

Open Academy Newsletter – 22 November 2024

Dear parents, carers and students, welcome to the newsletter this week.

The arrival of snow flurries pressed the excitement button on Wednesday with many a KS3 student desperate for the snow to stick and the school to close. Alas, for them and thank heavens for me it was just a slushy wet sleet shower which disintegrated quickly. However, it did signal that winter is well and truly here. Obviously if we do have weather issues we will do all we can to keep the academy running. As we have maintained our online learning infrastructure to support homework, home learning and catch-up, I was able to reassure students that even in the event of extreme weather, if we did have to close for a day, then online lessons would be provided so no one will miss out! Fingers crossed it does not come to that.

After the excitement of our amazing presentation evening where we were enthralled to hear about the career of a Norwich City legend Darren Huckerby – expertly interviewed by Mrs Halliday before he presented our Year 11 and Year 13 with their certificates and awards. It has been a little quieter this week so I have been able to turn my attention to a couple of key consultations which we need to share from today onwards.

Please find attached a letter from me launching our annual consultation on our admissions policy. This is an annual activity run by the trust and this year has very little in the way of updates. There are the odd minor change and adaptation as we are now Church of England status, but as promised our policy remains completely committed to being open for our local community irrespective of faith or none. There is the addition of a faith qualification in the over subscription section at the lowest priority, after all previous criteria are exhausted in higher priority, so I am confident it still fits with the spirit of our commitment to keeping our admissions policy open to all. The policy is attached to this newsletter so please do feel free to comment. See the letter for details.

With the sharing of this newsletter, I am also inviting comments regarding our plan to expand our Specialist Resource Base (SRB) for students with mild to moderate autism. We would be interested in your views on our proposal to expand the base from 10 to 20 students.

The SRB has become a real asset to the academy bringing expertise, resources and extra staff into both the base and into the mainstream school lessons. There is a real shortage of places across Norfolk and we are delighted that we are seen as being successful enough to be encouraged to expand. There are a number of benefits to expansion in terms of greater resources, as the SRB model is proportionately well funded, our whole staff expertise grows as we meet the needs of SRB students and the academy is enriched by the diversity of the students we support.

So please do let me know how you feel about this expansion proposal by dropping me an email. From today the official consultation begins, whether you are in support, have questions (I will try to answer general points in future newsletters), or worries.

For now, I better stop there as I have given you enough homework! Please enjoy the weekend as it arrives.

Jon Ford
Principal

1. Upcoming Assessments

Year 10: PPE1

All Subjects

Week Beginning 7th January 2025

Keep revising! Use revision guides and online resources including past paper questions. Ideally 30 minutes per night. Make sure you cover all subjects each week.

Use resources on Teams Classnote to support your revision. Ask your subject teachers for support where it is needed.

Good luck!

Mr Murray (Teacher)

2. Harry Potter Book Club

We'll be starting a new and exciting Harry Potter Book Club for all year groups in January. We're currently trying to collect as many copies of all of the books as we can before then, so that as many students as possible can take part and enjoy the magic!

If you have any unwanted copies of any of the books in the series, then we'd be absolutely thrilled if you would be willing to donate them to us.

Please bring all book donations into the library, or hand them in at the reception desk. Thank you!

Mrs Rogers (Librarian)

3. Year 7



The weather is turning colder as we approach winter. We have had our first flurry of snow and some year 7s have even done a little bit of impromptu ice skating. Even with the weather becoming cooler the year group is still consistently being fantastic. Out of 109 students, less than 10 are getting negative behaviour recorded on a daily basis and less than 5 are regularly making the wrong decisions. This is a year group that is truly being exemplary in their behaviour and attitude to learning on a daily basis.

The Big C of Resilience

Every week in tutor time students will be taking part in an activity promoting resilience. Each week is on one of the 7 Big Cs of resilience (Competence, Confidence, Connection, Character, Contribution, Coping and Control).

Last week's winners for coping was the whole of DESTINY. As a team they excelled with their dedication and enthusiasm, all taking part in a yoga activity in the morning. So, a massive congratulations to every member of Mr Kent's tutor group.

Positive Praise - I ask members of staff to share some positivity they have witnessed from the Year group, below is what they have said:

Boys rugby club started last week. 12 turned up to the first session and 10 crazy boys tried to play rugby out in the snow after school. We called it early when we realised that we couldn't feel our hands, but it was a brave attempt!

