

# Students very proud of their new-look academy

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Students at Ormiston Venture Academy marked the official opening of their new £8m facilities with rousing speeches and tours of the brand new school buildings.

The buildings at the school in Oriel Road, Gorleston, have been in use since term started last September, but were declared open on Wednesday as invited guests, governors and pupils gathered on the school lawn for a VIP ceremony.

Former pupil Callum Cooke, a Gresham's scholar who is now studying fine art at Oxford University, cut the ribbon and said: "As someone who went to the school when it was Oriel and Ormiston, I just want to say how much it deserves a building like this so it can carry on with the hard work it's always done."

The school, part of the Ormiston Academies Trust (OAT) network, opened in September 2010 on the site of the former Oriel High.

Speaking at the opening, chairman of governors Lesley King said: "I remember when the old buildings were first built and that was an exciting investment in a technical high school for Yarmouth. Now we get to see them transformed for education in the 21st century."

"Some people say that new buildings are a waste of time and a waste of money because what's important about a school is the people inside. In some ways, Ormiston Venture Academy has proved that to be the case - in old fashioned buildings that weren't fit for purpose they improved the school and turned it into one of the best in the country."

"But what we have now are buildings that you, the students and staff, deserve. These buildings are ready for the flair and excitement of trying out new things and taking even more pride in your work."

Ormiston has been praised



**A WALK IN THE SUNSHINE:** Pupils enjoy their new environment at the official opening of the new build at Ormiston Venture Academy. Pictures: NICK BUTCHER

for turning its fortunes around. It became the first sponsored academy in the region to be graded 'outstanding' on every measure by Ofsted inspectors and it recently became the first secondary school in Norfolk to receive a National College for Teaching and Leadership designation, making it one of only four national teacher training schools in the county.

Year 8 student Tiah-Paige Davie, 13, said students had looked forward to being in the new buildings after months of construction last year.

"Before, the corridors were squished but now there's lots of room. I think all the students are enjoying it, especially after watching all

the construction work. We had plans around the school that we could look at and I think it's turned out better than we'd thought."

Professor Toby Salt, chief executive officer of OAT, and former principal Nicole McCartney, now national director of performance and partnerships for OAT and executive principal of Ormiston Venture, joined governors, students and current principal Simon Gilbert-Barnham at the official opening.

"I'm very proud of Ormiston Venture Academy," said Professor Salt.

"It's our most outstanding and special academy. And I know pupils and staff are really proud too."



**OFFICIALLY OPEN:** Speeches and tours marked the official opening of the new £8million facilities at Ormiston Venture Academy in Gorleston.

## In Brief

### Appeal after homes raided

Cameras, cash and a mobile phone were among the items stolen after burglars targeted two Great Yarmouth homes.

In the first incident jewellery, a mini Asus notebook and a number of kitchen utensils were stolen from a property in Beatty Road, between noon on April 5 and 7am on April 8.

Then, between 1am and 8.30am on April 17, burglars stole car keys, three cameras, a wallet, mobile phone and jewellery from a house in Midland Close.

Witnesses should call 101 or Crimestoppers on 0800 555111.

### Cash in the attic

Organisers of a 50/50 auction are urging people to clear out their attics and garages in support of their local church.

The auction is being staged tomorrow at noon at All Saints Parish Hall in Scrabby with half the proceeds from each sale going to the seller and half to St Margaret's Church in Ormesby St Margaret.

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