

Open Academy Newsletter – 6 December 2024

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

It was great to read last week's newsletter from Miss Wenlock my co-principal – not least because it is great to have someone else share the responsibility of keeping you informed about the many activities, events and happenings across the academy.

Speaking of which, my main subject this week is to reflect on last night's wonderful Christmas celebration event in the academy. Every year, our fantastic chaplain, Mr Pimlott, gets us into the festive spirit with our Celebration of Christmas evening of carols, performances, readings, poems and a whole lot of festive cheer!

Every year people say it was the best ever and once again that refrain was in everyone hearts. Everyone who came joined in, stood and sang carols together. We reflected together and we celebrated the talents of our amazing students. There were piano recitals, a violin duet, readers, a Christmas sketch - all conducted by the fabulous Mrs Morgan-Hart.

Over the last couple of years. Mrs Morgan-Hart has ignited a passion in music for so many of our students that we now have such a vibrant confident and sweet-sounding choir and so many talented soloists ready to perform. I understand that it is time for her to move on to explore new avenues in her life. I can say the glorious ovation she received from the audience last night was well deserved for a career of inspiring students to enjoy their music. Whilst we have only been privileged to work with her for the last couple of years, the impact she has had will leave a musical legacy that is a testament to this fantastic teacher!

So, with a Christmas spirit firmly renewed, I better focus on the next couple of weeks and what is to come. Thursday 12 December sees Christmas jumper day as the student leaders have chosen to support the Save The Children campaign. It is NOT a non-uniform day! As teachers will have been explaining to students this week we hope students will 'Christmas up' their school or other jumpers (not hoodies – it's Christmas JUMPER day!) with whatever Christmassy stuff you can't face putting on the tree this year! Yes, if you have a Christmas jumper kicking around they can wear that, but the best ones are invariably the home decorated ones!

We will be allowing the students to have a non-uniform day on the last day of term to raise funds for the student leadership program, so there may be a second outing for that Christmas wear on the last day of term! While I am on that subject, I should also remind you that the academy will close to students at 1pm on Friday, 20 December.

Finally, I will draw your attention to my previous messages about our open consultations on our admissions policy and the expansion of the SRB. There is still time to add your views if you so wish right up until we break for Christmas, so please do get in touch if you have something to say about either of those proposals as explained in previous communications.

As I wish you a great week ahead, I hope you are able to start getting in to the festive spirit and that a little light of the spirit from Open Academy makes it home to you over this festive season

Jon Ford
Principal

1. Library

Midwinter Tales Event



We are delighted to invite you to Midwinter Tales, a magical storytelling event taking place on Monday, 16 December, from 4:30pm to 6:00pm. Join us around a glowing fire for an evening of traditional winter, festive, and ghost stories, read by our talented staff storytellers.

Inspired by the age-old tradition of gathering around the fire during the winter months, this event celebrates the joy of storytelling and community. There will also be a break to toast marshmallows over the fire and sip on some delicious hot chocolate.

Tickets are just £2 per person, available via ParentPay. The event is open to students, staff, and their families and friends. All funds raised will go towards the library and our new Harry Potter Book Club. Spaces are limited, so secure your tickets soon to join us for this cosy evening of tales and togetherness. We can't wait to see you there!

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)

2. PE

An amazing effort from our Year 9 netball team on Saturday at the National Schools Tournament. Placed in a strong pool, the girls fought hard and displayed outstanding netball. The girls worked hard as a team and showed great resilience throughout. **The Year 9 team are the first in Open Academy's history to get to this level!**

A massive congratulations to Angel C, Jennifer, Isabella, Elizabeth K, Elizabeth H, Aaliyah, Kimberly and Tallulah – we are so proud of you. Another thank you and well done to our two Year 8 girls who played up a year and still managed to be outstanding - Bianca and Alessia. The future is bright for netball at Open Academy.

