

Welcome to our Open Academy weekly update for parents and students

Friday 15th May

I hope you did not mind us communicating mid-week this week, however given the Government announcement, we felt it important to share the trust view immediately. I am adding it here as a reminder to start us off this week

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1. Message from the trust

Dear Parent/carer,

Like you, we have only just heard the Prime Minister's announcement that schools might start to re-open on June 1st at the earliest. He said that this would be for pupils in Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 who might be able to return in stages.

Our secondary schools will also be preparing to begin some face to face contact with Year 10 and 12 pupils who have key exams next year, in support of their continued remote, home learning.

We are waiting to receive further guidance from government about what this means for us. We will then provide you with information in the coming days and weeks as our plans to re-open develop and are finalised. In the short term, nothing has changed to alter the current arrangements we have in place to care for the children of key workers and other vulnerable pupils.

2. Return to school considerations

So, as you can see, we have no firm plans as yet to re-open as there is still much to question, explore and plan before that. The Government were however clear that they are encouraging us to continue with remote, home learning and we are looking at how we might start to reconnect year 10 and 12 in school from perhaps mid to late June at the earliest – although I must stress at this time we still have many questions about how we will ensure all are safe before we go ahead.

3. Thank you for your feedback

We also re-sent out the link to our parent survey and I really appreciate the feedback that you have given – we have had well over 50 responses to the survey now. The feedback is generally very positive with the averaged rating from parents being 8.4 out of 10 we are clearly getting things right for some – however we do note that our provision has been variable with some students not experiencing the best of what we are doing at all and I am grateful for the feedback from parents who's children have not had a good experience so far. Please rest assured we will continue to work hard to improve our offer to ensure all enjoy a positive experience

4.Raising our Virtual Ambition

We are sharing the feedback you have given us with our faculty and year team leaders and, as we approach the end of our first half term of the Open Virtual Academy, we will be drawing upon your experiences together with our learning and aiming to start the next half term with a much clearer, streamlined and more ambitious approach to our distance learning. Given that it looks like school will not be back to normal for some time yet, it is vitally important that we step up our collective efforts, where required, on the home learning agenda. I will clarify further what this will mean in practice as the half term ends and as we return after a well-earned half term break.

5. Open Academy Keyworker Childcare information

***NB If you are a key worker and wish to send your child in to the Academy, please phone the following number and arrange it with Mr Wilkinson...
07799 715432 during the hours of 9.00 - 3.00
so we can ensure we have the correct number of staff available***

6. Amazon Offer information

We have had the following information passed on to us from Amazon – the offer seems to include everything including Harry Potter even!

- Amazon has cancelled the subscription of books and audio stories for children and students of all ages, children everywhere can instantly stream an incredible collection of stories, including titles across six different languages, that will help them continue dreaming, learning, and just being children.
- All stories are free to stream on your desktop, laptop, phone or tablet using the following link <https://stories.audible.com/start-listen>.
- Please share with your friends who may have young children at home and may need constructive entertaining.

7. Library Update

We have a regular group of pupils taking part in our Manga and Book Club each week. These are informal chats and a chance to socialise with your peers. We talk about what we've been reading, share recommendations and play some book related games. All students are able to join and we welcome any new members. For more information, or to be added to either teams group please contact Miss Ling. Club meetings take place at the following times:

Manga Club: Mondays at 3pm
Book Club: Tuesday at 12:30pm

We would also like to remind you about our Accelerated Reader book lists. These provide links to free online books. We have shared these lists in previous updates and they are now also available within students guided reading groups in teams. If you have any questions, or would like any further advice regarding supporting reading at home, please contact our librarian Miss Ling who will be happy to help.

Secret Garden Read-A-Long

Our staff Read-a-Long of The Secret Garden continues. You can listen to the latest chapter, or catch up with previous recordings here: <https://soundcloud.com/user-895185797/sets/the-secret-garden-open-academy>

Not sure what the book is about? Watch a trailer for the upcoming film adaptation here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gHNOXD9Vk>

Harry Potter At Home

Calling all wizards, witches and muggles. A new website has been launched packed with Harry Potter related activities including crafts, quizzes and puzzles. Stars from the Harry Potter movies are also reading The Philosopher's Stone. Explore all this and more here: <https://www.wizardingworld.com/collections/harry-potter-at-home>

You can also explore British Library's: "Harry Potter, A History of Magic" exhibition online. Find out how to 'Study Like A Wizard,' 'Care for Magical Creatures' and find out more about how J K Rowling created the wizard world: <https://artsandculture.google.com/C/project/harry-potter-a-history-of-magic>

8. Careers Information

Well done to all those students who have been using Unifrog to research their next steps. This is available to all KS4 and KS5 students, so please do sign up and create an account. If you have forgotten how to access the resource, just google Unifrog, sign in with your Open Academy email and click 'forgotten password'. This will then generate an email which you can use to log in'. As well as the wealth of information available to you on the system, Ms Davies will be sharing 'Distance Learning' resources which will help you cope with aspects of the current lockdown.

