

Open Academy Newsletter – 12 January 2024

Dear Parents, Carers and Students

The scout motto of "be prepared" came to my mind on a few occasions this week.

The first was when scraping ice off the windscreen early one morning. Fortunately, I was prepared and had a scraper in the car. We all have a number of routines we do as a habit like putting an ice scraper in the car. These routines we teach our children. In school we use routines and habits to make it easier for students to understand what to do. Should the ice turn to snow over the coming weeks we know that we are prepared. Every student in Key Stage 3 has a knowledge organiser. They are printed every half term and given to the students in paper form. They are also available on our website. The knowledge organisers contain the key information for each subject that students need to learn that half term. That means that the students always have the answers to the questions printed on paper. It also means that if a pupil misses a day's learning due to illness then it is straight forward to catch up. For all classes there is also a TEAM. In TEAMS are the notes that students need for that subject. It is a space for pupils to submit homework, do revision and access all kinds of resources. In this way we will be prepared to provide students work whatever the weather throws at us.

The second occasion I was thinking about the motto "be prepared" centred around the pre-public exams next week. Commonly called mocks, pre-public exams are the critical practice exam papers that students can do ahead of the final exams in the summer. Year 11 and 13 are about to embark on their final pre-public exams next week. These are critical for the students to really understand the pressures of papers and managing time effectively. It is essential that the students are as prepared as possible by revising over extended periods of time committing to long term memory the knowledge that they have learnt in lessons. Unfortunately, there is no substitute for hard work and there are no short cuts. We can only be truly ready for these challenges by working hard over a sustained period. It is so pleasing to hear so many students doing just that. It is never too early to start revising for exams. It is worth revising a little bit regularly, rather than a lot rarely.

There are many occasions where we explicitly look at the skills and knowledge that helps us "be prepared." At present Key Stage 3 students are looking at what makes a healthy relationship in Skills for Life lessons. Each year group are looking at successively more mature themes. Currently the teaching staff are preparing the options booklet which will help Year 9 make choices about their future studies. Year 10 and 12 are preparing for the world of work by securing work experience placements. I would like to thank those families that have already returned their forms. It takes a long time to complete the checks necessary.

I have been speaking with Year 11 and 13s in particular looking at Open Academy Sixth Form applications and applications for apprenticeships and universities. I have reminded many what the Irish comic and actress Aisling Bea tells us "The harder you work, the more you learn, the more connections you make. You've just got to be prepared to keep putting yourself out there. You have to make it happen." Wise words for those students ready to make the leap into the next phases of their lives.

I hope that the new year brings everyone health and happiness.

Kevin Ward
Vice Principal

1. Parent Power

On behalf of the University of East Anglia, the Network for East Anglian Collaborative Outreach (neaco), Open Academy and The Brilliant Club, we would like to warmly welcome you to Norwich Parent Power.

Further and higher education can help your child to their dream career. You are the most important supporter of your child in education and beyond. We want to listen to you to find out how we can work together to support your child on this journey.

You will have the opportunity to speak to education experts at Norwich Parent Power meetings and co-design group activities that will benefit your family. Parent Power groups in other areas have taken part in activities, such as tailored visits to universities, guidance sessions on student finance, and training on homework support. You can read more about Parent Power on our website:

thebrilliantclub.org/parents/parent-power

Please see the attached letter and poster below for further information on this opportunity.

Mr Fisher
Assistant Principal



Norwich Parent Power

We warmly invite you to our Parent Power meeting.

Date: Thursday 25th January
Time: 6pm-8pm
Location: Norwich Medical School Building, Room MED 0.30, UEA
Parking: Free car parking available at the West car park
Refreshments: Free pizza will be provided. Please indicate your dietary requirements in the sign up form

Scan to Sign up!



This meeting will include a workshop on how to support your children with study skills.

If you would like to know more about Norwich Parent Power, please attend one of our online information sessions (via Zoom):

Tuesday 16th January, 18:30-19:00: <https://zoom.us/j/96745045064?pwd=anRXK3kranVUukJRRUVuMEFRMng2dz09>

Wednesday 17th January, 13:00-13:30: <https://zoom.us/j/97632901721?pwd=TG5nYWFGcUIUUnMzYXNUWDNUWWI5Zz09>

You are welcome to join our in-person meeting without attending an online session.

parentpowernorwich@thebrilliantclub.org
07398182824



2. Art

Congratulations to Lisa K in Year 12 who has become the second student to sell one of her paintings to a parent after it was seen on display in reception. She can now be classed as a professional artist. Great to see the effort and talent of our students recognised in the local community.



