

Open Academy Newsletter – 14 February 2025

Dear Parents, Carers and Students

As we come to the end of this half term, I wanted to take a moment to reflect on the wonderful work we've done as a school community and to highlight some key areas where we continue to strive for excellence.

Promoting a Love of Reading

This half term, we have continued to place a strong emphasis on promoting reading across all year groups. Whether through guided reading sessions, library time, or in-class activities, we are ensuring that every student has access to a range of engaging books. Encouraging reading at home is just as important, and I ask for your continued support in helping students develop a regular reading habit. Remember, students should be bringing in a reading book every day and we will be checking this in form time.

The Increasing Role of Student Leaders

This year, we've seen the growing importance of student leadership roles. Our student leaders have been involved in a range of school initiatives and are taking on more responsibilities within the academy community. It's wonderful to see students stepping up and having a positive impact on academy life.

Welcoming International and UEA Teachers

We are excited to have hosted teachers from international schools and the University of East Anglia (UEA) this term. These visitors have had the opportunity to observe our teaching methods and engage with our staff to share best practices. It's always valuable to learn from different educational settings and to showcase the fantastic work we do here at Open.

On the theme of striving for excellence...

Uniform Reminder

A gentle reminder to parents and carers that all students must wear their blazers and bring a school bag equipped with all the necessary materials for learning. This includes essential items such as a pen and pencil, and most importantly, a reading book. Uniform is an important part of our academy identity, and we appreciate your support in ensuring students adhere to the academy's expectations.

Thank you for your continued support. I wish you all a restful and enjoyable half-term break. We look forward to welcoming students back, ready to tackle the second half of the term with enthusiasm and commitment.

Kate Wenlock
Vice Principal

1. Toilets

Please could I reiterate our position on student's usage of toilets. We are seeing an increasing number of students sharing toilet cubicles with each other and at times using this to truant lessons. As an academy we expect students to use the facilities and leave the toilet and certainly not share cubicles. When this happens, we cannot guarantee their safety or the safety of others. It also reduces the time and opportunities for students who are genuinely in need of the toilet to go. We want to ensure that all students have the chance to use the toilets, however a small number are preventing this.

If students are found in the same cubicle as another student, we will be considering a plan to send that student to a nearby school to sit an External Internal Exclusion (EIE). Students have been informed of this and if these behaviours continue, we will have no option but to follow this approach. This is also an approach used by other local secondary schools which has reduced the issues around multiple occupancy in the toilets and lack of facilities.

Mr Richardson (Assistant Principal)

2. Upcoming Assessments

Year 11: **Mock Series 2** **All Subjects** **Week Beginning 3 March 2025**

English: Romeo & Julliet, A Christmas Carol + language paper 2 (non-fiction)
Maths: All content (2 papers - calculator and non-calculator)
Science: Paper 2 in Biology, Chemistry and Physics (See Teams Classnote for content breakdown)
Geography: Coasts, development, managing resources, urban fieldwork, coastal fieldwork, UK challenges
History: All 4 topics
Languages: All content
Food: All content
DT: All content
Textiles: Practical skills assessment
Sport: All of component 3
RS: 2 paper - Christianity and Islam
Computer Science: Paper 2 content (programming)

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)

3. KS3 Science

With the end of Spring 1 our Year 7/8/9s will now be moving onto new and exciting topics for Spring 2.




















Year 7s will be starting the **Chemical Reactions** topic, discussing and learning about chemicals and classifying them as groups such as acids and alkalis. We will be looking at investigations and practicals in how to detect if a reaction has taken place and ways to measure how quickly they react.

Year 8s have 3 more careers to be looking at! We have **Geologist** which looks at the earth's structure and how rocks are formed as well as the water cycle; **Car mechanics** which looks at how magnets play a vital role in making motors as well as how they interact with each other and materials; **Sports Scientists** which looks at the chemical reaction inside our body's: Aerobic Respiration.







Year 9s are going to be moving away from the career focus as we begin our final recap modules before we prepare them for their first taste of the GCSE curriculum in the summer. This half term we are going to be focusing on **Cells & Bioenergetics, Energy stores & Transfers** and finally **Particle motion**.