Also, here is the schedule for 'Speakers for Schools' for next week -

<https://www.speakersforschools.org/inspiration/vtalks/upcoming-vtalks/>

The Barclays Life Skills program comes well recommended and sign up is free – they have recently adapted their resources for life in lockdown so why not register for free as a student and see what is available at

<https://barclayslifeskills.com/>

9. Food Tech Gallery

From VE day commemorative cup cakes to Indochinese Hakka Noodles and from Cinnamon Swirls to Salty Focaccia via a range of Pizza's scones and other delicious meals and treats, please do see the latest Food Tech Gallery to amaze and inspire attached to this update. Please do keep sending pictures of your culinary efforts in to Miss Luter for this fortnightly gallery

10 Year 7 Update

Hello from the Year 7 Team!

As we slowly adjust to this new way of learning, we're really pleased to see the uptake from our Year 7 students in completing their work to very high standards. This week, I was thrilled to send home at least 10 postcards to students who had been nominated for excellent work this week. However, I also have to mention the following students for exceptional work this week:

Liliana Read & Ellie Rowley for beautifully transcribed fanfares
Chloe Blackwell for a fantastic Planet Postcard in Science
Ella Ramm for superb work in languages
Harvey Walters for his contributions to the tutor project

A reminder that contributions to tutor group projects are still happening and that if you would like to share an exciting ideas you've been working on, please send them to your tutors, including participation in the Quarantine Games – if you're not sure what that is, check out previous messages from the P.E Department! Furthermore, a message from Mr Dilley that all year 7 students have a Drama Project to complete that involves them recording a short performance at the end of the project. For those who complete the assignment, and give their permission, the aim is to put the recordings into a visual section of the whole school project "book".

I would also like to thank a number of students for engaging in our breaktime sessions at 11am on weekday mornings. These have been taking place on Microsoft Teams and I would like to encourage students to use it as a forum for discussion on pieces of work they've been set and an opportunity to connect with each other if social media hasn't already allowed.

Finally, I'm taking a page out of Mr Lambert's book and setting you a challenge for the week ahead. Your challenge, should you choose to accept it, is to learn how to moonwalk! There are plenty of videos teaching you how to master this cool dance move on the internet and its something to show off as you slide your way to lessons when we return to school.

Wishing you all health and happiness from Miss Lines, Mrs Edwards and Miss Moss

11. Year 8 update

- Our apologies for not including this in last week's newsletter – Ollie King managed 22 'keepy-uppies' in my challenge but missed the deadline! – well done Ollie.
- Lots of great work going on this week and postcards will be sent home. Special mentions to those that took part in the Positive Pathways presentation yesterday – there was lots of conversation and thoughtful questions being asked. Well done to Charlie Palmer, Paige Berry, Lucy Birkett, Misha Ward, Harry Robinson, Sade Woollard and Klaudia Baranowicz.

Congratulations to the following students:

- Harry Robinson for his effort in drama this week. He has really improved and some excellent work has been handed in.
- Jamil Ali for listening to and acting on feedback given on a piece of Science work.
- Bradley Copping for an excellent piece of work on PE relay athletics worksheet.
- Gera Dergacovs for excellent maths work last week (apologies for missing you off last week).

Remember year 8 try and attempt the Juggling challenge I have set for the end of half term, prizes will be given to those that have learnt the skill, if the parents can contact me if your child has learnt the skill.

Also as Mrs Roe rings round homes we wanted to say well done to all those who are demonstrating the core values of the school at home. When you're not busy working hard and persevering with school work there are a lot of life skills being learnt as we spend time at home. We are hearing about students being considerate and demonstrating kindness by making tea for their Mums or looking after younger siblings, cooking being done at home and proud efforts photographed and sent into to Miss Luter. Making workbenches and showing entrepreneur skills (Samih Ozkan) and using this time to think about their futures and aspirations. Please continue to tell us what your child is doing at home. It helps us to get to know your child more and find out what their interests, abilities and strengths are.

