

Open Academy Newsletter – 13 September 2024

Dear parents, carers and students

This week our assemblies have been focussing on our core value of hard work. Where we have been thinking about how hard work also needs to be smart work.

We are frustrated that teething problems in our new IT systems mean that a number of tools we would like to share with you are not quite ready – the obvious one is the TEAMS homework system as this is the most important bit of working smarter.

Along with assessment folder tasks, homework across all subjects is the opportunity that teachers get to see exactly how learning is progressing in their subjects and to develop specific advice for a student's next step in learning.

It may be that the teacher gives a specific written comment, or picks from a statement bank of common next steps, the feedback may be written on assessment or may be given verbally during the subsequent lessons. However, as I have been explaining to students this week, it is taking note of this specific advice and guidance on the work that working harder becomes working smarter.

I have been inspired by the Paralympics recently and I am in awe of the athletes who have taken their challenges and, instead of being restricted, have developed their talents around them, and what talent we have seen. Alfie Hewett has been a great friend to the academy – giving the presentation evening speech a couple of years ago. I am thrilled he has a Paralympics Gold medal this time, but although he lost his singles final, it was for some the most competitive entertaining sport I have watched for many years. Tennis was definitely the winner! It did however leave me thinking how awesome it is that some people work out how to develop their skills and abilities into talents and how the application of hard work can then really pay off. I used the example of Hannah Cockcroft in assembly – 9 Golds over 3 Paralympics – what an example of hard work.

So hopefully you will encourage hard work in our students – make sure homework is taken seriously and that learning can then get smarter – we know all our students have talent – we cannot wait to see it develop!

Finally, this week at the end of assemblies, Mr Dilley has been promoting our student leadership program. It gets bigger every year and with some fantastic rewards it is more than worthwhile getting involved. Applications are out now and form elections will happen at the end of next week. Please do encourage everyone to give it a go, even new Year 7s as, I will be needing Year 7 student leaders to help me with our Year 6 parents evening in just a couple of weeks on Wednesday, 25 September.

I am going to work on keeping my bit a little shorter this year, so I will stop there and encourage you to enjoy the rest of the newsletter

Jon Ford
Principal

1. Homework

Homework develops study habits and independent learning. It also encourages learners to acquire resources such as dictionaries and reference books/internet. Research shows that homework also benefits factual knowledge, self-discipline, attitudes to learning and problem-solving skills. We have a homework calendar for each term.

AUTUMN TERM 2024-2025			
When:	KS3	KS4	KS5
W/B: 9th September B	Food, Art, Drama Computing Music, PE, RS	Option subjects	All subjects
W/B: 16th September A	English, Maths Science	Core	All subjects
W/B: 23rd September B	Geography, History, MFL	Option subjects	All subjects
W/B: 30th September A	English, Maths Science	Core	All subjects
W/B: 7th October B	Geography, History, MFL	Option subjects	All subjects
W/B: 14th October A	English, Maths, Science	Core	All Subjects
W/B: 21st October B	Food, Art, Drama Computing Music, PE, RS	Option subjects	All subjects
W/B: 4th November A	English, Maths Science	Core	All subjects
W/B: 11th November B	Geography, History, MFL	Option subjects	All subjects
W/B: 18th November A	English, Maths Science	Core	All subjects
W/B: 25th November B	Geography, History, MFL	Option subjects	All subjects
W/B: 2nd December A	English, Maths Science	Core	All subjects
W/B: 9th December B	Geography, History, MFL	Option subjects	All subjects

Homework will be assigned via Microsoft TEAMS. Each student has been provided with login credentials and has received instructions during their computer science tutorial on accessing the assigned tasks. Owing to technical challenges, certain subjects will designate homework using booklets or emails until the issues are rectified.

Mr Fisher (Assistant Principal)

2. Free School Meals

Please see attached the letter sent out earlier this week.

Mr Richardson

3. Iris +Pay

Parents of Year 7 students should now have received a link to register for our online payment system. This will allow you to make payments for school meals, lockers and future trips. Cash payments are no longer required.

Thank you for your patience whilst we have resolved the IT errors. Please contact the finance office if you have any queries.

Mrs Appleby (Business Manager)

4. Upcoming Assessments

Year 7, 8, 9: EA1 assessments All Subjects Weeks beginning 7 October

Please use knowledge organisers to support revision, making your own knowledge organiser and filling in any gaps.

