

18 December 2023

Dear Parent / Carer

I hope that this letter finds you well and that your preparations for Christmas are well underway. We break up for the Christmas break on Thursday 21st December at 14:30.

Since the academy Christmas tree went up at the start of this month we've enjoyed an array of festive themed events. It was wonderful to see so many parents and carers joining us for the creative arts Christmas concert, where we were entertained by some extremely talented students. On Wednesday we have the academy Christmas dinner, and we will also be sharing the results of the 12 days of Christmas helicopter ride draw, for those students who have completed their boarding passes with 100% attendance, a fantastic attitude to learning, praise points every day and are always prepared with their equipment for learning.

It has been a busy but brilliant term with many highlights across all year groups. I hope that you have been following our academy Instagram account [@outwoodacademyadwick](https://www.instagram.com/outwoodacademyadwick), with almost daily updates of the fantastic achievements of our students and their learning experiences. You can also tune into our Adwick TV updates, with new episodes every two weeks.

All year groups continue to make fabulous progress, with their own priorities. Year 7 have settled into the academy and have earned their bronze awards in the ACE programme, and are now ready to complete their silver accreditation next term. Year 8 are preparing for their journey to graduation starting in January. Year 9 are in the process of selecting their key stage 4 GCSE's and vocational pathways and Year 10 have made a fantastic start to their GCSE and BTEC qualifications.

We have been extremely proud of how Year 11 completed their mock exams and their ongoing commitment to GCSE preparation and revision. With just 71 days from January until the summer examinations they are working very hard in their lessons and engaging with additional study and revision associated with exceptional outcomes. We are predicting record numbers for the sixth form next year and some very exciting career pathways.

Post-16 students are also working extremely hard, with Year 13 fast approaching their exams and applications for university. Year 12 students have set strong foundations including a very positive start from our first cohort of T-Level students, now working and studying alongside health professionals in our local hospitals and health settings.

In this final week before the Christmas break we will be hosting our Praising Stars release day. This has become a highlight in the calendar. Each half-term students receive their Praising Stars certificates and celebrate their effort and predictions, and are rightfully rewarded. I hope that you're able to share these celebrations at home as they bring to you their certificates or you access via the new Outwood portal on your mobile devices.

We now have more star students than ever invited to our weekly Fri-Yay celebration events and we've handed out a record number of Kindles to our millionaire readers. Following the launch of our Honours programme to years 7 and 8 we have queues of students sharing their evidence and receiving badges for their skills and attributes in and out of school, again this can be tracked via our Outwood portal.

We are always proud of our students, your children, but at several points this term there have been points where their maturity and character has really shone through. In November we paid our respects as part of remembrance, it is such a moving event to witness the whole academy community stop, fall silent, and pay their respects. With students in military and service uniforms participating in parades, and a special mention to Bella Marshall in Year 8 who performed the last post as the academy lay silent.

You may have seen our academy on television in the last couple of weeks as Calendar news, Good Morning Britain and other new outlets featured our students attending an assembly by Mrs Swiffen and her friend Vicki Goodwin. Year 11 and Post-16 students attended and participated in a powerful road safety assembly, based upon events which have affected our local community. Again students were extremely respectful and demonstrated maturity beyond their years, a credit to you as parents and carers.

Students have also contributed to charities both in and out of the academy, supporting both national groups and those closer within our community.

Education and learning has extended outside of the classroom. We have seen a big uplift in the numbers of students attending enrichment activities beyond 14:30, and the new calendar of clubs and activities will be coming out to you in readiness for January 2024. Students have successfully competed in sporting fixtures and we've many future superstars and champions in a range of sports, some already competing at international levels. Students have visited numerous places to bring learning to life and raise aspirations; to name a few, the sixth form have been experiencing university life, our business students have carried out case studies at The Butterfly House, dance students participated in a session at the world famous Pineapple Dance Studios and attended a musical in London, and we're currently planning for our next visits to Spain and an expedition to Cambodia! Geography students have been planting our very own thicket and attended our Outwood Mock COP-28.

I expect next term will be as equally busy and rewarding as last term and I look forward to again welcoming parents and carers into the academy to share the progress of students. This last term we welcomed many of you through our celebration events, transition & exam preparation evenings and the year 7 and year 11 parents evening. Next term we'll be hosting the year 9 guided pathways evening on Tuesday 9th January and the year 9 and post-16 parents evening on Tuesday 23rd January. There will also be a year 11 revision evening on Thursday 1st February.

The Christmas break for many is time to relax and spend time with family and friends, but we also want to ensure everyone has access to support services should anyone have concerns for a young person. Our designated safeguarding lead Mrs Richardson has in the last two weeks set up an additional Instagram account to share wellbeing and mental health support information. This can be found at: <https://www.instagram.com/oaawellbeing> with resources for coping at christmas. You can also access support via our academy website at <https://mentalwellbeing.outwood.com/>

We return to the academy on Monday 8th January, with students as always on site by 8.15am. I am sure you will support us in ensuring that students return for a positive new year, prepared and ready for learning.

Have a wonderful christmas and a happy new year from us all at the academy

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A Scruby', with a large, sweeping flourish underneath.

Andy Scruby
Principal