Aiden G for showing perseverance in English.

For maths Mia-Marie C for excellent teaching on the board during starter question time. India H for using excellent maths methods to answer questions.

So many positives from 7P in Geography - They all deserve a well done for their recent work on contours and revision - if I could highlight a few also that were answering lots of questions: Jenson, Catelaya, Nylah, Noah, Irmantus, Barbara, Ethan, Jools, Summer and Honey-Mai.

Nemo A for much improved behaviour and attitude in English.

On Wednesday, 7O have been using hand stitching and applique to create their monster designs for their handwarmers. They have showed great listening skills, resilience when needles came unthreaded and teamwork to keep each other's work benches organised. The atmosphere in the room was relaxed, focussed and positive and I look forward to getting on the sewing machines to develop our sewing skills further. Particular shout outs to Troy S, Harley M, Roman, Bea and Natasha for excellent answers to skills-based questions during the demo.

Well done to Leon, Noah, Viktor, Mason C, Jayden and Ollie F for representing Open Academy in the Year 7 smash-up tournament on Tuesday evening.

7P have worked incredibly hard this week, focussing on the detail of their key hooks. We have been using ply to cut the 3D relief with the fretsaws. Then we have used the files to quality control our cutting and make an accurate and smooth outcome.

Reminders

A big part of Open is supporting those in the community. Each year the school asks for students to donate what they can. These things are then put into hampers and distributed to those in need in the community. Your son/daughter's tutor will say more but please, if possible, start thinking about what could be donated.

As it gets colder please ensure your son/daughter is coming to school in warm clothing. Remember though that they are still required to wear their school blazer over their school jumper. Also, once in the building we do ask that they remove their coats as it is warm enough in the academy. If it was ever colder in the building staff will allow students to wear their coats. Finally, if they choose to wear leggings they still need to wear a skirt over the top. If students don't follow these reasonable requests they will receive a detention.

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 and Mr Dilley (Co-Heads of Year 7)
Mrs Smith (Assistant Head of Year 7)

4. Year 8

Well, I can now say that winter is here (GOT reference). As this week has seen a big drop in temperature, can we remind students that the roads and paths are going to slippery and dangerous around this time of year. In assembly this week I spoke about resilience and about a man called Kevin Webber who is the definition of resilient, I linked it to our students in the academy on how there are many things that can be difficult at times and there is a lot of pressure in school, but we must always show tenaciousness and give all we can to be as successful as possible.

Christmas door decoration is starting in tutors, so if you have any old decorations please give to your child to use for their tutors.

Congratulations to Destiny THU for winning the tutor with the best attendance and OLC Mrs Hindry for winning the tutor challenge.

Issy W for engagement in English lessons – Mrs Clayton

Michael S for using excellent math methods to answer questions – Mrs Marsham

Ellie-M and Mackenzie M for excellent effort in maths – Mrs Marsham

Well done to Issac, Joel, Ayo, Daniel and Harrison for working in a committed and collaborative way when starting to create their Pantomime. Also, to Theo for telling such a good joke he made Lili cry – with laughter! - Mrs Ormosi

Whole of 8P have been working well.

Phoebe, Ezio, Elias, Elise, Michael, Tegan, Bianca, Finley, Sophia, Leela, Johnson and Lacy-Mae for working hard – Mr Mundy

Vlad M for much improved behaviour and serious attitude in English – Mr Edwards

Charlie and Finley for always willing to share ideas in science. Alessia and Bianca for being an awesome twosome in science lessons – Mrs Molloy

Mr Lambert (Head of Year 8)
Mrs Roe (Assistant Head of Year 8)

5. Year 9

Another good week regarding attendance with Year 9. We are still around 91% for this week, which is good but please continue to send in your child even if they are feeling a little under the weather, we will support them. Thank you for your support with this as it really makes a difference in your child's education.

Thank you to the vast majority for getting it right regarding uniform. It is part of the school policy and the details are on the website if unsure. Long sleeve t-shirts can be worn under a shirt, but only if white.

The girls Year 9 netball team are through to the national finals next weekend at UEA. This is tremendous and is a first for the school.

Top achievement points this week are: Jacob C, Jake C, Talula E, Jake S and Freya S.