Year 11/13: Mock exams 1 All Subjects Weeks beginning 18 November

Start revision now! Use revision guides and online resources including past paper questions.

Good luck!

Mr Murray (Acting Assistant Principal)

5. PE

Extra Curricular Club Timetable

We are running lots of PE after school clubs for all students to take part in. You do not need to sign up to these clubs, just come along. All students must be wearing PE kit. We have lots of fixtures against other schools coming up so please encourage your child to attend clubs to represent the school. You will be made aware by text if the club is cancelled due to weather or any other circumstance.

PE EXTRA-CURRICULAR CLUBS SEPTEMBER - DECEMBER 15:00-16:00PM PE KIT MUST BE WORN!	
MONDAY	ALL YEARS BOYS FOOTBALL (SLA + SWI) ALL YEARS GIRLS FOOTBALL (RHI + STR) ALL YEARS BOYS AND GIRLS BADMINTON CLUB (RPE) DANCE CLUB (JOM)
WEDNESDAY	ALL YEARS BOYS AND GIRLS BASKETBALL CLUB (JWI) ALL YEARS BOYS RUGBY CLUB (SWI)
THURSDAY	ALL YEARS GIRLS NETBALL CLUB (STR + RPE)

Sponsorship

Open Academy PE department are looking for a business to sponsor our brand new football kits. Unfortunately, our football kits are looking very worn and some have holes in due to continuous use. We are looking to buy 20 brand new football tops for ALL years to wear this academic year. The business logo would be on these t-shirts and feature regularly on our website and newsletters. If anyone could sponsor or knows anyone who could sponsor, please contact me - shannon.trail@open-academy.org.uk.

SPONSORSHIP
NEEDED

IF YOU'RE INTERESTED IN SPONSORING OUR BRAND NEW FOOTBALL KITS PLEASE CONTACT:

SHANNON.TRAIL@OPEN-ACADEMY.ORG.UK

This will include:

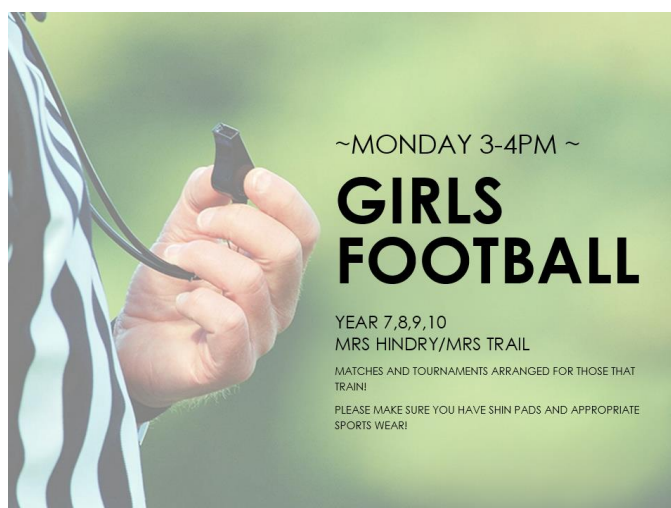
- Your business logo on all boys' and girls' new football fixture kits.
- Your business logo on our website and newsletters.

Football & Gymnastics

Gymnastics for Years 7 and 8 starts next week. Students must wear grip socks or will need to go bare feet. If students do not follow these options, then usual sanctions will apply. Kit should now be correct unless we have notification from parents via head of year, otherwise, sanctions will apply. If students are unable to participate in PE due to injury or illness, students will still need to get changed into their PE kit if physically able to do so.

Football club has started on Monday night for years 7-10. To attend football training and fixtures, students must have shin pads. They will not be able to participate without the correct safety equipment.

Fixtures and tournaments will be arranged throughout the term for pupils that attend training.



Miss Trail and Mr Wilkinson (Teachers)

6. Drama

Just a quick reminder that all students in Years 7, 8 and 9 will need to do drama barefoot, unless they bring a pair of gravity style grip socks with them.



Mrs Ormosi (Teacher)

7. Year 7

Well done Year 7 for a brilliant second week at the Open Academy! We are all so impressed with your continued dedication, enthusiasm and resilience, embracing the “LEARNT” behaviours and settling into this new way of life so well! We know that starting high school comes with many new challenges and difficulties – as well as opportunities, and we are just so impressed with how you are embracing it all and working with us to build on the progress and positivity of the first week! You are a wonderful group of young learners and a credit to the school – keep it up.