Deadline for Inspires Ocean project is Friday but please submit any work done. Positive Pathways continues Wednesdays at 11 a.m. and recording is on Microsoft Teams if other students want to watch presentations.

12. Year 9 update

I hope you are all well and managing to keep on top of your work ok from home. I really enjoyed hearing about who you made cups of tea for last week – thank you for giving it a go – I'm sure it made the person's day!

We are fast approaching the end of this half-term and I am so proud to say that as a year group you have not let a small thing like the school building being closed to stop you from learning! It has definitely been tough so far – I have really struggled working 'remotely', as you all know my IT skills are dreadful, so I've been learning so much recently and I think I might actually be getting better at it too! We've all had IT issues, work issues, collecting paper resources issues, motivation issues, but the over whelming majority of us have attempted work and worked when we can, so that's brilliant!

However, it would appear our remote learning is not going to end just yet, so I want to let you know to keep going the way you are. If you're feeling a bit overwhelmed or finding the work too tricky: that's perfectly normal – speak to me or your teachers and we will help. If you're feeling lonely being away from your friends: come along to one of the virtual tutor sessions or start a conversation in our 'Break Time' space on Teams. If you're suffering from a lack of motivation to do your work: then start the day with some exercise and then attempt some work BEFORE going on the x-box or your phone! I've found starting every day with the PE with Joe Wicks a real help to get me started and motivated. Most importantly, know you are doing very well in very unusual circumstances.

So finally, your challenge for this week! Either a) email/message a friend that you haven't spoken to in a while and tell them how you've been getting on and let them know you miss them OR b) you can email one of your teachers and tell them that you appreciate their hard work at the moment and that you are really missing school (as I know deep down you all are very much)!

Stay safe,
Mrs Clayton

13. Year 10 update

Hello,

Firstly, we hope that you and your families are well. Another week finished and starting off with our Year 10 superstars for this week:

- Samuel Leverett for his artwork depicting Seamus Heaney's poem Storm on the Island. An outstanding effort!
- Ben Ashby, Calli Atkins, Harrison Foster, Oliver Attoe and Matthew Barker for great attitude and super work in Computer Science and IT.
- Edward Lincoln, Jack Morris, Daniel Swatman and Rosario Furia for consistently brilliant hard work and exemplary attitudes to learning Science at home.
- Rosario Furia, Daisy Holman, Jack Morris, Quinlan Orr, Charlie Ramm and Daniel Swatman for a really good attempt at all set work in Digital IT.
- Archie Davison for excellent poetry work annotating an image with quotes.
- Katie Rowland and Alfie Sorrento for excellent work ethic in Health and Social Care.
- Will Birkett and Calli Atkins for awesome efforts and work in Maths.
- Kacper Podsadowski for an excellent work ethic in BTEC Sport.

Congratulations to you all – keep up your fantastic efforts as we continue in these strange and unprecedented times!

As we mentioned last week, there has been a channel set-up on the Year 10 Team called 'break time'. The idea being that this channel can be used as a space for your child/ward to interact with one another as they would during social times at school. Nobody has commented on there so far so please encourage your child/ward to have a look and reach out.

Following the Prime Minister's announcement on Sunday, we would like to confirm that there are no immediate plans to return to the Academy. However, when we do return it is likely that your child/ward will be the first to do so. We will continue to follow government guidelines on this but for the time being, please continue to encourage your child/ward to engage with Open Virtual Academy where, unfortunately, we are starting to see a dip in the number of students returning work.

As always, if you have any questions or queries, you are more than welcome to contact either of us at emma.matthews@open-academy.org.uk or debbie.lamb@open-academy.org.uk.

Finally, wishing you all the very best and thank you again for your support during this time. Stay safe, look after yourselves and your families!

Miss E Matthews (Head of Year 10) and Mrs D Lamb (Assistant Head of Year 10)

14. Year 11 update

We are increasingly aware that Year 11 students are finding motivation difficult and this is understandable.

If your son or daughter is going on to sixth form next year then we advise that they may be more motivated to look at their sixth form courses and start doing some work and preparation towards these.

If your child has applied for an apprenticeship course then we would recommend that they continue learning and complete work set by their teachers in the subjects that would develop

the skills and knowledge required. For example if your child has applied for plumbing then Maths, English and Science would be advantageous.