Year 11s - sorry for missing the revision calendar last week, please see below the topics for the next few weeks. Remember that the PPE2s will be using the paper 2 topics:

Combined Science:

10th Feb – 16th Feb 2025	 Bioenergetics: respiration	 Energy changes:  exothermic and  endothermic reactions	 Waves: types, properties, and uses	 Complete  timed topic tests; revise  long-answer techniques.
17th Feb – 23rd Feb 2025	 Homeostasis and response: nervous system	 Chemical changes:  reactivity series, acids and bases	 Magnetism and electromagnetism	 Annotate  diagrams for biological processes; practice describing the reactivity series.
24th Feb – 2nd Mar 2025	 Inheritance, variation, and evolution	 Rate of reaction: factors affecting reaction rates	 Particle model: density, internal energy	 Practice explaining inheritance diagrams; solve density-related  problems.

And for my Computer Science GCSE class:

10th Feb – 16th Feb 2025	Wired and wireless networks:  LAN/WAN, protocols	Programming: variables, operators,  sequence	 Research protocols like HTTP and TCP; practice coding with variables and loops.
17th Feb – 23rd Feb 2025	Network security:  Threats, prevention (firewalls, encryption)	Iteration and selection: loops, if-else logic	Solve 3 past-paper questions on cybersecurity; write pseudocode with iterations and conditions.
24th Feb – 2nd Mar 2025	System software:  OS, utility software	Searching and sorting algorithms: bubble, merge, binary	Visualize sorting algorithms with  flowcharts; summarize operating system features.

Mr Wilgress (Teacher)

4. Year 7

Year 7 have now completed the first half of their Year 7 journey with Open Academy. It seems like only yesterday that we first met the group in transition week. With that being said all, the students who have come from many different primary schools have come together into a fantastic cohesive team. It will be interesting to see where the group is by the end of this school year.

The Big C of Resilience

Each tutor group has been challenged with planning and delivering an assembly to the rest of the Year group. These are on different themes linked to the school's values. The first assembly was delivered by Inspiration on the subject of humility. I must say it was a humbling experience to see a group of students produce and deliver an excellent 15 minute 'performance' to the rest of the Year Group. Now we are just waiting for the next 3 groups to deliver their assemblies.

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

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

Sandra M & Mustafa M have both been fantastic in Spanish.

Darcie S has had an exceptional week so far and deserves to be praised for it. She had excellent English, maths, science and history lessons. Her attitude to learning has been exceptional and her behaviour has been brilliant. She has been a joy to teach.

Harley M for great effort and determination in his PE lesson – Mr Lambert.

Isabella C and Sapphira for excellent effort and attitude - Miss Trail and Mrs Pearsall.

The Year 7 rugby team played away at Wymondham High School yesterday. It was their first fixture and they performed very well, scoring the first try, coming from two behind to equalise before losing it in the last couple of minutes. Final score was 35-25, try scorers were Anton x3, Troy and Nemo, with player of the match was Charlie B - Mr Wilkinson

Some great sketching of facial features from Orlagh, India, Troy and Isabella – Mr Walters



Reminders

If your son/daughter is not in full correct uniform (blazer, shirt, tie, trousers, skirt, shorts, black shoes) they will be given a 30-minute detention to complete at the end of the day. If there is a genuine reason for any problems with this in the morning please send a note in with your child to hand in to the Year Office.

Chewing gum is not allowed in school. If a student is caught chewing gum they will receive a detention.

Every Wednesday from 3pm we have a homework club in a computer room to help students complete any outstanding homework.

Some students are starting to be excessively late to a lesson or not arrive at all. If this is the case the student will receive a Truancy code on Arbor. If a student receives 2 truancies in 1 day they will be in IE the following day.

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 7)

Mrs Smith (Assistant Head of Year 7)

5. Year 8

I can't believe half term is already over, it is officially the halfway mark of the academic year, before we know it they will be in Year 9 picking their options. This half term I have really been focusing on screen time and the use of social media. I gave the students a task this week to have an average screen time of less than 3 hours, those that have done so were given a reward of playing dodgeball during tutor today. Next half term I will up the challenge to only 2 hours average. It is great to speak to so many Year 8s that have told me they have deleted TikTok and Snapchat and really given it the best to reduce their screen time.

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

Congratulations for Destiny winning the tutor for the best attendance and Challenge for the tutor quiz. Half term is a great time to check in with your child to make sure they have full and correct uniform, please purchase anything needed over the half term, this includes the correct equipment like pens, pencils ruler etc.