Key Stats

Attendance – 95.8% (national average 93.8%). This is excellent – well done. Being in school and learning is so important for your present and future success, so it is wonderful to see attendance so high – let's aim to get over 96% next week.

Rewards – These are awarded by members of staff for different reasons; active listening, engaging fully with the learning, giving great feedback by answering questions, being respectful to all, being present and ready for learning, working as a team. For the last 5 days the total amount of learnt points achieved is an incredible 1017. This is fantastic and shows a wonderful start to the term and a great show of positive learning.

Praise

We asked members of staff to share some positivity they have witnessed from the Year group this week, below is what they have said:

7E doing brilliantly in Art. Completely focused - Mr Walters

Ollie F, Mohammed M and Honey-Mae B have had a brilliant start in maths - Mr Lambert

Superb effort in English from Layla L - Miss Roberts

Shout out for India Hughes' excellent sequence diagrams drawn in maths - Mrs Marsham

The vast majority of my Year 7s are doing very well with Spanish phonics - Mrs Blackburn

Shout out to Rhylee S for great engagement - S McEvoy

Important Notices/Reminder

- School photos will be taken on Monday - it is essential that all students wear the correct school uniform. Please visit the school website for clarity if needed.
- All Year 7 boys are starting gymnastics next week and will need to either take their shoes and socks off or wear grip socks, sanctions will be out on the system if this rule is not followed - Mr Lambert
- Girls PE - earrings and nose studs need to be removed for PE. If they can't be taken out, they must be covered with tape. Hair must be tied back for safety, so please ensure your child has a hair tie - Mrs Smith
- Any uniform issues please let the Year Team know so we can assist. To help with uniform going missing please can you add your son/daughter's name to their blazers/ties/PE tops.
- Please ensure all students have all the required equipment for their learning. This must include a pen and reading book.
- Celebrating success – we want to know the positive things you're getting up to outside of school – this might be clubs, hobbies etc. Please let your form Tutors know over the next week or so, so we can celebrate these efforts and achievements inside the Academy too.

If you wish to know about your child academically, please contact the year team or your child's teachers, and we would be happy to discuss your child's progress! It is only with your help that each student will make the most of their time at Open. Thank you so much for your support, it really makes a difference, and we are so grateful for it.

Mr Pickup (Head of Year 7)
Mrs Smith (Assistant Head of Year 7)
Mr Dilley (Year Team Support)

8. Year 8

We are now fully up and running for our first full week back at the academy. The students are now getting used to their timetables after some problems with our system. Extra-curricular activities are fully up and running from next week, girls and boys football club is on Mondays after school until 4pm, please make sure they bring correct equipment, shin pads, football socks etc.

A reminder for drama lessons all students must either take their shoes and socks off or wear grip socks, this also applies for my PE class that are now on Gymnastics. If any are unable to take part in PE due to injury students are still required to wear full correct PE uniform unless they are unable to due to cast/boot etc, there are ways they can contribute in class as a coach or official and if outside they don't get their school uniform wet if it rains.

There are still some without a blazer, thank you for those that let us know they are on order, those that are not wearing them in the academy will borrow from the year team and a consequence will be put on the system.

Other notices

- The whole academy will have their photos taken on Monday.
- Immunisations on Tuesday.
- All students should be bringing in a pen, pencil, ruler and rubber.
- Students know when their PE days are, so they need to bring in their sportswear, food tech ingredients on cooking days too.

Teacher praise

Fantastic answers in English from Ayo – Mrs Roberts

Harrison B for the effort he puts into every maths lesson. Well done – Mrs Marsham

For excellent effort in Spanish by all Year 8s.

Oliver R for excellent work in RS – Mrs Thoppil

Evie P has been working so hard in English so far this year - a really great start with excellent answering of questions! – Mrs Clayton

8E in music - good effort in our word detective activity: special mention to Ben, Jess, Lily-May and Chioma, who all found over 60 words! 8P sang beautifully this morning in music – awesome. Mrs Morgan-Hart

Mr Lambert (Head of Year 8)

Mrs Roe (Assistant Head of Year 8)

9. Year 9

Another great week with Year 9 and it's been fantastic to see so many engaging with lessons and taking advantage of the learning available.

This is a very important year for your child as they will be choosing their options for GCSE. With that in mind can we ask that you start discussing possible career directions with them and which subjects may support this. This will help inform our conversations in tutor time and hopefully encourage them to see the end goal to school and how vital it is.

