

Venturing into success



Ormiston Venture Academy celebrated on 25 August 2011, doubling their 5 A*-C GCSE grades in one year! Among these were a number of success stories with 38 students gaining 10 or more GCSE's at an A*-C grade. Charlotte Spalding (11 GCSE's A*-C) who also achieved the new English Baccalaureate qualification believes that "Venture means to seek out new horizons, to face new challenges and to break new ground." A vision she and her fellow students have truly embraced in their fantastic results.

After only one year as an academy, results have already doubled, with a 49% increase on last year's grades.

47% of students were also delighted to achieve 5 A*-C including mathematics and English, a further increase of 31% from last year.

The Academy has seen particular growth over the past four years as from 2007, GCSE results of 5 A*-C grades have increased from 35% to 95%, an increase of 171%. In 2007 the GCSE results including English and mathematics were at 19% so this year's results show a 147% increase.

Principal Nicole McCartney stated,

'We could not be more proud. To have doubled our results in our first year of operations is a testimony to our hard working staff, our gifted students and our supportive parents and stakeholders. These are the highest results in the school's history, and we know we will continue to go from strength.'



Joyce Hodgetts, Managing Director of Ormiston Academies Trust said,

"We are extremely proud of the results achieved, 95% of students have gained qualifications of 5A*-C allowing them to flourish and progress to a promising future. These opportunities give the students a better start in a challenging environment."

Peter Murray, Chairman of Ormiston Trust said: "The students and staff at Ormiston Venture Academy have every right to be delighted with this set of results today and we share their celebration. In the first year of being an Ormiston Academy they have doubled their 5 A*-C achieving 95% this year, a 49% rise from last year. These are outstanding improvements and the type of sustained improvements that we continue to see across the Ormiston network year after year."



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Celebration of Learning

One of the biggest transformations to take place this year at Venture has been the rapid improvement in the quality of learning and teaching.

Students tell us how much more they enjoy their lessons and succeed in them and this has been backed up by the judgements of Peter Johnson our School Improvement Partner who judged Learning and Teaching to be good.

This reflects the huge amount of time that our dedicated teaching team has invested in improving learning.

In recognition of these improvements the Academy held a Celebration of Learning Week in which teachers showcased their best practice to each other. Not only did this give us a chance to recognise the best practice that exists across the Academy, but it also helped us to ensure continued improvements as staff learnt from each other things which they could use inside their own classrooms.

Classroom Medics

Classroom Medics are a team of physiologists who give up some of their time to enthuse students about careers in Medical Sciences.

They came in to the Academy in July to introduce year 9 students to a range of high tech instruments for measuring the body's vital signs. Students participated in a question and answer session about how their bodies work and what normal readings on these instruments would be. They then had an opportunity to try out all the equipment and measure their own blood pressure, lung capacity, temperature, peak flow and oxygen saturation. They even took ECGs to show their heart rate. There was also a digital otoscope which allowed students to see inside their own ear canal.



Ormiston Venture Academy Students got a real taste for the trading floor of the London Stock Exchange recently as they took part in the Norfolk Share Dealing Challenge.

Not content with their trading during PL time, two teams of Year 10 students entered the Norfolk Share Dealing Challenge and went head-to-head with other schools from across the county.

Unlike the weekly trading of PL time students had to carefully decide on shares which would be fixed for three months! They chose well and both teams finished strongly fighting off teams from other local Academies and Schools. The top team going through to the Face-2-Face challenge in Norwich.

The Face-2-Face event, organised by Norfolk and Waveney Enterprise Services, is designed to give students a real taste of working as a stock broker. Tempany Edmonds, Zac Brown, Reece Breward, Kyle Knott and Ashley Scarlett all had specific roles to play in the task including floor traders and media analysts.

The Face-2-Face challenge was heated with traders running backwards and forwards and market conditions changing by the minute but the Venture traders kept their cool. They were calm under pressure and thoughtful in their decision making and this gave them the upper hand.



