

Open Academy Newsletter 15 December 2023

Dear Parents, Carers and Students

I can hardly believe it, but Christmas is almost here, so this will be my last newsletter of the term as we will be breaking up next week at lunchtime on Wednesday, 20 December at 12.30pm.

As this festive season hurtles by, I remember being told that time really does appear to go faster as we get older. It was explained to me that a 4-year-old must basically wait a quarter of their whole lifetime for Christmas to come around, whereas I only have to wait just $\frac{1}{57}$ which is obviously a lot less! It certainly feels like just five minutes since I was writing my Christmas greeting last year and I think it is useful to reflect on the rapid passage of time as we get older. Particularly for our Year 11 students who a few blinks of the eye ago were starting their journey with us in Year 7 and now already they will be spending most of their Christmas holiday swotting for their mock exams as they return in the new year.

This year we have made the decision to hold just one formal 'mock' or Pre-Public Exam (PPE) as we do lose a few weeks teaching time for an exam series. However, we will be doing significant practice papers on the run up to the real thing. It is therefore vital that the Year 11 and 13 students do all they can to revise and prepare for the exams in January as these could be, for instance, used as evidence if there were another COVID lockdown etc. Much More likely and usefully though the PPEs give us clear assessment information on what we need to focus on as we prepare them for their GCSE exams which will be on us before we know it (less than just one $\frac{1}{16}$ of their life so far now)!

On that note I would like to say a huge thanks to the majority of parents who were able to make it in for the GCSE study evening this week. I do apologise I was not there, however I understand a useful productive and busy evening was had and lots of positive comments tell me it was well worthwhile. If you missed it and would like to find out more, I am sure Mr Fisher who organised the event or Miss Wenlock who supported would be glad to answer emails or calls to give further advice.

So with a great big well done and thank you to Jess and the team in the canteen for serving such a lovely Christmas dinner on Wednesday – regaled as many were in their Christmas jumper efforts for the Save The Children Christmas Jumper day appeal, I would also like to thank you once again for your generosity in giving a pound for the Christmas jumper appeal and to say a final thank you of the year in anticipation of your support for the last day non-uniform day to support the Year 11 prom. All students contribute, including Year 11, so that when it comes their turn, they in turn will be supported. Yes, and we are back to Year 11 and the speed with which the year will be over. I will stop there then and say that I hope everyone finds time for their family, friends and some festive fun.

Wishing you a wonderful Christmas and the best of new years.

Jon Ford
Principal

1. Governors' Message

On behalf of the Governors, I would like to thank you sincerely for all the support and goodwill you have shown to the Academy this term. Without such a positive approach the Academy would be far less successful and all the poorer. The numbers who have attended the presentation evening, carol concert and parents evenings have been large and we are grateful for all you have done, not least in supporting your children in their academic lives.

Thank you again and may we wish you a very Happy Christmas.

Nick Plater - Chair of the Local Governing Board

2. Canteen

Tuesday, 19 December – fish and chips at lunch time.

Wednesday, 20 December – usual mid-morning break options only.

Aspens Catering

3. Year 7

We are only a few days away from breaking up next Wednesday, it was great to see all the Year 7s in their Christmas jumpers, although none that were better than my Home Alone jumper, maybe next year it can be beaten. I hope all students and yourselves have a merry Christmas and a happy new year, and I hope Santa brings you everything you've wished for (that's if you've been good that is).

Last call for any decorations so the Year 7s can decorate their tutor's door. Mrs Roe and I will be choosing the winners on Monday, they will then be rewarded in tutor Wednesday morning.

The tutor that had the most wins for the tutor challenge this term was Respect LMH, they will be rewarded with dodgeball against the tutor with the best attendance of the term, which was Inspiration ABL, on Monday morning.

Teacher praise:

Demarco W and Theo L were excellent in my past couple of geography lessons in independently communicating some out-of-the-box ideas – Miss Filmer

Harrison, Junior, Harvey, Dante, Sophia, Alfie, Riley H, Ellei-Amanda, Brogan, Ella-Mai, Elise, Morgan-Jack, Isabella and Freya – Mrs Marsham

Ashanti G, Dante D, Brogan M, Daniel G are doing well and Junior B and Morgan-Jack S for trying their best in Dyslexia Gold, Well Done!! Keep up the good work - Miss Kaur

Jak C for great attitude, effort and punctuality in English. Well done - Mr Edwards

Congratulations to Challenge ATH for having the best attendance and Respect LMH for winning the tutor challenge this week.

