

Setting the Standard!

Welcome to our second edition of the Venture Voice where we take time to celebrate and share all of the goings on at Ormiston Venture Academy.

It was a fantastic first term, and I truly believe that we have set the Venture Standard of Excellence in a few short months. Uniforms are smart, behaviour is outstanding, and all of our young people are working hard each day towards their future successes. Improving the standard of Learning and Teaching is at the heart of all initiatives, and each day that high standard becomes more and more evident.

I must take the opportunity to welcome three new and outstanding members of staff to the Venture team - Ms Gee Cook, our new Senior Vice Principal of Stakeholders and Standards, Mrs Susan Jury, our new Advanced Skills Teacher in Mathematics and Mrs Jane Haward, our new Head of Mathematics. I am thrilled to welcome them to the team, and wish them a warm Venture welcome on behalf of us all.

There has been much to celebrate, and I think the most obvious must be taking 8th place in the country during the Four Nations Athletics Challenge in November. Our award is displayed proudly in reception, and we are now looking towards World Maths Day in March, where Mr Plume will no doubt lead us to victory! This success, coupled with our involvement in the Halifax Share Trading Scheme, cements our place as a national centre of excellence in our specialism of Mathematics, and I know that we will only go from strength to strength.

We have also been celebrating the performance skills and creativity of our young people with our local community. Our Community Band Showcase and Christmas Spectacular were enjoyable evenings for all involved, and a great opportunity to see how much talent Venture Students have. We've also taken that talent on the road to the Hippodrome and The Forum in Norwich, where all in attendance raved about the performances.

It should be noted that we are not just celebrating the successes of Venture Students within the Academy. The EDP24, Great Yarmouth Mercury and BBC Radio Norfolk have also been ensuring that all in Norfolk are aware of the transformation that has begun to take place, and the fantastic youngsters that are making their community proud!

Yet further afield, we have been able to give students various opportunities for trips and visits, both locally and abroad. Most notably was our November visit to the battlefields of Belgium and France to pay their Armistice Day respects to those who fought so valiantly in the first and second world wars. Students insisting on wearing their new, smart uniforms as a mark of respect.



Staff and students have been working tirelessly and with a new-found vigour to reach the aspirational targets that they have been set. I must say a special well done to our Year 11 students who have worked so hard, and achieved so much, in one short term. Further, to parents and carers for their support and involvement with the Academy.

In the coming months there will be much to do as together we create plans for the 8 million pound capital spend that has recently been awarded to the Academy. I want to ensure the involvement of staff, students, parents, carers and community members in order to create and build a true 21st Century Learning Community.

What's going on at Venture Academy...

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Students take the Fantasy Stock Market Challenge

Stock Market challenge is an exciting and innovative competition between the PL (Personalised Learning) groups. Each PL group was given a fantasy £10,000.00 to buy shares from five stock exchanges around the world. At the half way point of the competition Aspire College was out in front with one PL group increasing the value of their portfolio by £2,000.00! However the students in the leading PL group are keen to keep in mind that due to market fluctuations they have to monitor their portfolio carefully.

The achievement of the challenge so far goes further than this and has given the students a wider understanding of how financial markets work. Some students have started to investigate fantasy trading independently with their own trading accounts.



Budding investors now have the opportunity to take part in the IFS Student Investor Challenge where they will compete regionally and nationally with the top prize of an all expenses paid trip to New York.

Ms McCartney, Principal said

"This is a great opportunity for the students to embed both specialisms at the Academy and learn new skills. If one of our teams win the IFS Student Challenge, Ormiston Venture Academy will be gifting the group with some spending money towards their trip to New York."

Mr Plume – Director of Mathematics



Mathletics News Report

Mathletics marked a whole new experience for Venture's Students. The international tournament involved an online competition between thousands of secondary and primary schools in the UK for the coveted "Mathletics Trophy".

The Mathletics competition includes a wide range of National Curriculum challenges at levels from Level 1 all the way up to level 6.

Every computer in the Academy was utilized to put Venture at the top of the leader board. Some students were even playing at home (and some teachers - including Mr. GB!!).

"Bring on the next competition in March! Go Venture!"