To say that the students performed well is an understatement. Despite the pressure (which was thought to have caused at least one other local Academy not to turn up) all of the students gave credible performances and showed the Venture Spirit. Out of all the Maths teams entered (there were Business Studies and Maths entrants) they came out on top!

Science Fair 2011

To mark the end of Science Week 2011, the Science Faculty and our brilliant year 8 students held a Science Fair on the subject of Communication. Science lessons were given over to the design of stalls, production of flyers and quizzes, dance rehearsals and experimental design in the run up to the day.

On the 18th March our 3 feeder primary schools arrived and were met by over 100 enthusiastic year 8 pupils and over 30 stalls. 'A Whizz Bang Pop' hands-on Chemistry demonstration, ably presented by the Year 9 Science adventure boys and a trip to Animal Care rounded off the day.

A special thank you should go to the prefects that helped the day run as smoothly as it did.

12 pupils in Year 8 won a trip to a Rocket Building day (held at the King's Centre and presented by StarChaser) for their overall effort up to and including the day while Animal Care won the 'best stall' prize as voted for by the Year 6 pupils.



Jack the Ripper Trip

On Friday 8th July the Humanities Department took 50 year 8 students to London for our annual Jack the Ripper trip. We had to be in London for 10am so leaving the academy at 6am meant an early start for us all.

The trip to London was broken up by a quick stop at Birchanger services and a chance to grab some Krispy Kreme doughnut's, something which many people on the bus had never had the pleasure of trying until now, and of course they went down very well on the coach.

The rain clouds had gathered by the time we arrived in Whitechapel for the Jack the Ripper tour, so apart from those who decided that their coat didn't match what they were wearing we all disembarked the coach dressed for a rain storm to meet our tour guides. Our guides this year were very interesting and had recently appeared on a channel 5 documentary and made the tour even more engaging than usual. We walked up Brick Lane, towards the Gherkin and Spitalfields Market and around other famous parts of the East End of London learning about Jack the Ripper, his victims and seeing the places they lived, socialised and were murdered up close. We were lucky enough to see some new photos of the victims that hadn't been seen before and the students came away much more aware of the Jack the Ripper case.



We had about an hour to spare which we spent in Porters Field Park, where we sheltered from the weather underneath a ridge of the Mayor of London's office, and took in views of London's Tower Bridge, the Tower of London, HMS Belfast and the newest sky scraper The Shard. After our lunch break we split into two groups and skipped the huge queue to get into the Dungeons. Now we have always had some people who get a little worked up going into the dungeons as it is a scary place but I think this year may have been a record with one person being sick, one hyperventilating and several skipping some of the scarier parts, I think next year there will need to be a limit on who can go based on how well they handle the dark and jumpy rides/films.

Despite the early drama we made it out alive and were all exhilarated by the experience, it is a brilliant mix of drama, suspense and accurate history that goes through less glamorous periods in London's history such as Jack the Ripper, The Great Fire of London, The Plague, Bloody Mary, Sweeney Todd and many more.



Ormiston Venture Academy is proud to be working with technology company Promethean as part of a pilot programme investigating the use of some new resources in the classroom.

The Academy has been loaned 3 sets of student response handsets that allow students to engage interactively with their lessons by 'texting' in answers to questions, taking part in voting and sending feedback to their teachers about their learning each lesson. The handsets are currently being used in Digital Media, Humanities and Mathematics lessons. Students have really taken to the new technology and regularly ask...

**"Can we use the handsets?",
"Can we text in the answers?"**

... in their lessons. Director of Digital Media, Mark Thompson, said "I am really pleased that a respected company such as Promethean wants to work with our Academy. It is a fantastic opportunity and initial impressions are that the technology has really boosted student interaction in lessons."

In addition to the handsets, Promethean has also loaned the Acaedmy a portable, self-contained interactive white board. Whilst the Acaedmy does provide an interactive whiteboard and projector in nearly every teaching space, this new addition adds a new dimension.

