

## Open Academy Newsletter – 15 March 2024

Dear parents, carers and students.

Welcome to this week's newsletter.

This week I want to take the opportunity of Lent and the build up to Easter to talk a little about an exciting project that Mr Pimlott, our chaplain, has been working on.

We had been discussing how we might start to develop worship at the Academy that suited our students. We wanted it to be a gentle introduction and opportunity for our community to explore their spiritual side without being pushy or intense – creating space for discussion and exploration and offering support, guidance and reflection.

Ideas were starting to form already before Mr Pimlott and I attended the national Church of England Education conference together. I spent the build up to it preparing Mr Pimlott for a rather dry staid Church of England event of the type I have attended in the past, and yet, when we got there it was completely different to what I had expected. Lots of young people in joyous worship joined by relevant speakers and as the headline moment, the Archbishop of Canterbury, interviewed by some amazingly down to earth students from Hackney. In short, far closer to worship that Mark recognised than I did (he knew all the songs too)!

If that wasn't inspiring enough, one of the sessions was about the church initiative called 'Growing Faith' which is exactly what Mark and I had been discussing starting at Open. We resolved there and then to get something started – and that is where we are now – the very start of something.

Our shared hope is that we can create an after school (perhaps before school at times too) fellowship, where students, staff and parents can come together, worship together, reflect together and explore their spirituality together. We are calling it Open House and we will be launching the idea to students in assemblies in the run up to Easter.

Please do talk about it with your child, as, with upbeat positive encouragement a guarantee, space for reflection and I dare say drinks and tasty treats alongside, we are looking to create something that is an enjoyable coming together of our community. All faiths and none are welcome, but with a largely Christian context, we think the opportunity to encourage each other spiritually may be something that could help anyone.

Yes, we are now waiting for the outcome of our request to become a Church of England school, however, Open House will be an ongoing project whether we get the go ahead or not as we think providing something positive to fill what for some might be a spiritual vacuum is an important step forward for us as an Academy. We may use some of the 'Growing Faith' materials and ideas with those who attend, but we are far more interested in co-constructing Open House with anyone who is interested. We would for example, be particularly keen to hear how we can incorporate other religions respectfully into Open House.

If you would like to know more, please talk to your child in the coming weeks, or contact Mark Pimlott at the school

I will stop there and let you enjoy the rest of the newsletter!

Jon Ford  
Principal

## 1. Updates

As Mr Ford has indicated this time of year is so symbolic for new beginnings. I have been thinking about the changes and transitions for all the pupils who are at the academy.

- Over the past few days we have been made aware of which parents have been fortunate to get places at Open Academy for their children next year. We have 239 applications for the 110 places. There are many families who have unfortunately missed out.
- Year 7 are getting ready for more amazing experiences at the academy like camp. Camp is a tradition at the academy that students never forget. Pupils in Year 13 talk fondly of their time at camp.
- Year 8 have been reflecting on resilience in assembly today. They were thinking how success comes to those that try and try again. They were superb in assembly.
- Year 9 have been thinking about options. This is such a big time in the life of a pupil. For the first time in their lives they have self-determination about some aspect of their education. Pupils are talking to me about how the preference form may change ahead of making choices. I will update everyone next week with any changes.
- Year 10 and some Year 12s are preparing for work experience. They are so busy finding placements ahead of the Local Authority deadline.
- Year 11 and 13 are preparing to take public exams. The effort that they put into the revision for their exams will take them forward confident into whatever sphere that they are interested in.

It is time for me to attend to my garden and plant seeds. By preparing everything well and attending the growing crops with water and weeding as required. I hope that I have the kind of success in my garden that I wish for the students in their studies and their future lives.

Mr Ward  
Vice Principal

## 2. Student Leadership

### Student Leadership Updates

#### **Just Dance Competition – Friday, 22 March, Drama Studio, 10am - 3pm**

Student Leaders, led by Jess Ramm in Year 13, will be holding a "Just Dance-a -thon" on Friday to raise money for the Schools "Thankfulness Fund", which helps many in our community through a variety of projects. All students will be invited to come and join in during lunch and break should they wish to, and sponsorship will be collected through the Parentpay app/Just Giving page that will be open next week.