Top 10 achievers of the week are, Izzy W, Alfie H, Daniel G, Ashanti G, Demarco W, Brogan M, Kayla B, Amalie T, Lily H and Phoebe B.

A massive congratulations to those students with 100% attendance, the top 10 achievement points of the year and those with no behaviour points.

Phoebe-May, Phoebe, Ellie-Mae, Dymtro, Alex, Ben, Leela, Ashanti, Mason, Ameera, Lincoln, Megan, Finley, Eva, Vlad, Lacey-Mae, Sarah, Sabrina, Rowan, Jack, Charlie, Phoebe and Amalie.

Top 10 achievement points of the term:

Ashanti, Dante, Theo, Charlie, Tilly, Ameera, Lacey-Mae, Ellie-Mae and Phoebe.

Mr Lambert - Head of Year 7

Mrs Roe - Assistant Head of Year 7

4. Year 9

Subject shout outs:

Drama - massive well done to all in Year 9 who have devised and performed a piece of physical theatre for their end of term assessment, those who have participated have all shown the skills needed for GCSE. Especially notable contributions from Kiera P, concentrating fully for 2 whole hours. Rianna A,

Chloe S, Riley B and Oliver N for excellent team work. Luke S, Harry B and AJ for brilliant engagement and Sasha P, Kaitlin W, Jason J and Noam for creative and original ideas.

English: 9P - the whole class has been working really well the last few weeks.

Science: Esme W, Lena W for consistent great answers and attitude to work

DT/Textiles - amazing prints in DT lessons this week:



Top achievement points this week:

Ross.B, Rodrigo.F, Eliza. S, Zena.A, Alfie.S, Millie .C, Reece.Y, Martha.W, Bruna.R, Erica.JJ, Harry.B, Henry O.A, Harry.S, Luke.S, Max.SD, Jason.J, Sasha-Mai.P, Noam.M, Kaitilin.W and Oliver.N.

Top achievement points this term since September:

Kiera	226
Hannah	211
Martina	209
Martha	207
Rodrigo	205
Lena	204
Kate	204
Kayden	199
Jason	198
Millie.C	196

Students of the week:

WB 4 Dec: Deacon.B, Ross.B, Ria.W

WB 11 Dec: Rianna.A, Kayden.SH, Jason. J

Year 9 students on the return in the new year will be completing assessments across all subjects and will start to look at their option choices. More information will be released regarding options and parents evening next half term

As we approach the end of term, a reminder that students need to remain in the correct uniform. Skirts and school trousers must be worn. All students must have their blazer on around the academy, they can remove them in lessons if necessary.

Wednesday a reminder that the school day finishes at 12.30pm and we hope you all enjoy the Christmas break.

Mrs Power – Head of Year 9

Mrs Edwards – Assistant Head of Year 9

5. Year 10

Students are now receiving their grades from teachers. Some will be pleased with grades and some may be disappointed. Our tutor programme after Christmas is designed around this to support students in how to plan and implement a revision timetable and continuing learning and practicing how to revise. Spaced learning is really important to help students to be able to recall two years of information and learning in their exams. Tutor time is essential, therefore please ensure your child is arriving to school to be lined up by 8.35am every day.

Thank you to all students who donated items for the Christmas hampers.

Well done to students the gaining the most achievement points this week. They are Kian W, Bubacarr, Riley B and Lucy-Rose B.

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

6. Year 11

Thank you to all who came to the revision evening on Wednesday evening. It was great to see so many people there engaging with the learning and revising that is/will be continuing to take place. If you were unable to make it and would like to know anymore then please get in touch with the year office. Also, there were some free revision resources handed out including; pens/highlighters/flashcards/post-it notes/revision guides. These are still available to anyone who did not collect them in the year office.

Finally, if you or your son/daughter feels that they need something that has not been provided to aid revision then please get in contact with their subject teachers to ensure that everything necessary is provided to give your learner the best opportunity to succeed.

Learnt points:

for this week the total amount of learnt points achieved is an amazing 220. Well done everyone.

The following students have had a great week and filled with achievements:

Norah W, Scarlett B, Emily-Jayne C, Suzy L, Ariya R, Lucy E, Ebon G, Adam L, Emmy R and Ella R.