Every week Mr Hawkins and I look through the highest achievement points for the year group and the following students were the top 5:

Ruby P – 70

Kaelan B – 65

Leon B – 65

Samuel R – 55

Munashe Z – 55

There were many more just below these 5 so well done to all.

We would also like some student leaders for the year group so please encourage your child to apply for these roles. This will give them valuable leadership experience and something to put on their CV! Mr Dilley is coordinating this through your child's tutor.

Lots of individual praise this week:

Well done to 9O and 9P in history for a very strong start to the year. Both groups have demonstrated excellent behaviour for learning, and have focused on and engaged in the topic of the rise of the Nazis.

Particular praise to Peter M and Kaydee H who worked really hard in History period 5 on Tuesday – Mr Crawford

9P in Music - good effort in our word detective activity: special mention to Callum, Taylor, Kelsie, Elysia, Katie, Hollie and Ruby, who all found over 70 words. Mega congrats to Sammy (157 words) & Cameron (187 words) - Mrs Morgan Hart

George B, Ben S and Maisey C for their excellent engagement and sharing of ideas in English. – Mrs Clayton

Angel N for asking questions to gain a better understanding of the topic in Maths. Zinedine O for excellent effort in maths. Well done and keep showing your working out in your book – Mrs Marsham

Shannelli is very hardworking and David Djalo always gives 100% too – Mr McEvoy

Mr Walters (Head of Year 9)
Mr Hawkins (Assistant Head of Year 9)

10. Year 10

Students of the week:
Kieran S, Hayden T, Dylain B, Harry B and Zena A.

Top Achievement points so far this half term:
Kieran S, Ryan B, Alfie S, Lena W, Esme W, Erica J and Kieran VW.

Year 10 have presented us with a battle this week with uniform because of the cold mornings and coming to school in hoodies. They must be wearing a school blazer, trousers or skirt. Leggings are not uniform and any leggings next week without a skirt will be an automatic detention. School jumpers can be worn under blazers, not a hoody or any sports tops. I have asked tutors to email parents when students are not in correct uniform, so we can together ensure students are well presented. We would appreciate your support with this.

Students have settled into their options well - a reminder that the 30 September is the final deadline for any changes due to the amount of work that would need to be caught up on.

Mrs Power (Head of Year 10)
Mrs Edwards (Assistant Head of Year 10)

11. Year 11

As your child embarks on Year 11, we want to keep you informed and involved in their educational journey. This year is a crucial one, filled with opportunities, challenges and preparations for their future. We look forward to working closely with you to support your child's success.

Key Autumn 1 Term dates for your calendar:

6th Form Open Evening and Study Skills Evening – Wednesday, 2 October
PPE 1 (2 weeks): Monday 18th November – Friday, 6 December

The aim of the Study Skills Evening is not only to help equip your child with the resources they need to be successful in their GCSEs, but also to give guidance to how you as a parent/carer can support them through what we know can be a challenging time. The year team will be present on the evening should you have any worries or concerns.

Please also see a link below, which takes you to the upcoming open evening events

<https://www.helpyouchoose.org/events>

Tutor Programme

We are very fortunate in Year 11 to have the heads of faculty as form tutors. Form time allows students to form a closer bond with their form tutor, who is often a key point of contact throughout the school year. This relationship can be vital for providing support, guidance and a sense of security. We also use form time to share important information, such as upcoming events, deadlines, or changes in the timetable/daily schedule. It ensures that students are well-informed and organised. Therefore, it is vital that students are arriving on time to school to enter the school building with their form tutor each morning.

Other news

Miss Whitwood, Head of Year 11 and teacher of Health and Social Care recently got married and has changed their last name. Moving forward, they will be known as Mrs Halliday. Please note that while their name has changed, there will be no changes to their role.

Students have really embraced a positive start and are working hard, here are some shout outs from their teachers:

For History Leah S, Isabelle T, Layla D and Rebecca S - generally being fantastic in effort and attitude to learning - Mr Pickup

A good start made to the GCSE Year 11 music course. Particular congratulations to Grace and Katy, who have both already recorded their solo pieces - Ms Morgan-Hart

Good effort from all in Year 11 Art - Mr Walters

It has been wonderful to see Honey and Kizzy in lessons so far this year - really good engagement from both - Mrs Clayton

Excellent effort in maths, listening to next steps and completing worksheets, well done Emilis V - Mrs Marsham

Shout out to my group for a brilliant start to Year 11 business - really strong focus and engagement going into this final year. Special mention to the following...Lola B, Riley D, George TS, Ayo T, Theo P and Leah J - Mr Dilley

My PE class yesterday were awesome, everyone got involved, lots of effort put in - Mr Wilkinson

Year 11 have been working on their initial designs for their final projects in DT, looking at the work of existing designers, global architecture and materials. They will now move onto prototyping and beginning the making process of their coursework.