It is amazing to see so much teacher praise this week:

Below are some pictures of those that were able to play Dodgeball during tutor for their reduced screen time, Alex D, Riley H, Leo L, Ellie-Amanda, Alfie W, Evie A, Kaylen A, Dymtro B, Jak C, Ashanti G, Ben S, Amalie T, Ayo T, Johnson B, Stefan C, Finley L, Bianca M, Brogan M, Alessia P, Michael S, Charlie S, Hattie A, Emily B, Harvey B, Jack E, Mathew O-R, James O and Dermarco W.



The majority of 8P were very focused on red folder task in Spanish.

Ashanti and Demarco for their work with student leadership this week - great event planning – Mr Dilley

Sabine and Jess H for excellent performances, attitude and effort - Miss Trail and Mrs Pearsall

Isaac H was great in DT yesterday. I'll put some achievement points on for him. I feel we've really found something he enjoys in the workshop!

Well done to all of Year 8 who have completed this terms progress review in drama. The scenes created have been genuinely engaging and they have all shown brilliant collaboration and commitment. Special mention to Amalie T for her great characterisation, Ben S, Riley L, Ezio S and Elias S for brilliant progress since their last reviews.

8E and 8O are doing brilliantly with their studies of insects in oil pastel. Too many to mention but really high-level work is being produced.

Jack S-H and Alfie H for being kind-hearted little gentleman, ultra caring for others and working hard and effectively always in English.

8P have been a dream today. We have been using the fretsaws, pillar drill and hand files to complete the first 3 pieces of their sweet dispensers. They have engaged all lesson, problem solving and making sure of accurate measurements.

Shout outs to Finley and Charlie S who used the pillar drill independently and learnt how to use the hole saws.



Some amazing art work completed this week by, Maxine, Jess S , Evie A , Jack E , Phoebe , Emily B amongst others.



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

6. Year 9

So we finally made it and I am looking forward to longer days and a bit more sun when we return. Thank you for all your support this term so far, particularly when it comes to encouraging your child to come into school every day even if a little under the weather. Please continue to do this as, rest assured, we can support them when here. Attendance has recovered a bit after a dip in January so this is great to see.

Good attendance really is the key to everything and all the data shows that students with consistent attendance are making the most progress. We are still above national average for Year 9 which is a fantastic achievement.

Please, please continue to support us with this.

We have also been pushing the mobile phone policy in school these last few weeks and we have issued several bans for those who are regularly using their phone in school. Thank you for supporting this. Phones need to be in bags and out of sight when in school. Our approach is that they are an unnecessary distraction to learning. If a student needs to send an urgent message home they can speak to myself or Mr Hawkins and we can facilitate this.

We held our third awards assembly yesterday and were able to give out approx. 45 certificates for outstanding effort across year 9 lessons. We will hold 3 more assemblies before the end of Year 9 and we have set ourselves the target of awarding every student in Year 9 at least one certificate.

We start the options process more officially after half term with options evening on Tuesday, 11 March so can I please encourage you to attend with your child. This is a vital choice they are going to make and will significantly affect the final 2 years of their education.

This website may help:

[GCSE options 2025: What GCSE options are there? - BBC Bitesize](#)

Teacher Praise

Amazing figurative artwork from Hanna K, Noah C and Iris B. I have attached pictures below. All three have showed consistent effort all this term so far – Mr Walters



Lizze K and Batoul for excellent performances, attitude and effort in the interhouse competitions this week - Miss Trail and Mrs Pearsall

Shout outs for Ben S, Sam G, Charles M, Maisey C, Issy D, Chakib L, Munashe Z and Misha P for their excellent work on reading to the class this week. They took a part each in our play and really brought the characters to life - Mrs Clayton

Jake S continues to work really well every lesson.

Kara M for fantastic effort in Q+A sessions - Mr Mundy

Ava L, Kim, Lucy, Kaydee, Jasmin and Hannah T had a great lesson yesterday – Mrs Blackburn

Mr Walters (Head of Year 9)

Mr Hawkins (Assistant Head of Year 9)

7. Year 10

Students with highest achievement points this half term:

Dylain, Rusne, Alfie S, Ayo, Riley W, Sasha-Mai, Tyler A, Jayce, AJ and Olivier.