#### **Non-School Uniform Day – Wednesday, 27 March**

As part of the Student Leadership charity event we will be holding a non-school uniform day on the last day of term. £1 needs to be paid via the Parentpay app for any student that wants to take part.

#### **City Hall trip for all Student Leaders on the Executive Committee – Monday, 25 March**

All student leaders are invited to take part in a full executive meeting in the heart of Norfolk democracy - City Hall in Norwich on Monday, 25 March followed by a private tour of the hall and Sheriff's office! A great honour!

As part of this trip we have launched the competition for all Student Leaders on the executive...

#### **"Our fine city..." short speech competition!**

Your mission is to write a short speech about Norwich - focusing on the following things...

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

- Why do we love it?
- Where is it heading?
- How can we help make it a better place?

## Prizes

- Prizes for the top entries.
- If your speech is selected you will be invited to give the speech at the Council meeting in the City Hall - if you want to write one, but are not keen on giving it at the meeting, you can nominate another Student Leader on the executive to read this for you.
- All those selected and given prizes will also receive 50 reward points and positive praise calls home.

## Key things to note...

- Speeches can last anywhere between 1 and 5 minutes
- The speech should be inspirational and positive.
- If you want, you could focus on Norwich from the point of view of a particular community or group
- See Mr. Dilley if you want any help with this.
- Once completed, send them via email or written in person to Mr. Dilley
- Deadline for entries – Friday, 22 March at 3pm

Mr Dilley  
Teacher

### 3. Year 7

I hope you have had the chance to start buying your Easter decorations, Easter eggs etc (my favourite is mini egg in case anyone was wondering) as it is not too long now until the Easter holidays. It has been a very positive week with a new reward scheme set up by Ryan and Tori in our 6th Form where students can earn a golden star in lessons, which they can then use in four weeks' time to purchase goodies. I have seen many happy Year 7s with their stars around the Academy.

We will be decorating the doors in tutor for Easter - this will be judged before we break up and the best door will be rewarded with a Easter prize. If anyone has any old decoration you do not need then please let students bring them in to use.

There is no date yet, but Year 7 reports will be coming out soon, showing your students' progress attitude in all their lessons.

Big praise goes to our football team that just missed out in the semi-final of the league to City Academy Norwich. It was a real shame we could not quite get over the line in the game, however, I am very excited for the future seasons with our very strong squad to choose from.

Mrs Roe has been having a lot of conversations to those that have not paid for camp yet. Camp is by far the best week of the year and all students will love it. If students are not able to make it they will be in the Academy in normal lessons. If you are having any issues with paying for camp, please use the link below

<https://www.norwichcharitabletrusts.org.uk/>

Top achievers this week are Ashanti G, Daniel G, Brogan M, Megan K, Amalie T, Morgan S, Harrison A, Ayomikun T, Phoebe B and Alfie W.

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

The tutor with the best attendance this week is Destiny TTH and the winner of the tutor challenge was also Destiny.

Teacher praise:

Joel and Sabine, consistently excellent answers in history – Mr Walters

Archie M and Mackenzie M for writing fantastic shape poems this week in English – Mrs Day

Rowan S for completing GCSE level homework and scoring an incredible 90% - Miss Roberts

Hayden P for contributing thoughtful and interesting idea to the lesson, also Ben, Matthew, Theo, Ruby, Hemin, Alex D, Teja and Jack S - Miss Harvey

Archie M for excellent work in maths with multiplication and division, Morgan S for engagement in maths with excellent effort – Mrs Marsham

Excellent comic strip on reproduction from Lacey M – Mr Lambert

Lily H, Ayo T, Sophia E, Ashanti G (handwriting) and Rowan S for efforts and improvements in English – Mr Edwards

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

#### **4. Marathon Fundraising**

Myself and Mr Bradshaw are running the first Norfolk marathon on Sunday, 28 April, starting and finishing in Cromer. For this we are asking for any donations to the Thankfulness Fund to support our students in the academy. If you wish to donate, a page has been made on the Parentpay app.

Thank you for those that have already donated. You may see us out training for it around the academy (separately that is, Mr Bradshaw's slightly faster than me) please give us a wave, no unicorn fancy dress this time for me.