Any student not gaining a 4 in Maths or English language will be asked to resit these subjects so continuing to complete work now will make it easier for them next year.

In the cases where students have not made plans for September I would ask that your child contact caroline.davies@open-academy.org.uk, or ruth.pearsall@open-academy.org.uk or michele.middleton@open-academy.org.uk as soon as possible. We have an incredible amount of support and resources available to help. We want every student to have a positive next step to look forward to in September, so please get in contact if your child doesn't have anything in place.

15. 6th Form update

This week I sent around a few videos by one of my favourite poets Tom Foolery who enlisted the support of some family members to create this video. Click

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bea4jCAkXsl>

If you haven't had a chance to see it, have a look now – I think it's pretty special.

Massive well done to all of you and how well you have managed your school work during this time. You guys are amazing!

TED TALK FOR THIS WEEK

https://www.ted.com/talks/julian_treasure_how_to_speak_so_that_people_want_to_listen?referrer=playlist-the_most_popular_talks_of_all

How to speak so that people want to listen

Year 12

Thanks to all of the students who logged into UniFrog already. Ms Davies has added some distance learning resources on there this week which will prove very useful for all of you, so please make sure that you have a look.

Please can you all remember to log into SIMS ENGAGEMENT each morning where our teachers will have sent a brief outline of your work for that day. You should then log into MICROSOFT TEAMS where a more detailed description of your work will be. Please try and return all work via TEAMS so that we can keep a log of it.

Year 13

Please make sure that you are ready for your chosen university/ degree apprenticeships, by researching content for Year 1 of your degree. We suggest that you read around the uni topics and listen to podcasts and videos. For Year 13 BTEC students as well as A-Level Art and Photography, you do not need to submit any more work now. We will use the work we have already to inform our centre assessed grade.

It is now time to accept your University place. Most of you will have the option to Firm - your first choice, and Insure - your backup choice in case you do not meet the requirements of your first choice.

UCAS deadline to accept offers is now - 18th June 2020

Note: this is an extended external deadline set by UCAS. Failure to meet this deadline may mean you could lose all your offered university places.

To accept your offers you will need to log into UCAS Track and follow the steps. Please watch the video on the link below for more information before making your final choices.

<https://www.ucas.com/undergraduate/after-you-apply/types-offer/replying-your-ucas-undergraduate-offers>

16. Safeguarding reminder poster

Please find attached a poster from the local authority which we would encourage you to discuss with your family as it contains a simple vital message – During these challenging lock down times student need to...

Encourage friends to tell somebody if they feel unsafe at home

17. Chaplain's reflection

You can view Mark's reflection on YouTube from the link below or read it for yourself below.

<https://youtu.be/V2d4Oze3xN0>

The Light in the Darkness

Just recently we have been celebrating victory in Europe day. I have been reflecting on this time in history by being thankful for the bravery of so many people in the second world war. At a time when the world was in a very dark place, the unconditional sacrifice and sheer determination of the allied forces, brought about our salvation. Salvation means preservation or deliverance from harm, ruin, or loss and it's a very relevant word for the current situation we find ourselves in.

Just like in the 2nd world war, today the world is in a dark place due to corona virus. It seeks to cause harm, ruin and loss to people's lives, our economy and our freedom. People in our communities and all over this world are in despair and fear, losing hope more and more as the days pass.

I want to bring some light to you today in quoting something from the Bible in **Psalm 27:1. It says**

The Lord is my light and my salvation—so why should I be afraid? The Lord is my fortress, protecting me from danger, so why should I tremble? These are words of great hope. The Bible also says that Jesus is the light of the world, He is always with us, chasing the darkness away and delivering us from harm ruin or loss.

In saying this, there will always be a light that shines in the darkness. I want to encourage us all to follow the example of what Jesus is and be that light to each other where ever we are. Let's carry on encouraging, lifting and fighting for each other. All it takes is a little light to push away the darkness and care and encouragement will be our salvation and victory. We will come out of this in beautiful sunshine.

Closing prayer.

Dear Heavenly Father, we thank you that Jesus is the light of the world. We pray that during this time that seems so dark, you would bring brightness into our lives and in the lives of our communities. We pray that you would give us the courage and hope to fight through to victory and to help and encourage the people around us on the way.

This we ask in Jesus name. Amen.

My thoughts are with you all and I pray that the light and presence of God will be very much felt in your lives.
God bless you all. Mark