Mr. Thompson said,

"Imagine an iPad that is 5 feet wide and that is essentially what we are talking about. Then allow any teacher to easily deploy this device in virtually any space that they are teaching in. The potential is fantastic."

The trial with Promethean comes to an end during the autumn term when the impact analysis will be presented to the company as part of the final report



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Primary Points... Catch up with news from our associated Primary Schools

Moorlands Lound Lake Trip

Years 3 and 4 at Moorlands Primary spent the day at Lound Lakes last week. They got back down to nature learning about the water table, pond dipping, a nature trail (where a grass snake and slow worm were eagerly spotted) and hay racking. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed their day. Thank you parent helpers and the Lound Lake team.



Fun Run For Funds

Last Friday staff and pupils of Herman Primary School took part in a sponsored fun run in aid of school funds.



The theme for the day was uniform and a fantastic selection was on show. The younger children took part in the morning with the older ones on a longer course after dinner, parents and friends were invited to cheer them on and also take part. The picture shows some of the Key Stage 2 children enjoying a warm up.



Celebrations as inspectors say Herman Primary School no longer needs notice to improve

A Gorleston primary school is celebrating after Ofsted said it no longer required notice to improve and praised its leadership, ambition and improved teaching. Inspectors said Herman Community Primary School had "good capacity to improve" and that persistent absence had fallen "very significantly" since the school's last inspection in March 2010.

They praised care, guidance and support and were particularly positive about the support to the youngest pupils, who they said, make "rapid gains in their personal and social development."

Ofsted said:

"Herman Community Primary School provides a satisfactory quality of education. It is an improving school. Decisive and robust action has been effective in raising attendance, which is now average."

"Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory academic progress and the good quality of support they receive has contributed to rapid progress in improving their speech and their ability to manage their own challenging behaviours associated with their needs."

"The headteacher drives improvement forward well. Decisive actions following detailed analysis have brought about a number of significant improvements since the previous inspection."

Inspectors added that all groups of pupils make at least satisfactory progress in lessons, with standards rising in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in writing in Year 1. However, they said, more work is needed to improve attainment in English and maths by the end of Year 6.

The school was given a notice to improve in March 2010 and has been working to improve teaching and learning and raise levels of achievement.

Kate Rutherford, headteacher, said:

"Everyone involved with the school has a shared ambition to make this the best school possible and we have been working intensively over the last 15 months to improve our monitoring of teaching and learning and better track pupils' progress."

"It is fantastic that the hard work of teachers, governors, support staff and parents has paid off and we are now making strong progress. There is still more work to do in ensuring consistency across the school but we are confident we know what needs to be done to support further improvement."

Moorlands Activities

A Performing Arts Company visited Moorlands nursery last term. DPA ran Tiptoe Ballet and Jungle Fun for the children. The children thoroughly enjoyed singing, dancing and acting and we're sure we have a few budding performers in our ranks! Thank you to everyone who supported Moorlands Summer Fayre. The wonderful selection of stalls and glorious weather ensured a good time was had by all. A fantastic £600 was raised which The Friends of Moorlands will use towards extra resources for the school. The Friends recently supplied all pupils with sunhats in the colours of their house teams.



Moorlands Visit to Carlton Marshes

Moorlands Primary children in Year 1/2 had a very successful visit to Carlton Marshes. They used a variety of equipment to catch and identify a great many species that inhabit the marsh.



Moorlands Summer Music Concert

A very successful Summer Music Concert was held at Moorlands Primary School. The concert was in partnership with Belton Church and involved many young hopefuls singing in the choir, solo and duet singing, piano playing, a puppet show and a jazz band all ensuring the audience had a fabulous evening.



**Best Dressed was awarded
to – Connor Saiche
& Hannah Boniface**



Senior Year Prom

Thursday 30th June, the clouds parted and the sun shone for a Prom like no other. After a year of hard work and months of preparation the Academies first Senior Year had earned what was a fairy tale ending.