Mr Lambert  
Teacher

#### **5. Year 8**

Well done to all those Year 8s soldiering on through the spring colds and coughs! As the weather becomes a little more mild, may I remind parents that although students can wear hoodies instead of coats on their walk into school they are not permitted once in school and will need to be stored in bags or in the year office if they do not have a bag.

A congratulatory shout out to the whole of Year 8 from Mr Hawkins for being amazing during the fire drill yesterday afternoon. As a year group, everyone was lined up promptly and in near silence well before some of the other year groups so well done! I am proud of your positive behaviour and actions shown during the drill.

Our top LEARNT achievers this week are:

Ruby P, Freddie M, Sammy R, Chakib L and Amy J.

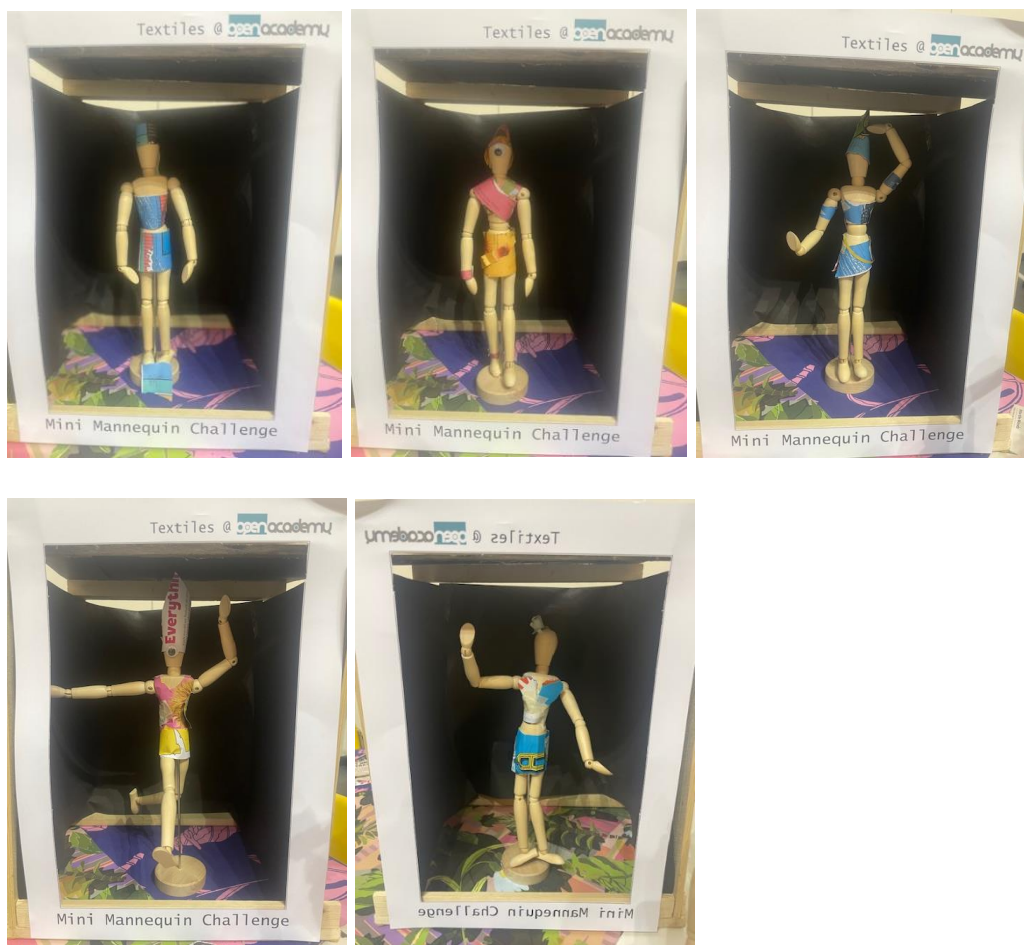
Congratulations to those in our form (8JWI) who have recently surpassed a 1000 LEARNT points this year! Really well done, let's keep the momentum going! Skye H, Amy J, Freddie M, Ruby P, Zinedine O, Samuel R, Thomas W, Cameron S and Sav, Kaelan. Very, very, well done to 8O in science for another brilliant week, from just answering questions alone we have amassed a mega 680 Ask & Answering Learnt points. Keep it going – Mr Willgress

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

## 6. Year 9

Well done to Jasmin, Eliza and Elise for showing great resilience when continuing to build their planters this week. They are both at the tricky and fiddly stage of joining the sides together and it proved challenging to get it accurate and secure. The whole of 9O worked hard and showed great teamwork creating a great atmosphere in the DT workshop yesterday.