With the end of Mathletics week over, it was time to count up the points. Not surprisingly, Venture Academy came 8th out of England and 18th in the UK 50 top schools category and Kevin Benny (Year 8) was the top student in the Academy with 23,970 point overall! Top Venture class was 9X1 who came an amazing 8th overall.

Students who succeeded in getting onto the leader board of the 100 best students got a free pass to the games room direct from the Principal!



We asked Mr Plume, who launched the competition, why the competition was important to us:

"This activity is so rich because it includes elements of competition as well as focused Maths learning – which ties in brilliantly with our specialism. Students can compete with others from around the UK and they love this. They can also earn points and credits for studying core areas of Maths such as Algebra and Number. I have never seen students buzzing this much about Maths!"

Jamie Skinner – Student Reporter



Students Venture Abroad Show Respect for Ancestors

As a mark of respect for Armistice Day 2010, a poignant school trip took place.

A group of almost 50 Venture students travelled to the key Battlefields of Europe as part of an educational visit to find out more about the world wars.

The trip took Venture youngsters to Ypres (Belgium) and the Somme (France) where their itinerary for the visit included witnessing the Last Post Memorial at Menin Gate, trips to Langemark and Tyne Cot cemeteries to see the huge numbers of lives lost on both sides of the conflict and visiting museums in Flanders Field and the Somme. When visiting the graves, students wore their Venture uniforms as a mark of respect for those who gave their lives. Chris Hart, a Sea Cadet donned his military uniform and laid a wreath on behalf of the Great Yarmouth branch of the Royal British Legion.

Visit leader, historian David Richards, Head of Citizenship and Personal, Health and Social Education said that he felt passionate about organising the visit:

“With first hand accounts of the world wars becoming increasingly difficult to share with young people, visiting the Battlefields of WW1 provides our students with such an invaluable insight into the importance of the world wars and why we should remember them. This trip would be an incredible experience for our students at any time of the year, but even more so over Remembrance weekend itself. This is highlighted further by a number of students having researched about their personal links to WW1, and having the opportunity to visit some of their relatives’ graves”.

Ormiston Venture Academy Principal, Nicole McCartney said,

“Educational visits like this are crucial to raising students’ awareness of the importance of the past. It is deeply moving that some of the children managed to search out the graves of their ancestors and pay their respects. I am incredibly proud that they wore their uniforms.”



Entitled to Free School Meals?

We Can Support Your Claim.

At Ormiston Venture Academy in Gorleston, support for families of children who may be entitled to receive free school meals for their children has been put in place.

Staff at the new academy suspect that many families who could be entitled to receive free meals for their children may not have submitted the forms and necessary evidence to benefit from this, so have been running family-friendly workshops to help with the necessary 'red-tape' associated with these claims.

So far, several families have used the 'drop-in service' to gain advice and support, but many more may benefit. Assistant Principal, Nicole Rossage is leading the support with Data Manager Heather McBarron. Mrs Rossage offered the following message to families who may be wondering whether they are eligible:

“In these difficult economic times, it is important that you claim what you are entitled to. By claiming for free school meals you can save yourselves nearly £400 per child per year.

Ormiston Venture has revamped the menu to attract more children to healthy eating, so there's no excuse for not returning the forms! The major changes include a brand new eatery called the Venture Café where all students are encouraged to enjoy a hot meal alongside the staff.

The menu does not encourage a 'grab and go' culture, but promotes the enjoyment of a civilised conversation and a good, nutritious meal. Dishes on the menu so far include roast chicken with stuffing and gravy, beef balti with naan bread and mushroom stroganoff. Delicious puddings include pear and ginger crumble with custard and traditional dishes such as bread and butter pudding with custard.

Assistant Head Girl, Claire Nobbs said:



“The Venture Café has now become a modern and inspirational place to enjoy the school meals”.

Staff will offer the following support:

- Copies of the claim form
- Guidance for completion of the claim form – including any issues with understanding the details the form requires
- A claim form checking service to help families feel confident they have submitted the right evidence

If you are unable to visit the academy in person to request assistance or have the form checked, please feel free to contact Heather McBarron by email on hmcbaron@ormistonventureacademy.co.uk and she will be happy to offer you personalised advice and guidance electronically.