Positive Praise:

Ashton T, Jessica B, Ashley B, Emmy R, Ariya R, Scarlet B, Lucy NW, Felix CS, Tye F, Ara R, Blake B, Steve V, Ebon G, Harisan M, Suzy L, Keira W, Sienna B, Lucy E, Ethan W, Ella R, Xylia S, Emily-Jayne C, Maddison SH, Adam L, Joel W and Norah W – what a fantastic group of people who are amazing in science.

Michaela B, Ethan W, Emmy R, Matthew T, Amelia R, Lily T, Lacy F, Star C, Hollie S, Izaak T, Joel W, Jake T, Preston B, Ara R, Max L, Harry G, Jessica B, Megan C, Gemma S, Ashley B, Deon E, Arturas K, Lucy E and Ariya R – another brilliant group who have put their full effort into exam practice in German.

Business students have been excellent, demonstrating wonderful support and teamwork. Providing verbal and written feedback on each other's presentations.

Emily-Jayne C for consistently excellent effort and engagement in lessons.

Ariya R for always pushing herself to extend her learning and understanding of exam skills.

Sienna B for consistent focus and effort.

Hayden B for consistent engagement and excellent knowledge retrieval

Harrisan M & Sienna B for continued excellence in English.

Thank you to my Year 11 PE class for supporting the BTEC students in their sports assessments by either taking part and being taught by the students or managing the lesson change.

On the last day of this term, we will be having a non-school uniform day. For this, students need to pay £1 each. This can be handed into their tutor or year office. This is to help raise money for the Year 11 prom to help reduce the cost of each ticket. 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

7. Art Sale



I had the great pleasure of welcoming one of our former students into the Academy on Thursday as she had sold one of her paintings that had been on display in reception. The painting was bought by Mrs Sissons and Amelie was understandably delighted and can now call herself a professional artist! Really well deserved and thanks go to Mrs Keedwell and Mrs Rose for helping with this sale.

Mr Walters - Teacher

8. Girls' Football

Well done to all the girls continuing to turn up for Monday football training after school, I really hope to see this continue after Christmas. We have lots of exciting games and fixtures arranged for the spring term. Training will return on Monday, 8 January - please ensure girls are bringing in appropriate clothes and shoes on a weekly basis.

First fixture for when we return is for the Year 7/8 girls on 15 January (3.30-5.00pm) at Open Academy. There will be no training for Year 9 on this day.

Miss Hindry – Teaching Assistant

9. Chaplain's Update



Christmas Hampers 'Random Acts of Kindness

A big thank you to all that have put so much effort into our Christmas hampers this year and I know that lots of people will be blessed with all these Christmassy goodies that have come so generously from our community. However, there is still time to bring in some last-minute items from the list below. Please could I ask one more time if there is anything you can send in with your child, please do, it will make a massive difference.

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



Christmas Reflection

In this week's reflection, just take a moment to picture in your mind's eye a traditional nativity scene. A poorly lit stable, hay and straw everywhere. Cattle, sheep, other animals and the donkey that had faithfully carried Mary to this destination would have been there too. You can picture the shepherds, the three kings with their gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh and the adoring parents, Mary and Joseph, whose gaze is fixed on the centre of it all. The baby Jesus, the son of God.

There laying in a manger was the **light** of the world, the **hope** of the world and the prince of **peace**. The words used here to describe who Jesus is are what our world is crying out for today. **Light**, **hope** and **peace**. In many ways, the world as we see it can seem dark and we long for light to shine through. We depend upon hope to get us through difficult and heart-breaking situations and we treasure and strive for peace when we lay our heads on our pillows at night.

We may be facing situations at this particular moment in time and we need **light**, **hope** and **peace** in our lives. In saying this, we can take encouragement from the Christmas story. Remember that mind's eye picture of the nativity scene? A scene created over 2000 years ago that might seem too long ago to be relevant and modern? Let me encourage you with this. The Christmas story is just as relevant today as it was then because Jesus has another name other than the ones mentioned above. The other name is **Immanuel**, which means that God is with us or God has come to live with us.

God is with us right now as 2023 comes to a close. He isn't laying in a manger thousands of years ago in history, he is here with us now to bring all the **light**, **hope**, help and **peace** that we need.

My prayer for all you wonderful and incredible people this Christmas is that light, hope and peace will be at the centre of your homes and your lives and that you will feel the presence of Immanuel always.

On behalf of my family and I, we pray that you have a wonderful time over this festive period with family and friends. We also pray the very best of everything to come to you for this up and coming new year. God bless you all.

Mark Pimlott - Chaplain

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