Students with the highest achievement points this week:

Sasha-Mai, Zak, Luke S, Natacha, Alfie E, Reece Y and Kaitlin W.

Students of the week:

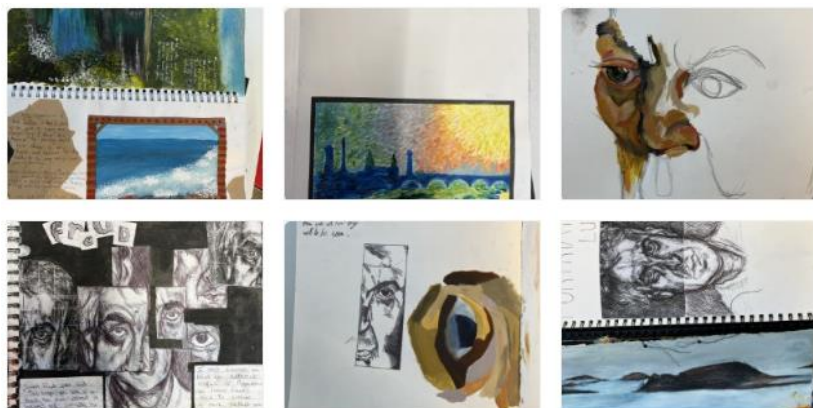
Lily A, Eliza S, Zena A, Reece Y and Samuel H.

Work experience

Thank you to all parents who have been supporting with trying to get their child placements, a lot of you spoke to Mrs Power at parents' evening regarding options. If students can chase any emails they haven't heard back from and make some phone calls to follow placements up over half term this will hopefully push some businesses to give them an answer. The difficulty we have is we are not the only school on work experience in the area that week so finding placements as quick as possible is more successful.

If students that do not have a placements can go into businesses over half term and ask if they take work experience students, during their opening hours this may open a few placements for them. If they have a placements please can ask them if they have returned their green form.

A selection of art work from this last half term from Year 10. Some names are Annalee, Martha, Lena, Esme, Martina and Paige W – Mr Walters



Mrs Power (Head of Year 10)
Mrs Edwards and Mrs Hindry (Assistant Heads of Year 10)

8. Year 11

Congratulations Year 11 for a super week, as we reach half term! With only **80 days** left until the first exam during the week beginning 5 May, it is vital that we keep an open dialogue between student, teacher and home. I encourage you all to come and speak to me or Mrs. Lamb if you have any questions, need support/have concerns, or want to celebrate any mini victories you have.

We are seeing some improvement in attendance, and as a year group you have achieved 13490 (up 15) reward points this week - real tribute to how the year group has taken on the challenge of this vital year of education - you should be proud of your achievements so far. We are very proud of you. This half term is a golden opportunity to rest and recuperate and prepare for your PPE2s in two weeks – a golden opportunity to show the progress you're making in preparation for the actual exams.

Key Stats

Tutor Competition

Well done Mr Stephens form – you win this week's tutor competition.

11 ABR – 82.4%
11 ERO – 84.1%
11KMU – 85.1%
11 NST – 91% - WINNERS!!!

Being in school and learning is so important for your present and future success – if your attendance drops below 89% you risk doing serious harm to your education and prospects – being in school and in lessons is crucial for your future success! Do you know what your current attendance is? If not, ask and if it is low work with us to help improve it.

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 **a brilliant 13490**. This is fantastic and represents how well you are doing and is a great show of positive learning.

Top Ten Performers

These students have banked the most reward points this term:

Tom, Roxanne, Keira, Luke, Tyler, Josh, Maizi, Lily, Lucy and Oskar.

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

Praise

Chloe, Jahsiah and Asha in hub tonight - they worked really well - Mr Kent

Jessie T for improved attendance and effort in English.

