

Open Academy Newsletter 1 December 2023

Dear Parents, Carers and Students

Welcome to this week's newsletter.

I will try to be brief this week as I realise my introductions have been getting longer and longer!

This week I would like to focus on the start of the festive season and to reflect on the generosity of our community.

I will begin therefore with a huge thank you to the Open community for raising over £300 for the men's health 'Movember' campaign. This charity helps the work of charities which support those with prostate and testicular cancer, male mental health problems and suicide prevention, and I am delighted to say that this year's £300 takes our total donated over 3 years to well over £1000. What a great effort from things like small change collections at events, the staff raffle and individual donations. I am particularly grateful to the rest of the team 'Open Mo' who endured the moustache misery for a month including Mr Pimlott, Mr Davies and Mr Jones. Obviously I should not miss this opportunity to remind gentlemen regarding testicular cancer that they should check themselves regularly and if something feels different see a doctor – and fifty somethings – get your prostate checked! I know a little uncomfortable but part of the campaign is about awareness raising, so there we go!

On another charitable front, thank you everyone who has already donated the requested items to add to our hampers for our Christmas random act of kindness campaign. I know in recent years, because times are hard for all, we have struggled to send out as many as we would like, so renewed efforts this year are really appreciated as there are so many people who could benefit. In the best times we managed around 50 hampers – I think last year was the toughest where we managed 25, but I know we will do all we can for this local welcome campaign.

And that brings me nicely on to Christmas. Firstly, can I remind everyone that the one event in the year you do not want to miss is our annual celebration of Christmas. Next Wednesday evening, 6 December starting at 6.30pm. Please do come and join us for our usual get together to sing some carols, watch performances and generally get in to the Christmas spirit. Everybody who attends says it kicks off the Christmas feel good factor and as the weather begins to get very cold and the nights are so long, it really is a welcome boost to the spirit. Please do come along – all are welcome!

Finally, I should mention that Wednesday, 13 December will be the Academy Christmas dinner day and we have decided this would be the best day to hold our Christmas jumper day for Save The Children Fund. As always, we encourage people to "Christmas up" an old jumper rather than buying for the event – we would rather the money was donated to the charity.

Remember the last day of the winter term is Wednesday, 20 December and is also a non-uniform day and fundraising for Year 11 prom. The academy will close at 12.30. Collections for the Christmas jumper day and last day of term non-uniform will be available to pay online shortly.

Jon Ford – Principal

1. Year 11 and 13 Revision Evening

We would like to invite parents of our Year 11 and 13 students to a GCSE and A Level revision evening, which will take place at the Academy on Wednesday, 13 December 2023 (5.30-6.30 pm). We believe that it is crucial to work together to provide the best possible support for your child, especially during this crucial phase of their education.

The purpose of this event is to provide you with valuable insights into how you can actively support your child's preparation for their upcoming GCSE and A Level exams. We understand that this period can be challenging for both pupils and parents. Therefore, we want to ensure that you have all the tools and information necessary to help your child succeed.

During the revision evening, we will cover the following topics:

1. Understanding the GCSE exam structure
2. Managing stress and anxiety
3. Creating a positive learning environment
4. Effective revision techniques

Our Year 12 students will share valuable strategies and techniques that they used when they went through their GCSE exams earlier this year.

We believe that your active involvement in your child's academic journey is crucial, and this event is an excellent opportunity to equip yourself with the knowledge and resources to provide the support they need. Together, we can help our pupils reach their full potential and achieve success in their GCSE exams.

Mr Fisher
Assistant Principal

2. Student Leadership Elections

Thank you to all those who stood for election, those who helped, supported and voted in the first Student Leadership election at the Open Academy! Turn out was pretty good as many of our students exercised their democratic right to decide who leads the brand-new student executive - a position of real power and responsibility helping to guide our year councils in working with our staff to make the Open a better place for all.