The venue (Somerleyton Hall) was a magnificent backdrop for our Prom. The students arrived in every type of transport you could imagine (Glass carriages, Sports cars, Rolls Royce and even a skip!).

The students looked amazing, the girls in their beautiful dresses and the boys in their very smart suits. They were treated to refreshments on arrival in the winter gardens followed by a stroll through the grounds to their specially decorated marquee. The students enjoyed a delicious BBQ and beautifully made cupcakes... then the party started! The custom dance floor rocked throughout the whole evening with students and staff dancing the night away.

The Prom was a fantastic way to congratulate our Senior Year for all of the hard work they have put in over the past year. We are extremely proud of them and they deserved this night to remember.



**Prom King & Queen was awarded to –
Pedro Marques & Chloe Anderson**

The First Year at Gresham's

There were some ups and downs during my first year at Gresham's but mostly ups; from being chosen to play 1st Team Rugby, to being Vice Captain and, hopefully, Captain of the Football Team next year. I have also been chosen to be one of the School Prefects and House Prefect, which compounds my success over the year, as this is seen as a great achievement throughout the school.

My first day at the school was probably the scariest. I remember being so nervous that I did not even have the courage to get out of the car when I arrived. I remember having this strange feeling in the pit of my stomach, which could have been a result of the celebration party I had been through the previous night, or simply nerves. I literally had to be dragged out of the car by Mrs. Ford, who is the Registrar at Gresham's. Without her persistence I reckon I could have stayed in the car for the whole day, or 'till I actually needed to get out. That was a scary moment but I managed to pull through.

I have met a lot of good people, or 'acquaintances' as Saka would say. The people are genuinely nice. The stereotypical view of many is, 'Oh, it's full of rich, snobby kids'. I mean, you do get kids whose families own 'Colman's Mustard', 'Topman' or even their own cereal company, however, no-one takes that into consideration and you are judged on how you present yourself and how well you try to get on with everyone else, rather than how much you have in your bank account or what you drive. Yes, these things are discussed, especially when you reach the age of 17, as people are starting to learn to drive. You may, then, be asked what car you are getting and so on. Personally I would like to think that the discussing of driving and cars is something you get no matter where you are, or come from. My personal 'take' on things is that people judge you on the respect you have for yourself and on others around you. The more activities you take part in the more 'acquaintances' you make.

Work-wise my level has gone up but I am thinking that it would anyway, since I have made the step from school to college. I cannot compare the level of work that is being done at Gresham's with the work being done at East Norfolk VI Form College, as I have never studied there. However, I can say that, from my experience, it is really hard studying at Gresham's. Firstly there is getting to grips with the ways of learning, then getting used to the timetable. The long days used to hurt me the most, when I first started. It was really hard back then but, now as I look back to September and when I arrived, the days seem shorter and they are not as tiring as before. I feel as if I am getting to grips with everything and next term I know I will go back even stronger than before.

Finally, I would like to congratulate Callum on getting the 'gig' – now he will be called 'Experiment 2'!



Lubalalo Ndhidi; Ormiston Venture's First Gresham's Scholar.

Sometimes I joke around with friends of mine and refer to myself as 'Experiment 1', since I am the first of many, I hope, to go through this experience.

Diary Dates: Keep up to date with events at Venture Academy...

- | | |
|---|---|
| September | November |
| 29 September 2011 – Open Evening | 4 November 2011 – Battlefields Trip |
| October | 14-16 November 2011 – Mathematics Prep |
| 7 October 2011 – Genes for Jeans Day | 17-18 November 2011 – Mathematics Challenge Days |
| 24-28 October 2011 – Half-Term | 18 November 2011 – Children In Need Readathon |

My work Experience with Broadland Meridian by Sidney Goodman

My name is Sidney Goodman and I am at the Ormiston Venture Academy. I have been placed with Broadland Meridian for my work experience. On the first day I met Sue who helped me get settled in and gave me some work to do.