Excellence East Website

I would like to draw your attention to the Excellence East website, <http://www.excellenceeast.org.uk> which offers articles, resources and links to other websites for young people and their parents/carers. Excellence East is a partnership of a number of higher education institutions and local authorities working in the region which offers a diverse range of activities including master classes, summer schools and specialist subject challenge days.

If you have any questions about Excellence East please do not hesitate to contact me at the Academy.
- Mrs Cator – Head of Faculty



'Venture Into' days

Ormiston Venture Academy is doing everything they can to ensure that students have enriching and dynamic experiences both in, and outside the classroom.

Trips, visits and visitors to and from the Academy are part of this endeavour. To be certain that all students in the Academy have a chance to get involved, the Academy have created 'Venture Into' days. Principal McCartney stated,

'We want to expose students to a variety of experiences in order to develop their curiosity and life-long learning skills. This term, we are Venturing into Creativity'.

This week Venture Academy were delighted to welcome Rockstar Production's Eugene Rieicansky, one of the most highly regarded music video directors with a hugely impressive and extensive client list including Madonna, Muse, Rhianna, Paul Oakenfold, Prodigy, Green Day and Vivienne Westwood.

Mr Rieicansky delivered a presentation on creativity to a group of students, explaining how hard work, a little luck, networking and more hard work made him the success he is today. Students at the Academy were most impressed, and even stayed on after the presentation for Mr Rieicansky's autograph.

Senior Vice Principal Gee Cook stated, **'We are delighted that Mr Rieicansky made a visit to our beautiful East coast, as he is often on the West Coast (of America!), and we look forward to welcoming him back into Ormiston Venture Academy to collaborate with our aspiring artists.'**



Students Work With Famous Author

Rafaella Barker Visits Venture

Norfolk-based author, Raffaella Barker, has begun a series of workshops at Ormiston Venture with the end result of publishing an Anthology of the work created by the students.

Mrs Barker, who has a monthly column in the EDP 'Norfolk' magazine, began working with schools on a similar project when she was living in London, a scheme called 'First Story'. The aim is for her to work with a group of students who do not particularly enjoy writing, so that she can convey her love of the language to them and to show that 'anyone can be an author'. There will be several visits, with the students drawn from Yrs 7, 8 and 9, continuing to write in their own time.

The finale will see Mrs Barker editing the writing, to produce a book which will be launched in the Academy in the Spring. - Miss E Haddleton – Head of Faculty



Gorleston School Film Premiered

Many thanks to Stephen Pullinger of the Eastern Daily Press for publishing the following article to celebrate the premiere of 'Teenage Kicks' – congratulations to all involved!

A survey of parents and children revealed that people were too often put off using Great Yarmouth's parks and play areas because of the actions and behaviour of some teenagers.

But now a group of teenagers has been recruited to address the problem – by acting out the issues in a 10-minute film to be shown in schools.

Youngsters at Gorleston's Ormiston Venture Academy came up with the plot for Teenage Kicks before shooting it at the nearby play area in Beacon Park.

The film, premiered at the school in front of parents, tells the story of misbehaving gang members who change their ways when a child is cut by rubbish they have tipped on a slide.

Paul Sprong, teacher of Expressive Arts, said: "The council approached us to make the film after it found that intimidation by teenagers was one reason people were not using the borough's play areas.

"They wanted to highlight the issues of inconsiderate behaviour in a film that could be shown in schools from Year Three to Year 11 to raise awareness."

The students came up with ideas themselves and the film took two days to shoot in the summer and 250 hours to edit.

Connor Saiche, 15, of High Street, Gorleston, who plays "bad boy" Jack who tips rubbish in the park, ties up the swings and plays football in the middle of the play equipment, said: "It shows us the impact of our actions and teaches us to look at what we do and act more responsibly."

Faisal Al-Yousef, 16, of Clare Avenue, Gorleston, plays Jack's best mate who tries to make him think about what he is doing and Katherine Nicholls, 15, of Station Road North, Belton, plays Faisal's friend who tries to warn him about the dangers of getting involved with gangs.

Principal Nicole McCartney said: "The way our young people conduct themselves in their community, and the community perception of them, is a message that we reinforce every day through our code of conduct. In creating this film we are able to share that message with a wider audience."



Students Read for Children in Need!

