



Bulletin

Issue 29 2 - 16 February 2011

PRINCIPAL'S UPDATE

This edition of the Bulletin draws together areas of progress and details the work already underway at the Academy.

We want to assure you that your child's progress is secure as the Academy builds on sound and effective systems.

Our vision is clear, our leadership is resolute, our systems are rigorous and the curriculum is more closely matched to student's needs.

The structure of the new building is now fully visible. We see this as a symbol of our growing strength and development.

Please drop in next week, as per the dates and times listed to the right for more information.

We look forward to seeing you then.

PRINCIPAL

Moving Forward...

We would like to share our progress with Parents and Carers.

Drop in and talk to us during one of our Information Evenings on:

- **Monday 7th February:**
6.30-7.15 for Year 7
- **Tuesday 8th February:**
6.30-7.15 for Year 8
- **Wednesday 9th February:**
5.30-6.15 for Year 9 & 10
7.30-8.15 for Year 9 & 10

There will be a brief presentation by Principal John Toland and Academy Council Chairman Billy Kennedy, followed by an opportunity to discuss the Academy's on-going progress and the detail behind what Ofsted said in their report.

Venue: Drama Studio - KS3 Grove Site



Pictured above: Current progress of building work at Oasis Academy Mayfield

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GCSE EARLY ENTRY AND MOCK EXAMS RESULTS

At the start of the year, the Academy held a very special assembly to announce the results of the Year 11 mock exams, the early entry results of exams taken in Maths and English in November. It was a celebration of the huge progress and achievement made by many students in their GCSEs since the start of Year 10.

We began the assembly by sharing some of the headline figures relating to their current attainment. The table below shows the percentage of students who had gained one or more GCSE grades at C or above. These included Maths, English, Statistics, Languages, ICT, NCFE Level 2 Nutrition & Health and ASDAN wider key skills.

No of C+ GCSEs	%
1 GCSE	85%
2 GCSE	47%
3 GCSE	17%
4 GCSE	3%

Students in each category were then called to the front and presented with a badge that represented the number of GCSEs they had passed. Those with one GCSE were given a bronze badge, two GCSEs a silver badge and those with three and four GCSEs were given gold badges.

This really gave the students a sense of pride and achievement and more importantly, it gave them the belief that they could now go on to achieve even more in their Summer exams with hard work, commitment and determination.

We also recognised the students who had done exceptionally well in the November Maths and English exams by exceeding their target grades. There were eleven students in Maths and six students in English.

Then it was the moment they had all nervously been waiting for; the envelopes with their results! Form Tutors handed out the envelopes and all students had to wait until everyone had received theirs. They were then given permission to open them. Immediately there were screams of joy, mixed with some looks of disappointment. The objective of replicating what it would feel like for students to collect their exam results in August had worked. Staff were immediately on hand to speak to students if they had any questions or queries about their results.

We now hope that the momentum generated by this assembly will give students the desire and determination to achieve as much as they can. So come Results Day on 25th August, there will be even more screams and shouts of joy.

Our overall picture for Year 11 intervention now looks very promising.

- From the mock exams and early entry Maths and English results we have created target groups for specific mentoring and support.
- The groups vary; there are students who need to secure 5 A*-C with Maths and English and those who need to secure 5 A*-C grades in other subjects.
- Students are really benefiting from this detailed level of support to ensure they make the necessary progress to achieve their target grades.

We are very confident that we will significantly improve on last year's results.



Pictured above: Mr Knight congratulates Nathan Goodger followed by Jordan Hillman

Pictured right: Year 11 during the Results Assembly



Pictured above: Mr Knight with Jack Denton



Keeping in touch

with Parents and Students

YEAR 11 ENGLISH & MATHS

As you now know, all Year 11 students were entered for GCSE English in November last year. Following this an analysis of the results has given us a very clear indication of the areas our students need to focus on. This detail is being discussed with each student on an individual basis with their English and Maths teachers. Twelve students achieved an A, with one student, Gareth Coffin achieving an A*. This adds to Gareth's A in GCSE Statistics which he achieved in the Summer 2010 exams.



