

## Open Academy Newsletter 15 September 2023

Dear Parents/Carers and Students

Welcome to this week's newsletter

This week I want to focus on my recent communication regarding our decision to apply to become a Church of England status academy.

Firstly, I would like to thank those who have already completed the online feedback form, or chosen to email directly with comments. It is good to see that so far people are warmly in favour.

For those of you who are unsure, I will highlight what I said in the letter you should have received by email earlier this week and attached again - that I believe Church of England designation is the best, indeed only way of ensuring that Open Academy remains an inclusive school for its local community as it guarantees our Christian ethos in a way that is fully protected.

It is strange to think that the Christian ethos was a key controversial element of the new academy's proposal back in the 'noughties' as the plan for a new academy to replace the old Heartsease High was formulated. I know back then some feared that the Christian nature might be used to exclude local students in favour of those with a religious background.

How things have changed. Firstly, it is clear that our admissions policy is open and fairly and squarely aimed at supporting all in our local community. Moreover, having looked in to the possibility of re-brokering, which would clearly have altered the academy's ethos, it has become clear that the Christian drive has been the main stay in keeping us inclusive for all in our local community. Becoming a full Church of England school secures that Christian ethos for the future, but will affect no other aspect of our work or curriculum, except we will also be inspected by the Church of England, to ensure we are operating within the expectations of our ethos – which is exactly what we want!

Parent voice will be really important to the regional director of education in making this decision, so it is key that if you have a view, I really do encourage you to share it.

I may not have answered your questions fully (save to say nothing will change day to day) so if you have questions or thoughts you have three ways to proceed – you can do any, all or just one, or none.

There is a simple online consultation form reached through this link <https://forms.office.com/e/t7vB073iGE>

Or you can just email your thoughts directly in to the office as some of you already have.

Finally, you can also attend our first parent partnership event of the term – next Tuesday, 19 September at 6pm where I will give a brief (literally 5 minute) presentation on re-designation and then take questions and feedback/thoughts from parents.

So, a simple clarifying change, that secures our local inclusive ethos into the future – what do you think – let us know via the online form/email/event?

Moving on from that but related, as we put the rest of the parent partnership program for the year together, I would be particularly keen to hear from you as to what sessions you would like us to put on. The revision/study skills for KS4 students' event was very popular last year – so that is definitely going to happen again – as is the how to support students with SEND. There are other sessions that we would like to run, but I am very keen that you let us know what would be most helpful to you.

That's definitely enough from me, save to say thank you all and keep up the excellent uniform approach – almost all getting it right now. A plea for the few though – shirts are tucked in so absolutely no leggings please!

Jon Ford  
Principal

## 1. Year 7

We have had an excellent first full week in the academy. The Year 7s have taken to the academy's routines and expectations brilliantly, myself and Mrs Roe have thoroughly enjoyed getting to know students better and see them flourishing around school.

Attendance for Year 7 is 94.12% and we would like to now see this start to increase now all students are settled in.

Uniform is good in Year 7. A few are still waiting for the last few things to be delivered, they must all remember that blazers must be worn around the academy with shirts tucked in, top button done up and tie looking neat. They all know that they have PE every Tuesday and Wednesday so PE kit must be available for those days. If possible, could they practice how to do their ties and shoelaces at home.

Extra-curricular clubs after school start next week:

Football - Monday

Choir - Thursday

Netball - Thursday

We are starting homework Hubs next week on Mondays and will invite all students to attend to support them with the homework process. This will then evolve after half term to include students who struggle to complete homework.

The top ten for LEARNT points this week are: Teigan-Mae M, Charlie S, Sarah O, Ameera J, Finley L, Ashanti G, Matthew O, Tilly B, Eva L and Hayden P. Well done and keep up the good work.

We have the photographer in on Monday, so please make sure we are smart just like we have been since starting.

Also, a reminder that there is a free breakfast available every morning from 8 am in the atrium.