Shout outs for progress and attainment with drawing techniques for Riley B, Ellie M, Asha, Theo, Alex, Dorian, Charlie and Oskar. Keep up the hard work and effort!

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



Mrs Pearsall and Mrs Halliday (Heads of Year 11)
Mrs Lamb (Assistant Head of Year 11)

12. 6th Form

We are delighted to welcome our new Year 12s into OA6. We are only a week or so in, but they have been a real credit to themselves, showing resilience, adaptability, and a real eagerness to learn in the classroom. Some of you may find this short 5 minute video useful as you make the leap from GCSE to A Levels: <https://www.netsixthform.co.uk/resources/view/leap-from-gcse-to-sixth-form-1-realising-the-challenges-video>

Subject Helpers

Year 12s - a reminder that by Monday, I would like each of you to tell your tutor which subject you would ideally like to help out in.

Tutor Time

I have been really impressed with how well students have been doing with attending tutor and assembly on time each day. Please continue with this awesome attendance and punctuality! Please also remember your reading books for silent reading on Thursdays.

School photo

School photos will be taken on Monday. Just a heads up in case you want to make an extra effort!

Shout outs

In Year 12 and 13 this week, we had Lauren Whitehead, a PE teacher from CNS, come over to Open in order to lead a yoga session. This was part of her 'Teen Yoga' program and she tailored the session to explain to the students why yoga is beneficial to footballers from a physical and mental perspective. Covering everything from muscles to mindset, it clearly had a positive effect as Ashton T went on to have a player of the match performance at Mr Wilkinson's football club, Steve and Kornel were also spoken about with glowing praise for their efforts.

In my own psychology lesson, I have been really impressed with how well students have taken to our current topic of conformity. Well done all of you for fully getting stuck in. A special shout out to Jess B who has really impressed me with her excellent note taking.

I have heard nothing but praise for our current Year 12s. Staff have been super impressed with all of you. A warm welcome to Alana and Shahad who join us from other secondary schools. I am sure that you will make them feel very welcome.

Have a wonderful weekend everyone and wrap up warm!

Mrs Molloy (Head of 6th Form)
Dr Davies (Assistant Head of 6th Form and Careers Guidance & Development)

13. Chaplain's Update

Care for the Family website and special event for parents

Please see below a link to a supportive website dealing with family issues and family life amongst other things

<https://www.careforthefamily.org.uk/support-for-you/family-life/parent-support/>

A special event is taking place on the 1st of October at King's Centre in Norwich called the "Big Parenting Questions". Please see below for info and a link to the booking website.

We'll explore principles that will equip you to come alongside your child as they try and establish their identity, assert their independence, and find their place in the world.

You'll come away with ...

- *An understanding of the Big Parenting Questions 'Why is everything changing?', 'How can I keep the connection?', 'What can I do to protect them?' and 'Who are they becoming?'*
- *Practical ways to stay connected with your child whilst letting them go*
- *Strategies to keep your child safe, both in the real world and online*
- *Ways to help your child establish their identity and develop independence*
- *Fresh optimism and confidence as well as practical tools and vision for your parenting, your child, and your relationship going forwards*
- *Bonus content to watch at home to help you with even more specific big parenting questions*

Event info

Raising children isn't for the faint-hearted. Just when you think you've got a handle on parenting, your child moves to the next stage of life and many of the tactics you've acquired become less effective, or even obsolete.

As your child gets older, decision-making becomes trickier and there are no clearcut answers to many of their requests. 'Can I have a phone?' 'Can I stay home on my own?' 'Can I have Snapchat?'

You can find yourself in unknown territory, scrambling to find answers and overwhelmed with questions of your own.

How do you know what's best for your child? How can you give them the freedom to grow without letting them wander into chaos?

Big Parenting Questions is a brand-new event for mums, dads, and carers, designed to offer hope and help through this transitional time in a child's life.

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/big-parenting-questions-norwich-tickets-866614024877>

Thought for the Week



Mark

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