Turn out - 53%
Ballots spoilt - 5

Elected as Head Students:

Areen M (Year 10)
Bailey S (Year 11)

Elected as Deputy Head Students:

Alfie S (Year 12)
Siobhan B (Year 12)

Mr Dilley
Teacher

3. Year 7

Happy 1st of December, we are now allowed to start getting excited about Christmas, it is that time to dust off the decorations, wash those Christmas jumpers, to open the first door of your advent calendar (although I don't have one) for those mischievous elves on a shelf to start causing havoc at home (I also don't have one of them). With Christmas around the corner, it is now time for tutors to start decorating their doors, with how amazing the Halloween doors were, myself and Mrs Roe are very excited to see the Christmas doors, so if you have an unwanted decoration please allow your child to bring them in, the best door will be rewarded.

Congratulations to Inspiration ABL for having the best attendance and we have a tie for the tutor challenge with Destiny and Challenge, so they will have a tie breaker question Monday morning.

Top achievers are, Dante D, Timothy A, Ashanti G, Alfie W, Charlie Sw, Isabella W, Lily W, Sabine L, Matthew O and Kyreese V.

Teacher praise:

- Big shout out for Hemin for extension work in German – Mrs McEvoy

- Thank you to Elise S for helping him decorate the F47 English room with her artwork – Mr Edwards
- Alessia P always brilliant in reading sessions. Very insightful comments – Mr Walters
- Freya W - thank you for always being the person to help with the equipment and for being such a kind and helpful young lady – Mrs Pearsall
- Alessia P for being kind, supportive and encouraging to others in her PE group – Mrs Pearsall

Mr Lambert - Head of Year 7
Mrs Roe - Assistant Head of Year 7

4. Year 8

Another great, but chilly week this week! As the weather seems to have taken a wintery turn, could I remind parents that there are school jumpers available for students who feel they need an extra layer on top of their shirt and blazer. Hoodies/other non-school jumpers are not allowed to be worn. Also, students are not allowed to wear leggings instead of a skirt or trousers.

A huge thank you to four Year 8 students who took part in a new staff interview this week. They all behaved brilliantly and made the school very proud. Well done: Freddie M, Charlee M, Ellie H and Chakib L.

Some more 'shout outs' for excellent work in lessons this week. Well done to Jensyn P for excellent engagement in English; Logan W for outstanding effort in literacy and Munashe Z for her impressive work in art.

Our Top LEARNT achievers this week are:

Charlee M	25
Chakib L	23
Ellie H	23
Freddie M	21
Rosie N	20

Keep up the good work!

Mrs Clayton - Head of Year 8
Mr Hawkins - Assistant Head of Year 8

5. Year 9

Subject shout outs:

- Art - Chloe S outstanding Art work.
- Maths – Tiffany.S, Harry, Zak, Eliza . S, Alfie H, Owen B, Kenzie P, Bruna R, Luke S , AJ, Samuel O, Ayo Y, Rianna A and Brandon S for consistent top efforts given in class and great progress in maths.
- German - 9H as they did so well on their progress folder work.

Top Achievement points this week:

Jason.J, Luke.S, Saha-Mai.P, Kieran.S, Rianna.A, Ross.B, Rodrigo.F, Eliza. S, Samuel.O, Olivier.K, Zena.A, Alex.C, Riley.B, Alfie.S, Oliver.N, Linda.H, Henry.A, Jayce.B and Martha.W.

Students of the week:
Samuel.O, Bruna.R and Ayo.T

Mrs Power – Head of Year 9
Mrs Edwards – Assistant Head of Year 9

6. Year 10

A huge well done to the year group for working so hard in their PPEs this week. We know that many have been very nervous, but this is such an important learning experience to prepare them for the final GCSE examinations.

As I mentioned last week the PPEs at this stage in Year 10 are not only to look at academic learning but also about learning how it feels to be in the hall, the importance of following all the procedures and becoming familiar with these.

The more prepared your child feels for the exam, the less stressful and more successful they will be. Now is the time to be practicing revision and recall techniques as each student will have a preferred style for different subjects. It is also a good time to make a revision timetable and get into the habit of studying. Habits are easier than trying to find motivation.

Congratulations to the following for gaining the most achievement points this week: Oskar C, Lily-Anna N, Kian, Jamie D, Max L, Ty C and Georgia B.