Thank you to all the kind parents who gave up their Saturday to come to support and celebrate the success of the students.

A final massive thank you to Custom Movers for sponsoring our netball dresses.

Miss Trail and Mrs Pearsall (Teachers)

3. Music

A huge well done and thank you to all our amazing students who performed at the Christmas celebration on Thursday night:

Year 12 - Ella R

Year 11 - Katy S and Grace S

Year 10 - Sasha-Mai P, Martina V, Andreas R and Harry B

Year 9 - Charles M, Ellie H, Kara M, Ella S and Peter M

Year 8 - Amalie T, Lily H and Phoebe S

Year 7 - Lexi C, Ann D, Demi-Mai M and Natasha T

You were all absolutely brilliant and I could not be more proud of you all! Thank you for making my last concert such a special one.

Mrs Morgan-Hart (Teacher)

4. Year 7

As we work towards the winter break the year group has lots to look forward to. Firstly, the disco, happening this evening and sure to be a fantastic opportunity for students to have an amazing evening with their friends. Secondly on Thursday 12 December there is Christmas jumper day. This is an opportunity for students to wear a Christmas jumper on top of their uniform, or decorate a plain jumper in a Christmas style. Finally, on the last day of term (Friday, 20 December) it is non-school uniform day. Students can wear their own (appropriate) clothes as long as they have donated £1 via the parent pay app. This is a great way to finish the school term. Any questions about anything please get in contact with your son/daughter's tutor or the year team.

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 were INSPIRATION with Troy S demonstrating the best example of Competence, a fantastic effort, well done.

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

- For maths, Lois H for helping other students and giving out resources in the classroom.
- Troy S for his spirit and keenness in English, undefeatable, like Troy itself.
- Just lots of praise for the Year 7 boys who are attending Rugby club on Wednesdays. Really good session last night, absorbing the knowledge and very positive that we could probably play a fixture next year!
- Anton K for his great effort in Spanish.
- Inspiration have had a large ceremony this week with the 'marriage' of their mascot. Something to really bring the group together.

Reminders:

- A big part of Open is supporting those in the community. Each year the school takes part in a random act of kindness. This is where we give out hampers filled with lots of things donated by the students to people in our community. We ask all, both staff & students, to donate what they can for these random acts of kindness. Your son/daughter's tutor will say more but please, if possible, start thinking about what could be donated.
- Every Wednesday from 3.00pm we have a homework club in a computer room to help those complete any outstanding homework.
- For Christmas jumper day and non-school uniform day you will need to donate £1 via parent pay.

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)

5. Year 8

We are now into December and all have opened our 6th door on our advent calendar (and I hope no more) I have a noodle advent this year. The Christmas buzz is really in full swing around the academy topping it off with the amazing performances at the Christmas carol last night.

A reminder that the Christmas door decoration competition has started in tutors, so if you have any old decorations, please give to your child to use for their tutors.

On Saturday I went to watch Bianca and Alessia play in the under 14's national school competition and it was amazing to see where all their hard work and perseverance in Netball is taking them and I'm sure to see them competing in more in the future.

At home can we just check in with our student with their uniform, seeing if there is anything they might need ready for returning in January, a reminder that tracksuit bottoms are not permitted in the academy and trousers will be given for them to borrow.

The tutor with the best attendance this week was Destiny, and with a clean sweep of the year trophies, the winner of the tutor challenge was also Destiny, congratulations.

Teacher praise

Jessica H, Ameilia T, Sabine for consistently outstanding effort in history and Jessica S, Maxine, Lily-May B for excellent effort in Art at all times.

Mackenzie lead the starter questions and answers from the board at the front of the class. Amazing !

Harrison B continues to impress with his attitude and application in English.

Alex D for Spanish

Mr Lambert (Head of Year 8)

Mrs Roe (Assistant Head of Year 8)

6. Year 9

A brilliant week for year 9, attendance is consistently good, and we are really keen to maintain this as it means better outcomes for the students. Thank you again for the continued support with sending your children in.