Have a great weekend.

Mr Lambert (Head of Year 7)

Mrs Roe (Assistant Head of Year 7)

## 2. Year 8

What a great start we've had to Year 8! We're just over a week in now and Mr Hawkins and I have been so impressed with the attitude of all the students returning to school.

May I remind parents that leggings are not allowed in school and students should be in a skirt or trousers please. Also, with the weather starting to turn a little colder we ask that students, if they arrive to school in a hoodie, remove them for the start of the school day please.

Our top LEARNT achievers of this week are:

Betsy K	28
Destiny O	24
Liam M	24
Kaelan B	24
Zinedine O	24
Ethan T	24
Ellie H	24

Keep up the excellent work!

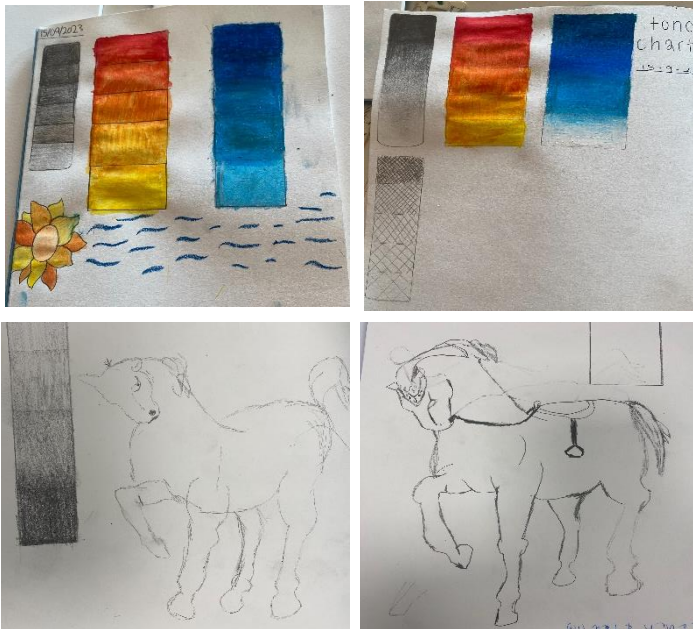
In assembly next week we will be looking at our school value of aspiration and I will be announcing how students can apply for our Year 8 student leader positions.

Mrs Clayton (Head of Year 8)

Mr Hawkins (Assistant Head of Year 8)

### 3. Year 9

Year 9 art this week:



Mrs Power (Head of Year 9)

Mrs Middleton (Assistant Head of Year 9)

### 4. Year 10

Next week students will be looking at revision skills in assembly and in tutor time. This is in preparation for their PPEs (Year 10 mocks) which will run for 2 weeks from the 27 November.

Getting into a habit or a routine of study/completing homework and setting a schedule – e.g. Monday and Wednesday 7-9pm is homework and revision time is easier in the long term. Anything that is routine is easier to stick to and less likely to be put off. Working for 25 minutes with a 5 minute break has been scientifically proven to be very effective.

Well done to the following for gaining the most achievement points this week, Leah-Marie, Tyler H, Oskar C, Katy S, Areen M.

Shout outs to:

Well done to Jamie D for some very focussed work – Mr Walters

Well done to Kayla D and Callum W in BTEC sports for excellent work and fantastic attitude – Miss Trail

Well done to Leah-Marie J for outstanding contributions in English – Mr Coyne

Mrs Pearsall and Miss Whitwood (Heads of Year 10)

Mrs Lamb (Assistant Head of Year 10)

## **5. DofE**

### **Years 9 and 10**

Please talk to your child about the Duke of Edinburgh Award and if they would like to participate. Thank you for those who have brought back enrolment forms, if your child would like a letter please ask them to see Mrs Pearsall or email [ruth.pearsall@open-academy.org.uk](mailto:ruth.pearsall@open-academy.org.uk)

### **Year 11**

Good luck to the Silver group for their assessment expedition this Thursday, Friday and Saturday. Fingers crossed for the weather!