I completed the UK Online courses and then helped Sue with a project on reminiscence that is being used at a Sheltered House. I created a quiz and a catchphrase competition on old time adverts going back to the 1960's.

I took part with Mr Ives in a digital champion course with Jim Edmonds which we both passed meaning we are registered volunteers to help the elderly and all other people who need to learn about basic computer skills from turning it on to using emails.

I have created posters for future events here with Amy including the Tea and Coffee Mornings and a Barbecue for residents of the area.

I have also worked a little at Recycle PC which is a charity that fixes up computers that have been donated by people and companies. They are fixed up and given to people who have no computers or any way of using the internet through old age or low income. I helped fix a computer tower to be donated next week to an elderly gentleman.

On my final day I created posters for a game night at the sheltered house. I have enjoyed my week a lot. I have refreshed my skills in typing, became a digital champion and have found a charity to help people.

Thank you to everybody who has made this week enjoyable for me!



Restoration, Restoration, Restoration

This may sound like a prime time TV show but at Ormiston Venture Academy we are committed to helping our students resolve problems by facilitating dialogue and taking ownership of issues that arise.

As Aspire College Leader, I have taken on the role of ensuring that the restorative approach is being used throughout the Academy.

The restorative approach puts repairing harm done to relationships and people over and above the need for assigning blame; this is not a soft option but a process which makes people far more accountable for their actions than punishment.

The advantages of the restorative approach in the Academy setting include a safer, more caring environment,

a more effective teaching and learning environment, a reduction in bullying and other interpersonal conflicts and an increased belief in the ability of young people to take responsibility for their choices.

In the new academic year I will be running small group work and one to one sessions with students who need some extra support to understand the affects of their behaviour and its impact on their learning.

We aim to give our students the tools to be more productive members of the wider community, and as always here at Ormiston Venture Academy we

'Aspire To Be World Class'

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

Justin Peach – Aspire College Leader

Email: jpeach@ormistonventureacademy.co.uk

Venture Community Fete

Despite initial doubts about the weather the sun shone for the first Venture Community Fete and to the soundtrack of the Venture's Got Talent acts nearly £850 was raised for charity.

His Worship the Mayor of Great Yarmouth, Councillor Coleman, and his wife, also a Councillor, opened the Fete which included around 40 stalls from all four Colleges. Each College had the chance to choose their favourite charity and the College that raised the most money on their stalls won the entire fete proceeds to donate to the charity of their choice.

Students work tirelessly to prepare their stalls and activities. Attractions included face-painting, apple bobbing, teachers in stocks, a human fruit machine and even a fortune telling stall. Tombolas also proved popular with the visitors and one stall, Aspire 4, lead by Miss Walsh, sold out in under 30 minutes making over £80!

"I was really impressed by the range of stalls on offer" said Mr Plume, Director of Mathematics. "The students demonstrated their entrepreneurial skills and selected stalls which proved very popular with our visitors. We've been doing some work in PL time designed to develop enterprise and many students have clearly got a talent for it."

Venture students also hosted Year 5s and 6s from Peterhouse, Moorlands and Herman who took part in a series of sessions about enterprise to get them ready for the fete. In sessions, lead by Venture's Senior Year, they discussed entrepreneurs and when taking a risk might be acceptable. Finally, before joining the fete preparations, they planned how they could make the most money for charity from £1.

Principal McCartney stated that it was a delight to see the results of the hard work the students had put in to designing and creating the Venture stalls. The Mayor and his Wife enjoyed their tour of the Academy so much that they are due to come back in September, at the start of the new term. Venture Academy students have done the Gorleston community proud, and we look forward to an even bigger and better fete next year.

After nearly two hours of trading it was a close battle between the Colleges as they fought it out to win the takings for their chosen charity. In the end Aspire managed to pip the other Colleges to the post and bank the takings for Great Ormond Street Hospital.



Parents' Literacy Group

At Ormiston Venture Academy, our greatest community resource is being well used as parents, carers and local philanthropists are giving up their time to help younger children to read with confidence and fluency.