On Year 9 open evening on Thursday, lots of Year 9 students took on the Textiles Mini Mannequin Challenge which involved designing and making a carnival outfit from old magazines kindly donated from the library. All participants made innovative and individually styled outfits considering the placements of the colours and prints and also the shape of the garments. Mr Ford judged them and after careful consideration chose Kaitlin W as the winner. Well done Kaitlin, please come and collect your winner's Easter egg from me on Tuesday!



9E have worked incredibly hard on their planters today. Shout outs to Harry S, Tyler, Alfie E, Kenzie and Lily A for their brilliant teamwork and helping each other! Keep up the exemplary work guys:

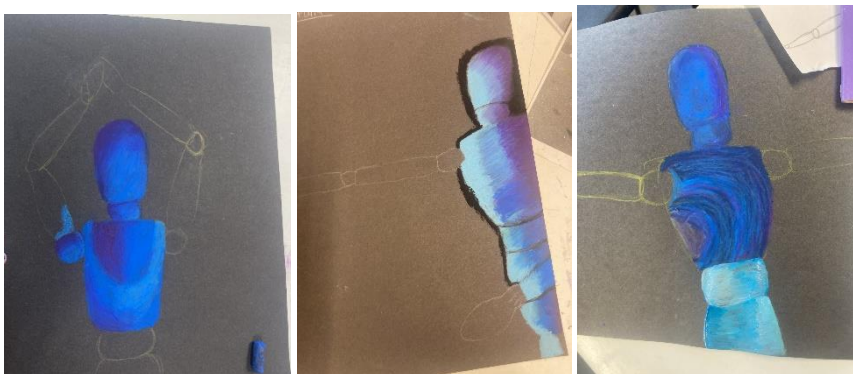
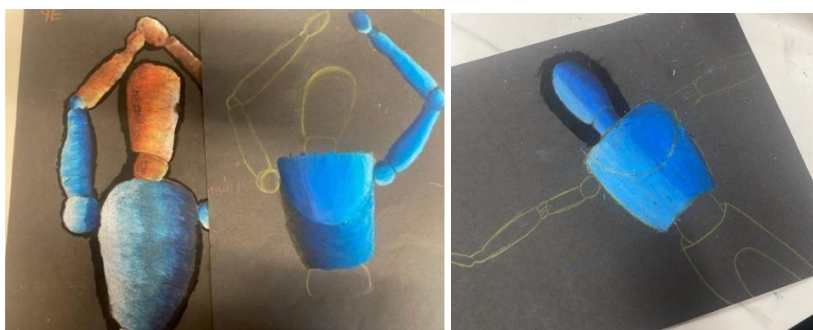




Excellent work by Millie in the OLC:



Fantastic figure work in progress from Ryan B, Hannah s, Evie D, Rodrigo F, Ada A and Kayden S:



Mrs Power (Head of Year 9)  
Mrs Edwards (Assistant Head of Year 9)

## 7. Year 10

Yesterday Mr Ward spoke to students about finding a work experience placement in assembly and tutors will be giving time for students to research and prepare a script for calling businesses.

Please support your child in finding a work experience placement, all work experience is valuable. Asking friends and family for a contact name or number for your child to get in touch with at a business would be a great starting point.