Mrs Pearsall and Miss Whitwood - Heads of Year 10
Mrs Lamb - Assistant Head of Year 10

7. Year 11

Well the weather seems to be turning wintery with frosty starts and the temperature below freezing at times. Please ensure your son/daughter is wearing the appropriate clothing to make the trip to Open in the morning. Also, don't forget to encourage your son/daughter to purchase a leavers hoodie if they wish. The current price will increase in January. To order the hoodie follow these simple instructions:

- Website: www.schoolleaverscompany.co.uk
- Go to "order your Hoodie"
- Username: 2664
- Password: cKGdWAzp (you must copy this exactly - use capital letters where necessary)
- Complete your personal details, choose colour and size along with any nickname you want to add – don't forget THIS IS AN ADDITIONAL COST.
- Proceed to payment.
- If everything is correct and paid for, your hoody will be sent to school addressed to me. They will then be distributed at the end of your Year 11 final assembly.

Any problems please get in contact with the Year office.

On Wednesday, 13 December we will be having a revision evening for the year group. This will be a chance for you and your son/daughter to come and hear about the importance of revision and get some free revision supplies, plus talk to the heads of each faculty. This will begin at 5.30pm and last until 6.30pm. Once again you will be able to pick up some free revision materials (pens/highlighters/folder/flash cards/pencil/post-it notes etc).

Finally, if you could take a few minutes to complete the following questionnaire for the review of Year 11. It would be fantastic to hear your opinions of the year group and Open and could help us to further support your son/daughter in this final year. The link is <https://forms.office.com/e/6RceT3h4Q0>

Or scan this QR code:



Learnt points: For this week the total amount of learnt points achieved so far is an amazing 168. Well done everyone.

The following students have had a great week and achieved the most LEARNT points:

Athanasios C, Jake T, Reece A, Sienna B, Scarlet B, Star C, Emily-Jane C, Lucy NW, Lily T and Lacey F.

Fantastic effort from these students. Keep it up.

Positive praise:

- This week has been a tough week for the Year 11 Health and Social Care students, who have been working hard to finish their coursework. Well done to students who have shown a great level of resilience and hard-work. Almost there!
- Athanasios C, Lily B, Sienna B, Lucy NW and Scarlet B for good effort in art this week.
- Emily-Jayne C and Adam L being very supportive and showing fantastic leadership skills across the academy.
- Felix CS, Hayden B and Ara A fantastic engagement in history, keep it up.
- Nora W has been completing excellent extended learning, Scarlet B and Sienna H for well-presented learning and Andrew C for engaging and answering lots of questions in history.
- Jay L for always trying their hardest in science.
- Ashton T & Recce P for their effort and engagement in English.
- Good luck to Xylia S who will be singing a solo in the Christmas Concert next week.
- Well done Ella, Chloe, Rosie, Maddison L, Maddison SH and Emily for getting their drama unit 1 coursework completed, 60% of the course done. Just the last unit to go....
- Maddison L for good practice and excellent effort with showing the methods you used to find the answers in maths.
- Well done to Ellie R, Emmy R and Ariya for their consistent hard work on their NEA DT portfolios. They are consistently producing top level work and showing a fantastic effort in both practical and theory work.
- Lily T for being a great coach in volleyball. Great coaching skills and fantastic support and encouragement of her group.

Thank you for your continued support and determination to support the learning of your child at Open.

Mr Pickup and Mr Walters - Head of Year 11

Mrs Smith - Assistant Head of Year 11

8. Sixth Form

Trips

This week sixth formers have been lucky enough to go on two really excellent trips; Health and Social revision trip to London Westfield and a Biology Man & Nature trip to Norwich School.

Both of these trips were not only super useful, jam packed with excellent speakers, but really importantly they were fully funded. Which means that our students were lucky enough to not have to pay anything towards either of them. As educators and teachers, it takes many hours for us to organise and run trips. And we spend a lot of time trying to get them fully funded so that our students can all access them. Unfortunately, whilst most of the students were present for these trips and made full use of them, I was disappointed that a number of students did not turn up for these trips – often not even letting us know that they were not going to go on the trip at all and just not showing up last minute. Whilst I am really disappointed that students have chosen to not turn up to trips that have taken hours to organise, I'm more upset about the lack of communication. As sixth formers they should be able to email/come and talk to their teachers if they have real reasons why they cannot attend a trip – we should not be chasing them minutes before we head off.

