

Dear Parents and Carers

Welcome to our end of term Newsletter. It's been a very busy first term and staff and students have worked hard. Getting to know the staff, students, governors and visiting colleagues from the trust has been a great pleasure. I have had many chances to talk to students whilst out and about on duty at break, lunch and lesson change and have also visited many lessons to see the work they are doing in class. There have been opportunities for me to meet parents at events and in some individual meetings which I really value, for the feedback I gain as well as the chance to get to know people.



The staff and governors are working together to build on our strengths (pastoral care, student development and behaviour) and to continue to improve student attainment in all years, through careful consideration of what is being taught and how we can ensure that it 'sticks' in students' memories.

I am sure you and your children are all ready for a holiday. Christmas can be a very busy time, but I hope that there are opportunities for you all to rest and be refreshed. Students return on 4th January.

Wishing you a joyful Christmas and a happy new year,

Mrs. Morris



Staffing Update

Mr. Herring, head of Year 10 and teacher of Drama and Music, leaves us at Christmas to concentrate on his acting career. Ms Hailey, who joined us in September as second in Maths, is also moving on. In January, Mr. Bloom will join us as head of year 10 and teacher of Maths and Mr. Napier as teacher of Drama and Music.

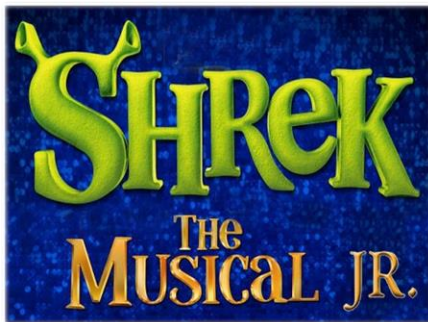
Parents' Evenings and Events

This term we have run two 'Meet the...' evenings for parents/carers and have a third scheduled. The first was 'Meet the new principal' and the second was 'Meet the Vice Principal for Personal Development and Safeguarding.' The parents (and grandparents) that came along were very positive about the sessions and we really enjoyed chatting with you about the developments that are taking place here at OSA and getting your feedback.

Events and Opportunities

It has been a busy term both within and outside the classroom. Below are some of the exciting events and opportunities that our students and staff have been involved in.

- A trip to see Macbeth, at the Royal Shakespeare Theatre in Stratford upon Avon, for selected students in years 10 and 11
- A visiting ex professional footballer spoke to year 9 about the value of having a second language, using examples of career paths linked to international sport.
- Year 11 students were supported in their post 16 planning by a visit to Colchester Institute
- Drama students from years 9-11 went to a production of Metamorphosis by Frantic Assembly
- This year's Royal Shakespeare Company Associate Schools programme has been launched, for which we are still proudly a Lead Associate School.
- Year 10 had an Employability day, hearing from carousel of speakers about the skills they would need in the workplace and learning about progression routes. This was followed by an opportunity to have a formal interview with a local employer.
- Year 11 have had assemblies from post 16 providers throughout this term helping them prepare for the next stages in their education.



- Rehearsals for the Whole Academy Production of 'Shrek the Musical' are underway after an incredibly competitive audition process which saw 282 students auditioning for just 130 places in the cast! Tickets go on sale in January so look out for them to ensure that you get yours before they sell out.
- We welcomed 300 members of the community into the academy for our annual Christmas concert which saw students from years 7 – 11 showcasing their outstanding talents and progress in Dance, Drama and Music.

- The auditions for Ormiston's Got Talent have been happening over the last week, with the local final taking place in January and winners going forward to the OAT Regional and National finals!
- Our Arts Council has been appointed via application and interview process. As always this was extremely competitive and it's great to have a council represented by students from all year groups.

Sporting successes

- The PE department's ongoing commitment to promoting student engagement and extra-curricular sport was recognised in the nomination for an Active Suffolk Award: Most Active secondary school. Representatives from the department collected the Runner-Up Award in a ceremony held at Trinity Park, Ipswich.
- Sports Captains have been appointed via application and interviews. It was good to see so many students keen to take on this role.
- 15 Sports Clubs and Activities are being delivered at lunchtime and after the academy day with a diverse range of students attending the sessions. Football club remains the highest attended club with 40-60 frequently attending. This along with the indoor football and basketball sessions at lunchtime and after school trampolining are consistently popular.



Sporting Fixtures

- U14 Girls Badminton Team won their regional Badminton Competition and will play at Suffolk Finals in Spring Term. Boys Team finished 3rd.
- Year 9 Boys football team won all games played and remain in County and West Suffolk Cups. They also beat St Joseph (Private school) 2-0 away with an excellent all round team performance.
- Year 11 Boys football put in excellent performances vs County High and Mildenhall to win and draw games on same evening.
- Year 10 Girls football team have won most of their games and remain in both Cup competitions.
- Year 9 Netball team have won all their games so far and Year 8 have won most of their games too.
- Two of our boys finished in top 40 athletes at regional cross-country event with a field of 200 competitors.



Notices

· Advance notice: From September 2024, all students will be required to wear proper school shoes and trainers will be not allowed. No externally branded footwear will be allowed, even if they are all black. This means that students will no longer be able to wear the Nike trainers. I know that most parents will not be thinking about buying new school shoes in the summer but thought it best to warn people now, to ensure families don't buy expensive shoes in the new year that their child won't be allowed to wear for long. This has been decided after a large amount of feedback from parents and students.

Traditional school shoes typically cost £30-£45, significantly less than many branded trainers.

· Now is also a good time to remind parents that our uniform regulations state that acrylic nails and false eyelashes are specifically banned. Students may wish to have these embellishments for the holidays, but they must be removed before they return to school.

ATTENDANCE:

A crucial foundation stone of GCSE exam success is excellent attendance. Many students with 100% attendance were rewarded with 'skip the queue' passes at the end of term. Whilst our school attendance is above the national average, that national figure is low. Students with less than 95% attendance are likely to have gaps in their learning and understanding that will impact on their future success. Thank you for supporting good attendance and punctuality – key skills not just for school, but also for the world of work.

