIP

THE PE DEPARTMENT ARE LOOKING FOR A BUSINESS TO GO ONTO THE STUDENTS' BRAND NEW FIXTURE KIT.

This will include:

- Your business logo on all boys' and girls' new fixture kits.
- Your business logo on our website and around our sporting facilities.

Interested? Please contact
shannon.trail@open-academy.org.uk



Miss Trail
Teacher

11. Attendance

Punctuality

All students should be in the academy no later than 8:30am in order that they are in their tutor group on time. Any student arriving after 8:40am, will be entered in the late book on Reception. If a student arrives after 9:05am, this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence, which affects their attendance. At Open Academy, we monitor all students' punctuality to registration in the morning, as well as to lessons.

Absence from the Academy

If your son/daughter is ill and unable to attend school, please contact the academy every day that your son/daughter is absent, prior to registration if possible, by telephoning 01603 481640 or alternatively you can contact us by email on our new email address:

student.absence@open-academy.org.uk

Please do regularly check the Student App for details on your son/daughter's attendance, achievements and behaviour.

Mrs Ganson
Attendance Officer

12. Help with Living Costs

Please see the attached information.

Mr Davis
Safeguarding Officer

13. SEND

Please see the attached information.

Mrs Hewitt-Coleman
SENCO

14. Chaplain's Update:

Carol Concert



Just a reminder that our carol concert will be taking place on Wednesday, 14 December at 6.30pm-7.15pm. This is a free event, all are welcome and it will be a great night of Christmas cheer. There will be carols, student performances and the Open Drama Club will be performing in "An Open Christmas Carol". Refreshments will also be served during the course of the evening.

Booking is not essential but we would love to know that you are coming. Please feel free to contact the school or email me mark.pimlott@open-academy.org.uk to do this, or if you have any other questions. We look forward to celebrating this great season with you.

Christmas Hampers

This year we are giving out Christmas Hampers as random acts of kindness to our community again. This provided a lot of wonderful surprises to many people last year. Students are aware of this in school, but we would appreciate your support in this too. Please see the list of goods that can be donated for the hampers so please feel free to send items into the academy with your child. **Please note, it's very important that we stick to the hamper list.** Perishable food vouchers can be given as well as donations. The last day for hamper items/donations will be Monday, 12 December. Thank you so much in advance for your generosity:

- Perishable Food Vouchers
- Stuffing
- Shloer/Red or White
- Custard
- Savoury Snacks
- Tin Of Chocolates
- Biscuit/Shortbread Tin/Packets
- Christmas Crackers

- Christmas Cake
- Christmas Pudding
- Mince Pies
- Cranberry Sauce
- Gravy Granules
- Crisps
- Tinned fruit/Peas/Potatoes

This Week's Reflection

In the Christmas Story we have several examples of perseverance. The three wise men in their quest to follow the star to visit and present gifts to the baby Jesus. For them the journey was very perilous as King Herod an evil king of that day, was trying to use them to get to Jesus and kill him. They didn't give up, they gave their gifts to Jesus and didn't tell Herod a thing about it. A wonderful act of bravery.

Another time of perseverance was when Joseph and his heavily pregnant wife Mary were trying to find a place to give birth to the baby Jesus. Everywhere was full up, because a census was taking place and there was nowhere for them to go. They didn't give up and eventually found a stable to lodge in.

Today we might be at a time in our lives where there seems to be nowhere to go. Trapped and overwhelmed by the trials and stresses of life and trying hard to find some peace and a place to find refuge.

I want to encourage you to keep going, keep persevering. Just like Mary and Joseph and the three wise men reaching the hope that was Jesus, you will arrive at the hope of better things and a change in your circumstances too.

You are all in my thoughts and prayers.

Mark Pimlott
Chaplain