As we approach the end of term, I am preparing our end of year assembly where we celebrate those students who have made consistent effort this half term. I have asked all teachers for the names of students who fit this category and Mr Hawkins will print off certificates to give them so please look out for this. Last time we gave out nearly 30 certificates so it will be a great bonus Christmas present for them to bring home.

A fantastic achievement from our netball girls reaching the finals at UEA last Saturday. I was amongst several staff members who went to support, and they did us proud against very tough opposition.

Some uniform reminders:

Blazers must be worn and ties. If there are issues with this or a tie has been lost please contact the year team as a replacement will need to be purchased if it can't be found.

Blank White long sleeve tops are permitted underneath their shirt but not black please.

The following students have had the most achievement points this week. This includes the points they get for attendance also: Destiny O, Ruby P, Kaelan B, Matilde B, Kelsie-Rose B, Jacob C, Elysia C, Jake C and Elizabeth C.

Some individual praise from teachers this week:

Taylor N and Ewan C for excellent effort in Science- Mr Stephen

Chakib for outstanding contribution in German – Mrs McEvoy

Arda for perseverance in Gymnastics this week – Mr Lambert

Ben S, Iris B, Batoul S and Maisey C for excellent effort in their art assessment this week. – Mr Walters

Have a great weekend and merry Christmas!

Mr Walters (Head of Year 9)

Mr Hawkins (Assistant Head of Year 9)

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

7. Upcoming Assessments

Year 10: PPE1 All Subjects Week Beginning 13 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.

English: A Christmas Carol

Maths: All topics covered to date (2 papers - calculator and non-calculator)

Science: Topics C1, C2, B1 and P1 (See Teams Classnote for content breakdown)

Geography: Changing Landscapes, Costal Landscapes, River Landscapes, Part of Weather & Climate

History: Crime & Punishment, 1250 to today

Languages: All content taught to date

Food: Macronutrients, micronutrients, Nutrition requirements for different groups, Health and Safety

DT: Carbon Footprint, Methods of Production, Material Properties, Papers & Boards, Maths based questions, Automated machinery

Textiles: Practical skills assessment

Sport: Coursework Exam - Component 1, Task 1-3

RS: Christian Beliefs, Marriage & the family

Computer Science: Computational Thinking, Binary, Programming

Art: Practical skills assessment

Photography: Editing of photographs

Use resources on Teams Classnote to support your revision. Please see video on how to revise which can be shared with your student.

Ask your subject teachers for support where it is needed. Good luck!

Mr Murray (Teacher)

8. Year 10



Year 10 future forward trip to UEA - students were superb and enjoyed all the activities.

Open Academy came second by only 1 point in the university campus challenge against the other school in the area.

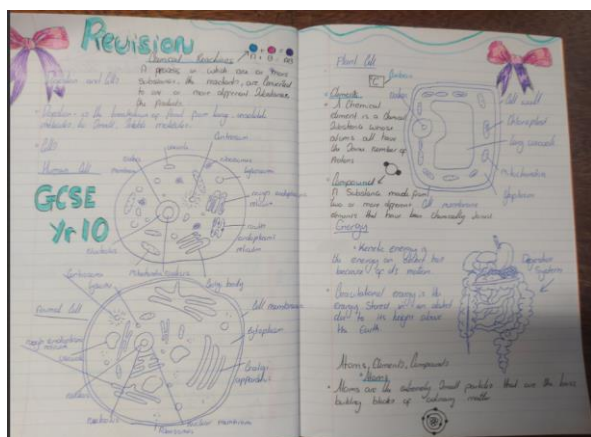
Students of the week for their excellent representation of Open Academy on the UEA trip:

Kate S, Reece Y, Somaya R, Nikita S, Ayo T and Kieran S.