Friday 19th November was an eventful one at Ormiston Venture Academy in order to raise crucial funds to help those less fortunate. In total, our students succeeded in raising £500.00.

Ormiston Venture Academy Senior Vice Principal, Naomi Palmer said,

"We are all incredibly proud of the effort our students put in to this fund-raising event. We place a high value on reading and ensuring students' literacy skills are developed at every opportunity, so the Readathon provides us with the perfect way of tackling this."



Could You Support Reading With a Year 7 Student at Ormiston Venture Academy?

At Ormiston Venture Academy, we are committed to ensuring every child leaves us with an outstanding set of qualifications in preparation for further study and the world of work. From the start of every child's education with us, it is imperative that we offer as many opportunities for success as possible.

We know that in order for children to achieve this, they may need further support in reading and communication skills, referred to in the press as 'literacy'. We have identified a group of children in Year 7 who would gain tremendously from completing reading activities with either an older student or an adult for part of their weekly routine. We would like to hear from anyone who would be prepared to give up time during term-time weeks on a voluntary basis.

To start, we plan to run the sessions during our weekly PL (personalised learning) slot which takes place between 1.35pm and 2.35pm on Wednesdays. Depending on the progress students make during this time, we may look to expand this to take place during some of the morning PL slots to make the support more frequent.

Our Head of English, Miss Brown, will be involved in the selection of students and Mrs Kenton-Barnes, our Learning Resource Centre Manager, will select the appropriate pairs of books based on the children's current reading ability. Families of the children involved will, of course, be informed of this new support structure.

If you would like to volunteer to help, you will need to complete an application form (so we have your details on file) and a CRB (Criminal Records checking Bureau)

application. As part of our duty to safeguard every child and adult in our care, we will only be able to use volunteers with a full and clear CRB return. Depending on the volume of strong applicants, we may need to select volunteers through a short, informal interview process.

A GCSE qualification, or equivalent, in English would be useful, but it is not essential. The act of listening with interest to a child read will help enormously to build confidence! If you would like to visit the LRC and discuss the choice of books with Mrs Kenton-Barnes before agreeing to help, please feel free to arrange this with me.

To summarise:

1. Ensure that you are free between 1.35pm and 2.45pm each Wednesday during term time (for one half-term in the first instance).
2. Complete an application form and CRB checking form from Venture Reception.
3. Contact me if you would like to review the range of books which will be used in the project

Please do not hesitate to contact Leci Vicente if you would like to discuss this new and exciting project in more depth.

Leci Vicente – PA to Senior Vice Principal
Email: cvicente@ormistonventureacademy.co.uk



Diary Dates: Term Dates for 2010/2011

18th February	Venture closes for February half-term	2nd May	Bank Holiday Monday Venture Closed
28th February	Venture re-opens to students	27th May	Venture closes for May half-term
8th April	Venture closes for the Easter Holiday	6th June	Venture re-opens to students
26th April	Venture re-opens to students	22nd July	Venture closes for the Summer Holiday
29th April	Bank Holiday Monday Venture Closed		

Community News Venture Rocks



To celebrate the opening of the Academy an evening was held in October for the local community. It started with a dance exhibition by The Potters Theatre School and sports hall activities led by Football In The Community. An exhibition match between East of England under 16 Ladies Volleyball team and the UEA Ladies team excited spectators with the skills displayed and England Netball ran a Get Back into Netball session for adult players to complete the sporting activities.

The highlight for many however was the band showcase which featured Liam Lonergan and Faisal Al-Yousef, members of the Academy, 'Green Day' featuring former students, The Wright Stuff and the outstanding Second Hand Blues Band, featuring our Aspire College Leader, Justin Peach on drums, headlining the event.

Over 400 people attended the activities and all enjoyed the event tremendously.

This is just the first of events that the Academy is trying to put on for the community. Coming soon after Christmas is Film Club where some of your favourite old time films and musicals will be shown.

Mr Giles – Assistant Principal



Venture into the Festive Spirit!