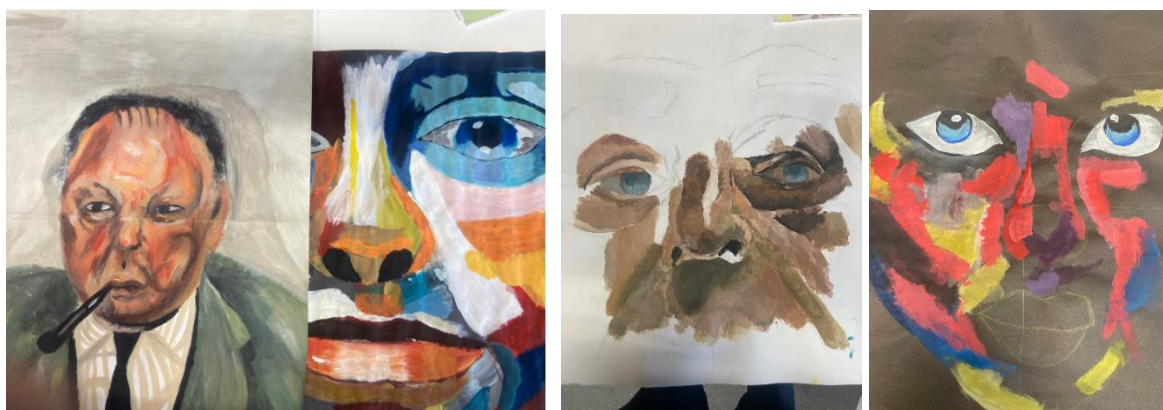
I think students are a bit nervous about getting started so please encourage them, this is such a valuable experience and even if it is not in a career path they are planning, working in any professional environment can really help them in the future.

Well done to those who attended the geography trip last week, behaviour was exemplary and although the temperature was a bit fresh, we are all glad it stayed dry.



Also, well done to the following for gaining the most achievement points this week Max L, Lucy-Rose B, Kiera B, Bubacarr T, Ayo T, Layla D and Kian W.

Brilliant portrait work in progress from Amy T, Kizzy L, Rebecca S and Daisy H:



Mrs Pearsall and Ms Whitwood (Heads of Year 10)  
Mrs Lamb (Assistant Head of Year 10)

## 8. Careers

This week's Year 10 assembly students were reminded of the importance of our core value perseverance. This is particularly relevant to those still looking for a July work experience placement as we recognise that coming out of our comfort zone and not losing heart can be worthwhile in the end. Please continue to encourage your Year 10 students in their search for work experience placements even if they have not succeeded in getting their first choice – all work experience is a valuable part of education. The

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

deadline set by Norfolk County Council is Wednesday, 27 March and all completed student self-placement forms must be with me by this date in order to be processed in time.

The Norwich School are holding their annual Careers and Networking Event for Years 10-13 at The Gunn Club, Norwich City Football Club from 19.00 to 20.30 next Thursday, 21 March. The event is completely free for students to attend and is open to students from any school either with a teacher or with their parents. There will be representatives from a wide range of sectors including architecture, accountancy and business consulting, civic planning, emergency services, financial services, media, events & theatre, music, arts and product design and an array of industry specialists to speak to. The event is a good opportunity for students considering future careers, A Levels and progression to university.

To register for the event, students should complete the following form:

[Norwich School Careers & Networking Event Registration](#)

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

## 9. Year 11 Easter Revision Timetable

I am writing to inform you of some important dates for your child's GCSE exams. The exams will start on 7 May 2024 and will run for just over 8 weeks. Each student has been given their exam entries and dates, so please ensure that your child is aware of their schedule.

To help prepare pupils for the mock exams, there will be a series of revision sessions during the Easter break. Please encourage your child to attend all relevant sessions.

Subject	Date/Time	Teachers
German	2nd April 10-12pm	Mr Blanchflower
Further Maths	2nd April 10-12pm	Mr Kent
Maths	2nd April 12.30 -2.30pm	Maths Teachers
Science	3rd April 10-11.30pm	Science Teachers
Geography/History	3rd April 12.00 -2.00pm	Mr Mundy/Mrs Wenlock
English	9th April 10-12pm	English Teachers

Your child is required to bring drinks and snacks to their revision sessions as the canteen will be closed during these times.

In addition to the weekly after-school sessions offered by departments, we encourage pupils to complete their revision tasks at home. All pupils have been issued with homework to help them plan their revision. You can support them by reminding them to read and highlight their work, create note cards, or quiz them on various sections of their revision guides. They also have work on the Seneca and Mathswatch websites.



I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude for your continued support and invite you to contact me at the school if you have any questions or concerns.