Mr Walters
Teacher

3. Year 7

Great to have all Year 7 back for their first full week after the Christmas holiday, they have now all had a full term to get themselves used to the way at Open Academy. Just a reminder about uniform - leggings are not allowed as well as hoodie/jumpers, fluffy socks, also coats are not to be worn inside. We are by far the best in the school, but we can still be better, I thank you for your support with uniform.

There is a three-way tie for tutor challenge with Challenge, Destiny and Respect all scoring 18, there will be a tiebreaker on Monday for the winner.

The tutor with the best attendance is inspiration ABL.

Top 10 for achievement points are: Charlie SW, Ashanti G, Chalie SI, Pheobe B, Lacey-Mae M, Riley L, Ellie-Mae M, Tilly B, Finley L and Rowan S.

Teacher praise:

Teja, Jack, Ezio, Elias, Rose and Jessica S, consistently focused in lessons – Mrs Power

Good consistent effort from 7P in our work on the Black Death in history. Great classroom discussions. - Mr Walters

Sophia E for the effort she has shown in maths with starter questions and Brogan M for showing working out for different math methods – Mrs Marsham

Lily-May B, Amelie T and Ben S for hard work and integrity in English and showing their good nature and commitment to Academy's ethos – Mr Edwards

<https://www.open-academy.org.uk/our-academy/news/newsletters/>

Mr Lambert (Head of Year 7)
Mrs Roe (Assistant Head of Year 7)

4. Year 8

It's been a really positive week this week with our Student Leaders doing some training around how to be a successful leader and mentor. We are missing a few of our ties that we lend out to students, so we'd be grateful if you could have a check at home and send any stray ties back to us please.

With there being a few colds and coughs doing the rounds, parents are able to bring some paracetamol/ calpol into to school and sign a form which gives permission for students to take it as required. The medication will be kept in our medical room and the giving of it is monitored by staff.

Ms Marsham would like to give a shout out to the following students for their hard work and effort in Maths: Callum B, Connor B, Austin L, Alfie L, Aiden M, Rosie N, Angel N, Destiny O, Zinedine O, Ruby P, Batoul S, Hope T and Jacob W.

Excellent work has been going on in English since our return with students looking at their new course Adventure Fiction! Some shout outs to Angel G, Kelsie-Rose B and Samuel R for offering their ideas and answers to their class.

Out top LEARNT achievers this week are:

Chakib L	143
Samuel R	103
Amy J	94
Zinedine O	93
Cameron S	88

Keep up the good work!

Mrs Clayton (Head of Year 8)
Mr Hawkins (Assistant Head of Year 8)

5. Year 9

Students of the week:
Sasha M-P, Brandon S, Olivier K and Ada A.

English shout outs:
Trixie B - improved punctuality
Eliza S - superb attitude to learning and behaviour
AJ B and Alfie H - great effort with written work this week
Martina V- consistently conscientious attitude to work

Art:
90 for excellent effort in Art with their pop art final pieces

UEA Scrapbot Olympics visit:
A group of Year 8 and 9 students went to UEA this week with Mr Knight and Ms McColl. They represented the school well, were introduced to robotics and will be building and programming a robot for the competition back at UEA in March. Well done to the following: Ross B, Rodrigo F, Ryan B, Jasmin C, Bella H, Jacob C, Charlee-Mae M and Elizabeth H.

Well done to Mason F, Caitlin P and Tiffany S great work in maths this week - Mrs Power

All 9P all for their positive German work and Jenson L for creating an excellent booklet using key vocab
– Mr Blanchflower

Katie for immaculate bookwork, Ria and Alfie H for consistent effort in Maths – Mr Phillips

Mrs Power (Head of Year 9)

Mrs Edwards (Assistant Head of Year 9)

6. Year 10

After our first full week back the year group have earned 2975 achievement points! Well done Year 10.

Please see the email sent about parents evening which is next Tuesday, 17 January. You can make appointments using the link in the email. This parents evening will be an opportunity to talk about how your child performed in their mock exams and what they need to do to improve.

Mrs Pearsall and Mrs Lamb will be available if you have any concerns about study skills and revision timetables etc.

Well done to the following for gaining the most achievement points this week Keira B, Ayo T, Dylan M, Riley B and Brandon P.

Well done to Jamie D, Lily B, Honor LB and Maizi Y for effort in German - Mrs McEvoy

Great effort from the following students on their Kurt Jackson landscape work in art to Kacie W, Rebecca S, Amy T, Ivan, Georgia B and Ella R Key – Mr Walters

Praise for outstanding attitude towards learning maths to:

Kain W - Excellent neat hand writing with number work

Georgia B - Outstanding effort with making notes to remind her of what methods to use.