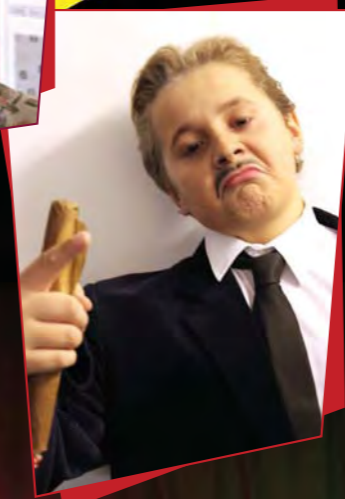
Venture hosted its first Christmas showcase of music, drama and dance during the penultimate week of term to a sell-out crowd!

The event, organised, produced and directed by Mr Sprong and Mrs Bower included a 'best of the best' selection of the Creative Arts Faculty's work, plus some Christmas specials to get everyone in the spirit.

Acts included the dance troupe's rendition of key songs from Hairspray and Venture's own take on the Scorsese classic 'The Godfather' – with a festive twist! Jarrod Teasdel stole the show as the central character and we all respect Marley Soanes in a new way after his Marilyn Monroe impersonation!



All who attended spoke highly of the venture students' effort to make the event a success – here's to the next one!



Aspire & Achieve – Can You Kick It? Yes, You Can!

Three students from Ormiston Venture Academy were selected to join the forty member England team attending the 2010 World Junior Kickboxing Championships in Edinburgh over the October half term holidays.



Venture student Cameron McGarrigle who at 14 was the first-ever junior kickboxer from the Eastern Counties to win a world kickboxing title.

The students spent a week in Scotland fighting eliminator rounds with teams from the Ukraine, Canada, USA, France, Sweden, Iran, Greece, Belgium, Spain, Portugal, Turkey, Germany, Lebanon, Wales, Ireland, Belgium, and Russia.

The semi-finals and finals of each weight and age category took place on the last two days where the remaining fighters competed for the coveted gold, medals and the honour of being crowned junior world champion.



Undefeated British number one Kelsea Carroll (13) won the gold medal in the -40 kilo (12-14 year old females) light contact category with an amazing display of boxing skills that had the Canadian national coach voting her as the most skilful fighter of the tournament.

Jade Munro (13) who earlier this year became the first-ever female fighter in Norfolk to win a NationalABA boxing title, and the first schoolgirl in England ever to win national titles in four different combat sports; took the gold medal in the -50 kilos (12-14 year old female) full contact category by second round TKO in the final.



National champion Ben Mitchell (13) was in explosive form, blitzing his way to the final and winning the gold medal in the -45kilos (12-14 year old male) full contact category. Ben started kickboxing three years ago and says it's a great way to let off steam.



All four Venture students train at the 3 Lions Gym and aspire to be world class athletes in the future, and based on their success they are already on the right path to achieve this goal!

Mr J Peach – Head of Aspire College

Spot- lighting Mr G.B.

Many unusual things have come from Australia. But, this one teacher is the most unusual thing of all. Instead of wrestling crocs and snakes, this teacher has decided to do something far harder. He decided to teach maths to High School students. He is a teacher that always has a smile on his face. He is strict, but fair. He is a bad dancer. The world would survive only one of him and it only barely survives him.

He is Mr G.B.

Mr G.B. is a teacher with a good sense of humour. He can often be found dancing badly to Metallica in the games room and in his classroom. In lessons he is always mindful that everyone understands what to do and tries to make it as fun as possible. He is a laid-back, understanding teacher. He is fond of torturing (teaching) his students with maths songs. One of his students describes him as 'awesome' and even forgives him for being a Liverpool supporter.

Mr G.B. is striving to ensure that the Academy becomes exactly what the students deserve, and if his hard work is anything to go by, we will soon have the best school in the country. Mr G.B. has been with this academy for several years, starting as a maths teacher and progressing to becoming part of our Senior Leadership Team. He is someone to look up to and respect. He sets an example with his smart appearance and readiness to work and how strictly he follows the rules. He believes that Ms McCartney is doing a great job as Principal of the Academy and puts it all down to passion for the job.

Mr G.B. believes that anything can be fun depending on the spin you put on it and is very enthusiastic about Maths. He encourages his students to strive for excellence.

"I personally, believe that Mr G.B. is a very talented, if slightly eccentric, teacher. He strives for excellence and is determined to see that same excellence in his students. He is an avid reader of the myth and magic genre and his favourite author is Raymond E. Fiest."

Channon Watker – Student Reporter