Mr Fisher  
Assistant Principal

## 10. Year 11

Another week done another week closer to exams. It is with this passage of time that becomes all the clearer, both the fantastic effort, resilience and determination that the majority are putting into their learning and also those who are not making the most of this diminishing time at Open. Every morning we meet as a year group before coming into the Academy. There are always students missing. This can have a knock-on impact for the rest of the school day, as in the first 20 mins of school each day students are given the opportunity to engage with teaching experts to really get focused for the day. Also, any issues or challenges can be spoken about and fixed. When students miss this, they may disengage with their learning, giving it less importance than it truly has. This just starts that negative spiral which means learning is lost and attainment is harder to achieve. We know that this message is often lost on students who have no real idea of the consequences the next few months may have on their future lives. This is why we need your continued support to get your child into school on time so we can give them all the support they need with their learning.

So far, a little over 50 students have purchased a hoodie, just over half the year group. We have yet again, managed to extend the deadline to purchase the leavers' hoodie, which is now 31 March. Please follow the instructions below and if you have any problems, please contact Mrs T Smith

1. Go to <https://www.schoolleaverscompany.co.uk>
2. Username: 2664
3. Password: cKGdWAZp (you must copy this exactly. Use capital letters where necessary)
4. Complete your personal details, choose colour and size along with any nickname you want to add – don't forget THIS IS AN ADDITIONAL COST.
5. Proceed to payment.
6. If everything is correct and paid for, your hoody will be sent to school addressed to Mrs Smith. They will then be distributed at the end of your year 11 final assembly.

Learnt points: For this week the total amount of learnt points achieved is an amazing 58. Well done everyone.

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

Star C, Grace E, Thomas J, Rosie C, Rakan A, Amelia R, Billy B, Hayden B, Ruby T, Preston B

Positive Praise:

Leo W - for his positive attitude and effort in his food practical exam.

Lilly T and Star C for their amazing booklet work in German.

Massive shout out to Lily E and Molly H who were super helpful at Year 9 Pathways last night. They were great at speaking to students about the health and social care course and how they have found it.

Aukse J and Jessica W for having a great focus in maths with Mrs Power.

The following have been showing a fantastic attitude towards maths by taking notes to increase their grades and regularly reviewing methods to answer maths sentence questions - Maddison L, Xhesika D, Lilly B, Caitlin A, Ellie M and Mayling T.

It is only with your help that each student will make the most of their time at Open. Thank you for your continued support of the learning of your son/daughter, it shows itself every day.

Mr Pickup (Head of Year 10)  
Mrs Smith (Assistant Head of Year 10)

### 11. 6<sup>th</sup> Form

Firstly, I would like to wish all everyone a **Happy Ramadan**. Muslim staff and students will be observing Ramadan (a period of prayer and fasting) from **Sunday, 10 March to Wednesday, 10 April 2024**.

Ramadan culminates in a celebration of Eid al-Fitr (ʿĪd al-Fiṭr), also called the 'Festival of Opening the Fast', when the traditional month-long fast is ended with a feast. Happy fasting!



### Year 12 Business Cake Sale

The amazing Ryan, Torri and Kimora ran a cake sale last week and were fundraising money for their business project, which will improve behaviour among the Year 7s. They managed to fundraise a whopping total of £206.88. Amazing guys. So proud. I heard the rocky roads were the absolute best things on that table....massive shout out to whoever made them.



Year 13 - With exams looming ahead, it's time to buckle down and prepare for success. Here are some key tips to help you excel:

- **Start Early, Stay Consistent:** Begin your revision early and stick to a regular study schedule.
- **Create a Revision Plan:** Organise your revision with a detailed plan, setting realistic goals for each session.
- **Practice, Practice, Practice:** Solve past papers and practice questions to improve your exam technique.
- **Seek Support and Collaboration:** Don't hesitate to ask for help from teachers or form study groups with classmates.
- **Take Care of Yourself:** Prioritise your well-being with plenty of rest, healthy eating, and breaks between study sessions.
- **Stay Positive and Focused:** Maintain a positive mindset, avoid distractions, and visualise success sounds cringey but it works!
- **Plan for Exam Day:** Prepare everything you need in advance, arrive early, and stay calm during the exam.