Gareth (left) said of his English GCSE success; *"I am very happy with the result I achieved. With the time pressure I wasn't expecting to do so well – luckily we have an amazing English teacher."*

Other comments from students included;

"I was extremely happy with my A as I didn't think I had done so well. Thank you Ms McCarthy."

"I was proud of myself and my friends!"

"The experience brought a whole new level to achievement – I was so happy when I opened my results envelope!"

"I was so glad I got my C grade as it means I could get into the college course I want to do."

"I was very happy with my English result and pleased that I had revised enough for the exam."

Students are now working to improve their English grade and/or working to achieve their personal best in the English Literature exam.

Maths had a 48% pass rate from those students in Set 2 who did the early entry. Mehnaz Rahman (pictured below) was particularly delighted with her B grade, as her prediction was a C. Mehnaz had been very nervous about doing the exam in November, but is very pleased she did so she can now concentrate on her other subjects in the Summer exams. Eshita Chowdhury (pictured right) was equally delighted and excited by her B grade in Maths.



Not only is the Academy really proud of the success of all Year 11 students so far, but students themselves are really proud of their achievements too. This has given them an excellent experience of what to expect and we wish them well.

LEARNING AND TEACHING: ASSESSING STAFF

Learning and teaching is at the heart of all that we do here at the Academy. The Ofsted in December rated us 'satisfactory' in this area with some 'good' and 'outstanding', but we are working tirelessly so that we move to 'good' and beyond to ensure our student's attainment is raised to the next level.

In order to ensure that we achieve our target of 80%+ of our lessons being 'good' or 'outstanding', we are using a number of cutting edge strategies. Teachers are regularly monitored through a rigorous lesson observation process and targets set to improve their practice. We have a scheduled weekly programme of *Learning Walks* carried out by our Advanced Skills Teachers and Curriculum Leaders. *Learning Walks* involve visiting a lesson for 15 minutes and looking closely at the learning that is taking place. A proforma sheet is then completed and fed back to the teacher about what went well and suggestions of what could be done to make the lesson even better. This half term the *Learning Walks* are concentrating on students whose teachers feel they are not working to the best of their ability. We are looking at how they are learning in their lessons and what can be done to maximise their achievement.



Above: *Learning Walk* taking place during an IT lesson

At Oasis Academy Mayfield there is lots of good and outstanding practice in lessons and we are working really hard to make sure this high quality learning and teaching is being shared across the staff. This term, staff are working in coaching groups to joint plan, observe and give feedback (coach) to further improve their practice. This Thursday, at the schools staff training session in the evening, our lead practitioners are teaching their recently judged good/outstanding lessons to colleagues, so sharing best practice across the school.

All this work is because we passionately want students to maximise their potential and achieve the best qualifications and grades possible, so they have choices when they leave us to go to study at college, take up training/apprenticeships or join the world of work.

To Live is to Learn

LEARNING AND TEACHING: ASSESSING STUDENTS

In order to monitor and identify students who are not progressing in the way they should, the Academy has introduced a number of new strategies for this area too.

Students already sit a test in Year 7 and 9 called the Cognitive Ability Test (CAT); this is an indicator of a student's raw ability and monitors their progress across their first three years of Academy life. In order to ensure that progress is being made across the three years we are introducing the test in Year 8 as well. This kind of external measure is vital in showing how our learners are progressing against national data.



As an Academy we have made the decision to maintain the use of SATs (Statutory Assessment Tests) as a means of measuring progress from Year 7 to 9 in English, Math and Science. May 2011 will also see our Year 9 students complete online tests in Reading, Maths and Science, which will help us to make sure that all the information we have on our students, be it Teacher Assessment (TA), SATs and Cognitive Ability Tests, supports the targets that have been set for them when they leave us in Year 11.

All this information is used, both in the classroom to inform the teachers about the pace and challenge required to progress, and in the identification of those learners who require extra support and intervention in order to achieve their aspirations in life as they leave the Academy.



Pictured above: The 'attendance mountain'

ATTENDANCE MATTERS!

Attendance at the Academy is very important and has been improving month on month and is now in line with the national average.