Mrs Pearsall  
Teacher

## **6. Year 11**

We are delighted to see such a positive start from our Year 11 students. Their attitude in class as we start this final year has been exemplary and I've been extremely impressed with the how many students have been receiving achievement points.

18 students with the most points this week are:

Emily-Jayne c, Ashton T, Sienna B, Ebon G, Max L, Lucy N, Grace E, Adam L, Scarlet B, Lucy E, Suzy Langley, Anya R, Xyla S, Steve V, Hayden B, Harisan M, Kieran P and Ella R.

We will send positive text messages out at the end of half term to the parents of all students making this consistent effort so please look out for those.

In assemblies this week and last, I have highlighted the vital importance of good attendance and resilience this year. I have also shared how long they have until their first exam in May (approximately 144 school days) and how quickly the time will go.

Please encourage your child to complete all homework and attend all Hub sessions when they start next week. We want all students to aim high and get the best grades they are capable of.

These are just some of the individual comments I have received:

My Year 11 art class have made a great start with the following students really going above and beyond: Emily Jane C, Megan C, Ruby S, Scarlet B, Lucy W and Kai M - Mr Walters

Max L, Grace E and Emily C have made accurate and insightful contributions to work on Blood Brothers - Mr Coyne

Emily-Jayne C for excellent effort and engagement in History since we came back. Excellent attitude - Mr Crawford

Great effort on their DT portfolios from Ellie R, Ariya, Emmy, Bailey, Ben, Reece P, and Kieran P. You are really taking ownership of your individual work, well done! - Miss Rednall

Emily S, Jess B and Lily T for their great work in maths - Mr Philips

Wonderful engagement and effort by Tallulah B and Ashton T in English this week and some excellent analysis from Kieran P - Mrs Clayton

Adam L, Emily S and Alice G for excellent playscript reading and expression in class - Mr Edwards

Please can you give a shout out the following students who are working well towards their DofE Silver Award. We have seen some great teamwork already on the assessment trip:

Kai M, Reece A, Reece P, Izaak T, Jessica B, Suzy L, Nora W, Ashley B, Gemma S, Rosie C - Mrs Pearsall, Miss Whitwood and Mr Stephens

In other news we have asked for applications for Head Boy and Head Girl for Year 11. Any applicant should write a letter outlining why they would be a suitable and enthusiastic candidate. Any successful student will need to be an excellent role model for the rest of the student body.

The Prom committee is now established and we will have our first meeting on Tuesday morning during registration, so we will keep you updated on our fund-raising efforts.

On a final note, we expect all Year 11 to be in full uniform from Monday including blazers. If there are any problems, uniform related, or other please contact the year team.

Mr Walters (temporary Head of Year 11)

Mrs Smith (Assistant Head of Year 11)

## **7. Year 11 After School Revision/Intervention**

From Monday, 18 of September, we will be implementing our planned intervention/revision sessions with Year 11 students to support them in their GCSE courses and preparations for their mock and final GCSE exams. These sessions will run at the end of the school day and end between 3.40pm-4.00pm. A full timetable for the sessions, which will run until the summer exam.

The sessions run on a two-week timetable, similar to our normal school timetable. Each day has sessions running from different departments. If your child studies RS during period 6 on a certain day, they will need to attend that timetabled lesson.

Mon	Tues	Wed	Thur	Fri
Sci	Block 3	Hum	Maths	Eng
Sci	Block 4	German	Maths	Eng

Some departments are targeting certain intervention sessions at specific students up until Christmas. Departments will be inviting students to these sessions through their subject teacher. If your child has not been invited to a session that they feel would be of benefit to them, please ask your child to approach their subject teacher to enquire as to whether they can attend that session. If a session is running a full class, then it is a revision session open to all students who take that subject.