Remember, exams are not just about knowledge but also about resilience and determination. You've got this!

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

## 12. Chaplain's Reflection



I read this story and it really spoke to me so I thought I would share it. Often, we wonder, "What did I do to deserve this?" or "Why is this happen to me?" Here is a wonderful explanation!

A daughter is telling her mother how everything is going wrong, she's failing everything, her boyfriend broke up with her and her best friend is moving away.

Meanwhile, her mother is baking a cake and asks her daughter if she would like a snack and the daughter says, "Absolutely Mum, I love your cake."

Here, have some cooking oil," her mother offers. "Yuck" says her daughter.

"How about a couple of raw eggs?" "Yuck, Mum!"

"Would you like some flour then? Or maybe baking soda?" "Mum, those are all disgusting!"

The mother replies: "Yes, all those things seem bad all by themselves. But when they are put together in the right way, they make a wonderfully delicious cake!"

If you are of faith or not, life/God works the same way. Many times, we wonder why we go through such bad and difficult times. But God knows that when He puts these things all in His order, they always work for good! We just have to trust in life/trust Him and, eventually, they will all make something wonderful!"

In closing the Bible says that "all things work together for our good".

You are all in my thoughts and I pray that all things in your lives will work out for the good.

You are all in my thoughts and prayers. God bless.

Mark Pimlott  
Chaplain



## Young People's Workshops

The Wellbeing Service has created two informal workshops for young people: One to tackle anxiety and low mood, and another to support studies and learning. These workshops are informed by Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), a form of evidence-based, solution-focused therapy that can help young people make sense of overwhelming situations by breaking worries down into smaller parts, and taking a step-by-step approach.

### Anxiety and Low Mood – How to beat them

This one hour workshop is aimed at younger people aged 16 and over. It is designed to help you understand why we experience low mood and anxiety, and how we can incorporate some simple but effective tools to enable us to feel more in control of our mental health.



### Successful Study

Successful Study is a workshop written to help with the process of study. It provides practical advice and support to give the best chance of success.

It is based on a psychological understanding of the mind and brain. It covers 'the study trap', general wellbeing, study principles, motivating ourselves, deadlines and exams. It will also explore how COVID may have impacted our ability to study successfully in recent times. Successful Study provides a variety of ideas and tips to get the best out of ourselves when it really matters. The content will benefit any student aged 16 and over regardless of level of study.

For more information and to book please contact:  
[communications.wellbeing@nsft.nhs.uk](mailto:communications.wellbeing@nsft.nhs.uk)

[www.wellbeingnands.co.uk](http://www.wellbeingnands.co.uk)

All workshops are provided free of charge.

For more information and to book please contact: [communications.wellbeing@nsft.nhs.uk](mailto:communications.wellbeing@nsft.nhs.uk)

Wellbeing is commissioned by the Norfolk and Waveney Integrated Care Board, GfK: WY067. Published January 2023. Review date December 2024.



## FREE Workshops for Organisations

### Wellbeing in the Workplace – Building Resilience

#### 2 hour session workshop

Wellbeing in the workplace can help you as an employer to support your workforce through stress, emotional challenges, and poor mental health. We offer support to combat stress and to help build resilience. This workshop includes psycho education on the causes of stress offering techniques, practical strategies, and support to help challenge unhelpful thinking.



### Wellbeing in the Workplace – Low Mood and Motivation

#### 2 hour session workshop

Wellbeing in the workplace can help you as an employer to support your workforce through low mood, depression, and poor mental health. This workshop offers support to understand some of the most common signs and symptoms of low mood and depression that can affect everyday life and includes strategies and techniques that aims to reduce the symptoms.

### Anxiety Toolkit

#### 1-2 hour session workshop

Anxiety is something that we all live with. This workshop helps us to understand anxiety whether that be our through our own experiences, or reflecting upon the experiences of those around us. Using evidence based techniques we give tips for managing anxiety in daily life, and provide more information on how to seek extra support if it's needed.

All workshops are provided free of charge.  
For more information and to book please contact: [communications.wellbeing@nft.nhs.uk](mailto:communications.wellbeing@nft.nhs.uk)



for anxiety and depression

[www.wellbeingnands.co.uk](http://www.wellbeingnands.co.uk)