Oskar - A fantastic effort with all maths work during the lesson. Well done - Mrs Marsham

Mrs Pearsall Ms Whitwood (Heads of Year 10)

Mrs Lamb (Assistant Head of Year 10)

7. Year 11

We hope you all had a good Christmas break and are looking forward to seeing your son/daughter show off all their learning in the upcoming PPEs in the next 2 weeks. Results for these will be available before the Year 11 parents evening on the 13 February. These are going to be the only time the students will experience what a GCSE exam is like before the real things begin in a few months. They will show us what areas need to be worked on to enable all to achieve their potential. It may also be cold in the exam hall due to it being such a large space. Students are still required to be in full correct uniform, but can wear layers under their shirts or a school jumper/plain black jumper under their blazer. No coats are to be worn in the exam hall.

Learnt points: For this week the total amount of learnt points achieved is an amazing 317. Well done everyone.

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

Athanasios C, Gemma S, Star C, Preston B, Michaela B, Chloe D, Jessica P, Ruby T, Thomas W and Reece A.

Positive praise to:

Mega positivity for Lilly E who was struggling on placing protons, neutrons and electrons in the right spots. Then she saw the pattern, tried an example and self-corrected when she made a very small error on the last bit. Really impressive.

Improved effort and initiative from Gemma S with regards to her revision.

Jess W very positive start to January in maths been very focused.

Ara R and Max L for great effort in German.

The final term before the GCSE exams begin. The more to plan, prepare and practise the more useful, meaningful and impactful these exams will be. Remember the main cause of stress is the unknown, the way to combat that is to prepare. The way to prepare is at school in lessons, working with experts who have gone through this process many, many times before.

Thank you for all your support in both the past, present and future with the education and wellbeing of your son/daughter. Have a wonderful weekend.

Mr Pickup (Head of Year 11)
Mrs Smith (Assistant Head of Year 11)

8. Careers

If you are a parent/carer of a Year 10 student please encourage your young person in their search for a work experience placement for our WEX week 8-12 July. This is a very valuable part of their education with students who succeed in finding their own placement gaining greater confidence and maturity.

Completed forms should be returned to Dr Caroline Davies as soon as possible so that Health and Safety checks can take place in good time. If you have any questions please contact the Year 10 team or me at caroline.davies@open-academy.org.uk. Replacement 'Student Self-Placement' forms are also available at from me in S12.

If you are not familiar with our 'live' Careers Newsletter please visit the home page of our website to take a look. Any suggestions for useful content can be sent to caroline.davies@open-academy.org.uk

Dr Davies
Assistant Head of 6th Form
Careers Guidance & Development

9. Chaplain's Thought for the New Year

When I was a lot younger, my dad owned a small farm and I can remember spending hours on end sitting in the back of a tractor cab watching out the back window at the plough carving up the soil getting the field ready for planting.

At the beginning of a furrow, the tractor driver would turn around and watch the plough lower into the ground and then he would look forward and never look back until he got to the other end of the field. The result would be a near perfect furrow line.

He used to explain to me that the reason he never looked back was that if he didn't keep looking forward, the furrow would not be straight, it would be all over the place. "Wobbly" I think was the term mentioned.

The secret to a great furrow was to keep looking forward and lining the tractor up with a tree or marker in the distance and not taking his eyes off it.

We have celebrated Christmas and a new year awaits us. We now have decisions to make. Do we look forward into the future or do we turn around and look into the past?

Maybe 2023 was a rough year for some of us and looking back on it can make us feel a bit wobbly for 2024 but I want to encourage us to look forward to a year of hope and opportunity. Let's set our eyes on the positive, leave the wobbles behind and trust good things will happen. 2024 could be the best year of our lives.

A couple of verses from the Bible which have always encouraged me at the start of a new year and in them God says this to us

When you cross deep rivers, I will be with you, and you won't drown. When you walk through fire, you won't be burned or scorched by the flames.

Because of My great love, you are not consumed, for my compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is my faithfulness to you.

His compassion and faithfulness to us in this new year are new (not old or in the past) every morning and He is only a prayer away.

You are all in my thoughts and prayers

Mark Pimlott
Chaplain



Vehicles & traders arrival 9am - 4pm
Public entry 10am - 3pm

£5 entry for adults
£2 entry for children
Under 5 is free

Autojumble/Car boot £5 a pitch
Booking required

Sunday 14th April

Open Academy – Salhouse Road – Norwich – NR79DL

Contact for more details/book pitch – hugo.pickup@open-academy.org.uk

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hugo.pickup@open-academy.org.uk