Lucy, Theo and Charlie for effort in English – Ms Roberts

Thomas, Chelsea and Lucy B for hard work in science - Mr Stephen

Praise for Kiera B, Brandon P and Ayo T for all their hard work in English - Mrs Clayton

All of 11ABR are revising well during tutor times, some have brought in paper resources from their subjects to work through - Mr Mundy

Lily G and Honey R had a great lesson last week making lots of neat and detailed notes - Mr Mundy

Alex P has continued to work hard all year. Marnie has been trying really hard in lessons - Mr Mundy

Great effort in art from Rebecca S, Amy T, Maizi, Daisy, Ella Rose, Lily Anna, Georgia B and Jessie T - Mr Walters

Important Notices/Reminder

- **Lates** – all minutes you miss of lessons will be added up and then made up on a Friday. Again, being in class from the start of each and every lesson is so very important for you achieving your full potential in May/June - so expect us to be hard on this.
- **Truancies** (2 in a week = truancy IE **until 4pm**). Again, missing lessons is NOT an option – 2 truancies in one week will lead to a truancy IE. Please remember if you are struggling then you **MUST** come to the Year Office! We can help.
- **Uniform** – Being smart and presentable is an important part of being ready to learn. Please make sure you come to school in the correct uniform – please check the website if you need guidance of what is required.
- **Hub Card** – Students have made an awesome start with the Hub Card scheme. Once it is signed by all relevant Hub Teachers in the week, students need to get it signed by parents/guardians and then someone from the year office – it can then be entered into the prize draw.
- Raising money for Prom – the more we raise the cheaper the tickets will be. Today we raised over £170 for the Prom – a bake sale at Open record.

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 Dilley (Head of Year 11)

Mrs Lamb (Assistant Head of Year 11)

9. 6th Form

Hopefully Year 13 students applying to university have started to get offers through by now and you're starting to feel like there's light at the end of the tunnel! If you haven't received any offers, or aren't sure what you want to do next, don't panic, they will all start trickling in very soon.

Year 13 PPE

Please see the exam timetable below:

PPE2 Year 13 - Week 1 - w/c 3rd March 2025						
WEEK B	PERIOD	Mon 3rd March	Tues 4th March	Wed 5th March	Thurs 6th March	Fri 7th March
9.05-10.05	1	Chemistry Paper 1 2 hrs (4) History Britain 1hr 30 m (6)	Psychology Paper 1 2hrs (8) Physics Paper 1 2hrs (2)	Biology Paper 1 2 hrs (5) Sociology 2 hrs (4)	Psychology Paper 2 2hrs (8) Maths 2 hrs (4)	Biology Paper 2 2 hrs (5)
10.05-11.10	2		Art All Day			
11.10-11.30	Break					
11.30-12.30	3					
12.30-1.30	4					
1.30-2.00	Lunch					
2.00-3.00	5					
		Spotts Hall	Spotts Hall	Spotts Hall		

PPE2 Year 13 - Week 2 - w/c 10 March 2025						
WEEK A	PERIOD	Mon 10th March	Tues 11th March	Wed 12th March	Thurs 13th March	Fri 14th March
9.05-10.05	1	Maths 2 hrs (4) Psychology Paper 3 1hr (8)	History 1 hr 30 min (6) Chemistry Paper 2 2 hrs (4)	Biology Paper 3 2 hrs (5) Sociology 2 hrs (4)	History Tudor Rebellion 2 hrs 30m (6) Physics Paper 2 2 hrs (2)	Photography All Day
10.05-11.10	2					
11.10-11.30	Break					
11.30-12.30	3					
12.30-1.30	4					
1.30-2.00	Lunch					
2.00-3.00	5					
		Spotts Hall	Dance Studio	Spotts Hall		

Mrs Molloy (Head of 6th Form)

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

10. Chaplain's Thought for the Week

Just want to share a verse from the Bible to encourage. It says this. "Two people are better off than one, for they can help each other succeed. If one person falls, the other can reach out and help. But someone who falls alone is in real trouble".

There is a two-fold challenge to us all in that we need good people around us. Firstly, two are better than one and there is nothing better than having someone come along into our sometimes-gloomy circumstances and give us a word of encouragement or just to be there for us. I want to encourage you to

reflect on “who is that person or who are those people” that we can depend upon. If no one is coming to mind, it is time to start choosing, we all need that someone

Secondly, a challenge to us all. There is a massive issue with loneliness in our world today. As a community, we all are needed to make two better than one and I want to encourage us all to seek out the people who are “just one” and be there for them. Two are better than one.

Many times, it can be obvious who to give encouragement to, but other times when not so noticeable I want to encourage you to listen to your heart and spirit and be led to whoever needs your encouragement.

You are all in my thoughts and prayers

God bless. Mark