Highest achievement points this week:

Tyler A, Olivier K, Rodrigo F, Samuel HJ, Dylain B and Rianna A.

Year 10 exams will start the second week back after Christmas. Students will be covering revision techniques and revision timetables in form time next week, so it's important students are in school on time to access this support for preparing for their exams.



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

9. Year 11

We want to thank the Y11 for their patience in waiting for their PPE results. We hope to be able to have an assembly next week.

Reminder that the 6th form Taster Day takes place on Tuesday 10 December. Students are not required to wear uniform but are expected to be dressed smartly.

Shout outs

Georgia B and Harley R, well done in science - Mr Stephen

Ivan B for really pushing out his boundaries and expanding his wide and increasingly sophisticated vocabulary in English - Mr Edwards

Amy T for excellent work in German - Mrs McEvoy

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

10. 6th Form

UCAS

Deadline is Friday, 13 December. Please make sure that you are nearing completion. Any problems, please see myself or Dr Davies in the first instance.

Year 12 PPE – week starting 14 January

The Year 12 PPE will start the week of 14 January. Please note, these exams will not be held in the Sports Hall. They will take place in your normal lessons. Please speak to your subject teacher ASAP so that they can tell you when they will be setting these exams.

Football Match: Open vs Hellesdon

Last week the boys played a match against Hellesdon. We unfortunately lost 2-0, but the feedback from the boys was all positive, about the way we played as well as compared to previous results.

The Year 11 boys that joined the team also really enjoyed the experience. Well done boys!



Christmas Jumper Day

Thursday, 12 December is both Christmas lunch day in the canteen and Christmas jumper day. Can this year's 6th formers beat last year's extravaganza?



Mrs Molloy (Head of 6th Form)

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

11. Family Action Autism/ADHD Support Service

Our thoughts in December are about how this time of year can be difficult both at home and at school for children and young people who are neurodivergent. And as usual there is information about upcoming courses for parents/carers.

Please do share with any families who you feel would benefit.

[Family Action's Norfolk & Waveney Autism and ADHD Support Service](#)

Norfolk & Waveney Autism/ADHD Support Service

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

12. Big Norfolk Fun

Bookings for the Big Norfolk Holiday Fun programme are now open!

Students on benefits-related free school meals can access free activity provision during the school holidays.

To find out more about this winter's programme, please visit our website: [Big Norfolk Holiday Fun - Active Norfolk](#).



13. Chaplain's Update

Good news

This week we had over £1000 worth of books presented to Mrs Thoppil and student leaders for our students to use from The Carolyn Murray Literacy Award. Please see below for information regarding this very generous gift for which we are very thankful for.

The Carolyn Murray Literacy Award was set up in 2020 by Graeme Murray, following the passing of his wife, who was a headteacher and former Literacy Co-Ordinator. The award has a threefold purpose:

- *To continue the legacy of Carolyn, who devoted her life to the education and development of young children.*
- *To reflect Carolyn's passion to help children develop their level of literacy.*
- *To spread the message of the Christian faith that was central to Carolyn's life.*

It was Graeme's privilege to be able to present an award of £1,000 of books to Open Academy, where he had been visiting to take morning Christmas assemblies throughout the week. The books will be used to compliment the RE lessons within the Academy, and to supplement the Academy assemblies, too.

Thank you Graeme and your sponsors for this, it is really appreciated



Christmas Hampers 'Random Acts of Kindness'

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



This year we are giving out Christmas hampers as random acts of kindness to our community again. Students are aware of this in school, but we would appreciate your support in this too. Below is an item list of goods that can be donated for the hampers so please feel free to send items into the academy with your child.

Please note, it is very important that we stick to the hamper list. Perishable good vouchers can be given as well as donations. The last day for items/donations will be Tuesday, 17 December. Thank you so much in advance for your generosity.

Christmas Hampers, what to bring 2024

- 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



Thought for the Week



God bless.

Mark