Lots of individual praise has come to me this week which is fantastic:

Many Year 9 students are showing real perseverance and have been making incredible progress in their performance skills by performing a duet for their assessment. Particular mention should go to Peter, Kaydee, Lucy, Ava, Shiloh, Jake, Ewan, Destiny and Kelsie-Rose. Well done all – Mrs Morgan-Hart

Whole of 9P for work on flooding especially Ewan C. Callum E, Skye H and Jake S.

9E working well especially Lily A and Lincoln. 9O working well especially Isabella - Mr Mundy

Caitlyn Newell for explaining maths methods during the stater questions. Batoul Sadek for excellent effort in maths – Mrs Marsham

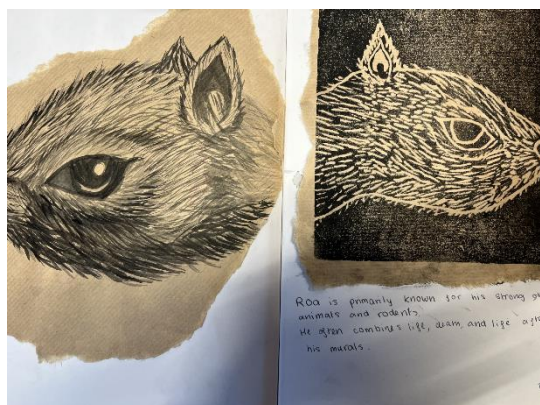
Excellent work from Keegan, Taylor N, Sammy and Cameron in drama this week, when exploring the work of Théâtre de Complicité. Well done boys – Mrs Ormosi

Noah, Maisey, Ethan, Tom W, Chakib, Ben and Issy for outstanding efforts in English and some wonderful modelling of fluent reading in class - Mrs Clayton

Leo C for honesty, maturity and sensitivity in English and greatly improved behaviour and attitude to learning - Mr Edwards

Shiloh for a really good start in her science lessons at Open and Jake Smith for completing all this week's extension tasks - Mr Stephen

Outstanding work on their lino prints this week from all in 9E and 9H especially Isabella, Elizabeth H, Lily AP, Jennifer B, Noah C and Connor P (see Jennifer's images below) - Mr Walters



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

6. Year 10

Students of the week:
Alex C, Riley B, AJ B and Leah S.

Top achievement point in the last 2 weeks:
Martine V, Martha W, Ryan B, Rodrigo F and Ross B.

Please can we ask parents for their support with non-uniform tops in the cold weather. Students can wear something underneath their shirt, a school jumper and a blazer in the cold. Hoodies are not school uniform.

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

7. 6th Form

Year 12 PPE

The Year 12 PPE exams will begin the week of 7 January. You will get an exam timetable before this date before the Christmas holidays). Please make sure that you speak to your teachers so that you are aware of what papers you will be sitting, and what content you need to revise.

Year 13 UCAS

Please continue to complete your UCAS applications. The deadline for all complete applications is coming up in the next 3 weeks. Please speak to myself, your tutor, or Dr Davies if you need any help with anything.

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

8. Chaplain's Update

Care for the Family Website

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 Celebration of Christmas

This will be a great night of festive cheer for the whole of our community. There will of course be carols, student performances, snacks, and a wonderful Christmassy atmosphere. We would love everyone in our Open Academy community to come and to invite friends and family too.

The date is Thursday 5th December at 6.30pm and it's a free event. We look forward to seeing you there.



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

This Week's Reflection

As we approach another change in season, I just wanted to share something to encourage our community. Our seasons change naturally and so do seasons of life. We seem to always be looking for the next season. Whatever season we're in, we sometimes complain about it. We complain about the heat of summer, the cold of winter, the rain in spring and the shorter days of autumn.

We're always trying to quickly move out of the season we are in. However, it is the different seasons that create the lifecycle of growth and production. Without winter the ground could not rest. Without spring seeds would not sprout. Without summer, plants would not grow. Without autumn we would not see a harvest. Our lives experience these same cycles and seasons. Just like the regular seasons, we need to be encouraged that whatever season of life we are in, all is working together for good.

In closing, we may be going through a difficult time at this moment in time, but the word season means "that time must come to an end". Hold on, spring and summer will replace your winter. You are all in my thoughts and prayers for autumn, winter, spring, and summer.

God bless.

Mark