If you have any questions about our after-school intervention program, then please contact us via email at [ian.fisher@open-academy.org.uk](mailto:ian.fisher@open-academy.org.uk).

Mr Fisher  
Assistant Principal

## **8. 6<sup>th</sup> Form**

### **Key dates coming up:**

Monday, 25 September - Mental Health Awareness session for Year 13 during tutor and period 1.

Monday, 2 October – Year 11 6<sup>th</sup> Form taster day (please be welcoming when Year 11 join you in the futures area for a taster of a day as a 6<sup>th</sup> Former).

Wednesday, 4 October – 6<sup>th</sup> Form open evening (your teachers may ask if you would like to volunteer for the event).

Monday, 18 October – Mental Health Awareness session for Year 12 during tutor and period 1.

## Year 13 UCAS

The date for completing your UCAS is slowly creeping up on us. As such, please could I ask that you all take a few minutes to watch the handy videos in the link to get you started with how it will all work!

<https://us5.campaign-archive.com/?u=8dedc07ce580600fe618f38c3&id=b4a82789f5#>

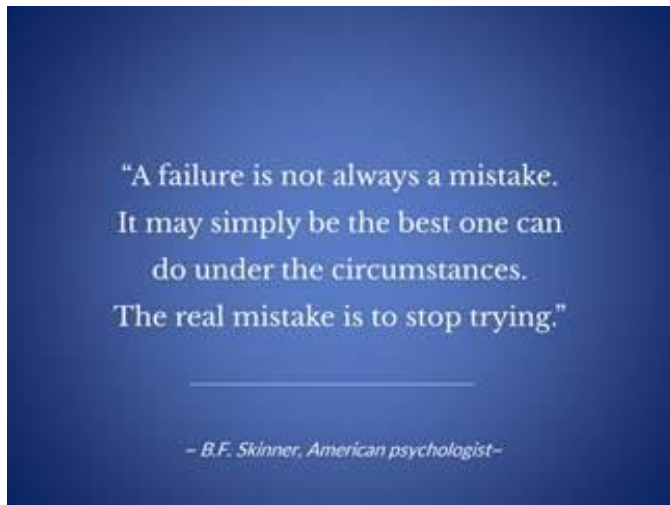
## NCS Kingswood

Year 12 will be going on a residential trip to the Kingswood Centre in Cromer on Monday, 30 October to Friday, 3 November. A letter with all the information has been sent home this week. Please ensure that the reply slip and the Informed Consent sheet are completed and returned to Mrs Molloy by Friday, 22 September.

Mrs Molloy (Head of 6<sup>th</sup> Form)

Dr Davies (Assistant Head of 6<sup>th</sup> Form and Careers Facilitator)

## 9. Chaplain's Reflection



Mark Pimlott  
Chaplain



## Looking for Youth Conservation Volunteers!

Introducing **Ents**, brought to you by Wheatfen Forest School and South Yare Wildlife Group. Ents is for high school aged people (11-16) in Norfolk.

Do you love the outdoors and want to connect with people who share your interests? Are you considering taking GCSE Natural History or training for a job in nature post 16? Would like to build your tool skills? Are suffering from eco-anxiety? If so, helping nature in a practical way could also help you to feel better. Whatever your motivation – nature needs you!

**Sign up here!**



**SCAN ME**

**How does it work?** We arrange a work party roughly every 6 weeks at a weekend or in school holidays at a wild space in the South Yare area, within a 10-mile radius of Norwich. Once you have registered your interest, you will join a pool of volunteers who will be invited to come to each work party via email. RSVP to say whether or not you can come along. You don't have to come to every one, and **it is free to take part!** There are 15 spaces per work party.

**What happens at a work party?** Ents carry out conservation tasks such as clearing woodland scrub; removing invasive, non-native plants from the Broads; raking reed litter and having a bonfire; planting trees; digging ponds; or doing a Bioblitz to identify plants and animals, and help landowners make plans that will improve the biodiversity of their land.