Following a local campaign to recruit families to listen to new Venture recruits reading, a group of 6 adults spend every Wednesday afternoon in the academy's Learning Resource Centre supporting students on a one-to-one basis.

Senior Vice Principal, Naomi Palmer, led the campaign to bring the community in:



Having helped with reading for two terms, many of the members of the reading group are now keen to become more involved in the academy day. Several have expressed a desire to observe their student readers' learning skills in other lessons across the curriculum and others wish to support lessons where literacy is key to success.

"At the secondary education stage, we often forget to ask families to offer time to support learning and so many are keen to come and help. We are missing out on a crucial group of highly skilled, generous individuals if we don't explore this opportunity. At Venture we are so grateful for this additional support time – many of the children in the group have managed to raise their reading ages by 2 whole years in just a few months."

Mr Mackintosh has been attending the Wednesday afternoon sessions since... having heard about the group through... He commented on the value of the reading sessions for the volunteers:

Mrs Nichols, who has volunteered since the start of the group in January said:

If you are a parent or carer of a student at Ormiston Venture Academy, or a member of the community who is keen to get involved, please contact Naomi Palmer on npalmer@ormistonventureacademy.co.uk or telephone 01493 662 966 for further details.

All volunteers are subject to a Criminal Records Bureau check and attend training sessions prior to starting.



Famous Mathematician Treasure Hunt

Hot on the heels of their success in the Four Nations Mathematics challenge students at Ormiston Venture Academy are now participating in a treasure hunt based on Famous Mathematicians.

The Famous Mathematicians have been planted in locations in each of the Venture Colleges; *Aspire*, *Achieve*, *Create* and *Innovate*. Students have to find each Mathematician and collect clues to show Mr Plume, Director of Mathematics.

The Mathematicians who are featured, and include Descartes and Gauss, change every two weeks and are displayed in new locations.

"As you would expect students spend time learning about, and practicing, key Mathematical skills in preparation for exams and the World of work" said Mr Plume who is running the treasure hunt.

"Even before I had passed around the Treasure Hunt details I had students talking to me about the Mathematicians. It's great to have the opportunity for them to learn more about the famous names behind the Maths".

The treasure hunt will run until the end of the year and the student who returns the clues to Mr Plume most quickly and accurately over the duration of the competition will win a prize.



Athletics success in the year leading up to the Olympic Games

Venture Academy experienced an amazingly triumphant day at the district athletics event held at the Wellesey stadium in great Yarmouth.

Numerous proud students received their Gold, Silver and Bronze medals for their achievements right throughout the day. 41 'A' event and 43 'B' event medals were won in total which helped the Academy to a highly credible 3rd placed finish overall. This was even more Outstanding when one considers the sizes of our opponents schools, and the fact that we were only 20 points behind 2nd place.

P.E Does Us Proud

The PE faculty and students themselves deserve huge congratulations for all of their hard work and commitment. Onwards and upwards!

PS. Thanks to all the PE staff for their hard work and commitment.



Sports News

UK School Games World Record Breaker!

Ormiston Venture Academy student swimmer breaks world record at UK School Games.

15 Year-old Jess Applegate swam an incredible pb to shatter the World, European & British records for the 50 metres freestyle S14 category. Jess took $\frac{1}{2}$ second off of her previous best to touch in 28.90 seconds and take the MD title at the UK School Games in Sheffield last weekend.

Jess also took over 1 second off of her 100 metres freestyle pb to touch in 1:03.30. This was just 0.04 outside of the British record which has stood for 11 years.

She claimed the MD title, her 2nd gold of the weekend. Excellent swimming well-done Jess.

The UK School Games is a 4-day multi-sport event for athletes 16 & under. It is run like a mini-olympics and gives young athletes a great opportunity to experience a bigger multi-sport event. Norwich had 4 swimmers selected to represent the East Region – Jess Applegate, Mark Chard, Poppy Ingleson and Marcella Aris.