The Academy has taken a number of steps to drive attendance. The current attendance figure for Mayfield stands at 92%, which is an increase of 3% on 2010 and 8.4% on 2009. The number of students who are persistently absent from the Academy has dropped from 16% to 7%.

We have achieved this by putting the following in place:

- Rigorous monitoring of absences by the Attendance Team
- Return to school interviews with students
- Attendance meetings with parents
- Voluntary parenting contracts introduced
- 'Late' detentions introduced
- Attendance assemblies: 'How non-attendance affects grades'
- Best Tutor Group attendance competition
- Monthly attendance certificates
- Yearly 'perfect attendance' awards

Students can now be seen checking the Attendance Board each week, not only to see where they are on the League Table, but also where their Tutor Group is placed on the attendance 'mountain' (see below). It is great to see more and more students receiving a monthly 100% attendance certificate.

Congratulations to all our students who have perfect attendance, those whose attendance has improved and those students on target to receive an attendance award with the chance to win a Netbook at the end of the year.



Pictured below:
Principal John Toland
with Jamie Farrell,
'Most Improved
Attendance 2009-2010'



Pictured above, back row (back left to right): Owen James, Paul Edwards, Adam Holmes, Sam Collins, Connor Brown, Andrew Rawlings and Adam Coffin

Front row (left to right): Kieron Cave, Hannah Nguyen, Joe Grant, Jodie Freeborn, Murphy Morris, Katherine Gibbs, Maud Kotey and Alicia Modha

Keeping in touch

with Parents and Students

IMPROVING LESSONS: INTRODUCING '5 IN 5'



During the Autumn Term 2010, as part of our continual drive to improve the learning and teaching in the classroom, the Academy introduced the '5 in 5' procedures for the start of all lessons. Teachers greet students at the door as they arrive at the lesson and then support students to do 5 simple routines in the first 5 minutes of the lesson.

The '5 in 5' procedures are:

1. Put all bags and coats on the back of chairs/ under tables
2. Get planners and equipment out
3. Record the date, title and learning objectives from the board
4. Record homework from the board
5. Get on with a 'do now' task or started activity for the class to do when they've come in

These simple '5 in 5' procedures have helped ensure that students start the lessons in a positive and active manner, providing a smooth transition into the main learning objectives of the lesson. Punctuality to lessons has improved greatly, as students know that they will be greeted at the door and rewarded with Vivos if they win the 'punctuality draw' carried out by the teacher every lesson.

Please come along to the Competency Showcase in the CM classrooms From 3pm to 4pm on Wednesday 30th March 2011 to find out more.

YEAR 7 COMPETENCY

Our Year 7 students have settled into the Academy now, with the 'transition' from their Junior School feeling a long time ago. Our curriculum for Year 7 students is based upon a balance of specialist lessons in English, Maths, Science, ICT, PE and Languages, a 'carousel' of specialist lessons in Music, Art, Drama and Design Technology and nine lessons per fortnight with their Form Tutor who covers aspects of Humanities and Competency.

Competency is new to many parents, and so all Year 7 parents are invited to come in and view student projects undertaken during 'CM' (Competency) lessons at our 'Competency Showcase' event in March.

Topics include Communication, My World, Ancient Civilisation, the Olympic Games, Healthy Living and the Environment. Many parents will be aware that the current project is based on Ancient Egypt because students are completing an extended homework project based upon that - due in just before February half term. Parental support at home is encouraged and very much appreciated.

The assessment in Competency tracks students as they develop the skills essential to success in life, learning and work. These Personal, Learning and Thinking Skills (PLTs as they are known) comprise of six groups:

- Independent enquirers
- Team workers
- Effective participants
- Self managers
- Reflective thinkers
- Creative thinkers

The projects develop and refine these skills. Students assess themselves and each other (known as peer assessment), on how well they have demonstrated these skills. The judgement is checked by the teacher and awarded either a Bronze, Silver, Gold or Platinum Level.

The projects also cover aspects of National Curriculum in English, Science, History, Geography, RE, Design Technology and support student success in these areas as they go into Year 8. We are currently developing links across from Competency to other subjects so that specialist subject knowledge and the essential PLT skills can dovetail together to secure student attainment and progress.



Above students show off their work during the previous Year 7 Competency Showcase