UCAS

Over a week on from our UCAS day and we have only had 2 students email us drafts of their personal statements. Please note that I will no longer be authorising for any Year 13 students to work from home/ go off site during private study sessions until we have received at least the first draft of their personal statement and the majority of their UCAS application completed. This will commence from today Friday, 1 December. Any student not in the Academy, unless authorised by me, will have an unauthorised mark on the register.

Rosie is available in the Academy every Tuesday if students would like to make an appointment with her to go over their personal statement. Similarly, Dr Davies is also able to help them get started if they are really stuck.

Students all have lots of private study sessions on their timetables – these **MUST** be used to complete UCAS over the next couple of weeks. Please also note mock exams start after Christmas so they need to complete UCAS before the end of term so that they can concentrate on revising for these.

PPE

Year 12 – exams start Monday, 11 December

Year 13 – mock exams start Monday, 15 January

Mrs Molloy (Head of 6th Form)

9. PE

Please can you remind your child that no jewellery can be worn in PE to minimise the risk of injury. If a piercing is new (within 6 weeks) then tape must be brought to cover it.

The only jewellery permitted in the appearance policy is a watch, one stud in each ear and a nose stud.

PE Department

10. 3G Pitch



Can you spot me? I was honoured to be asked to the grand opening of our new pitch.

Pictured with girls in orange from two of the girls' teams I have set up and helped train. We were lucky enough to run a 2-hour training session on the grand opening evening in half term.

You can find us in the local paper and on the Norfolk FA website much to the girls delight!

This pitch is also now used to train our Open Academy year 7, 8 and 9 girls! There are now 100,000 more girls playing football than there were five years ago, according to an annual survey of children's fitness by

Sports England, which also found secondary school girls are more active than they have ever been. Which is why I am so keen on getting our girls playing!

More details in to what the new pitch hopes to achieve and why it was so needed. 'Works at the facility finished last month in a project that was made possible thanks to a £150,000 grant from the Greater Norwich Growth Board, and funding of £509,823 from The Premier League, The FA and Government's Football Foundation.

The expansion, which will cater for increased demand in the local area, develops The FDC Open into a state-of-the-art, dual pitch football facility that will continue to be used by Open Academy students during the day and the local community during the evenings and weekends.

It's estimated that over 1,000 people will use the facility each week in a bid to provide better access to high quality football pitches in Norwich.

Partner clubs Sprowston FC and Thorpe St Andrew FC were present for training and fixtures at the ceremony on Thursday 26th October which saw representatives from the Greater Norwich Growth Board, the Football Foundation, Diocese of Norwich Education Services Company, Norwich City Council and other organisations join Norfolk FA to mark the official opening of the new pitch.'

Mrs Hindry – Teaching Assistant

11. Chaplain's Update

Christmas Hampers.

what to bring

- 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



A Celebration of Christmas

You are warmly invited to 'A Celebration of Christmas' this will be a great night of festive cheer for the whole of our community. There will be of course be carols, student performances, snacks and a wonderful Christmassy atmosphere. We would love you all to come and invite friends and family too.

The date is Wednesday 6th December at 6.30pm and it's a free event.

We look forward to seeing you there.



Reflection

As we approach this season of advent, I want to encourage you to not give up or let your **hope** diminish. **Hope** means a feeling of expectation and desire for a particular thing or things to happen. Advent means a time of **waiting** and when we reflect on this, **hope** and **waiting** go hand in hand. All of us are hoping that things would happen in our lives, hoping we will receive a breakthrough in, or rest from the different challenges that we face. For these things to come around, it's a time of waiting. It's an uncomfortable season because a time of waiting is something we can't control or put a timeframe on.

Just like in the Christmas story, the world was eagerly waiting for a messiah, a saviour and deliverer which would bring hope for all people. People would be saying "when is it happening, why is it taking so long"? Then hope broke through, Jesus was born and the waiting was over, something new had begun. Hope had arrived.

We may have the same questions, when will my breakthrough or hope come? I want to encourage you to be patient in the waiting and I know your hopes will breakthrough too.

You are all in my thoughts and prayers over this advent season.

Mark Pimlott - Chaplain