



1 December 2023

“In seed time learn, in harvest teach, in winter enjoy.”

William Blake

Dear Parent/Carer,

Winter has certainly arrived with a bang today. Well done to everyone for doing everything they could to get into school and being sensible in the conditions. Students should not worry about being late in these conditions. Their safe arrival is the most important thing.

Firstly, this week I would like to say well done to our Year 11 students for their attitude and efforts in the recent mock exams. Once again, their conduct was exemplary. In the coming weeks students will receive feedback from their teachers and will receive their grades in a mock results day on 22nd January. We have high hopes for this year group and continue to wish them the best and to remind them that their teachers are here to help and support them when they need it. The after-school timetable for Year 11 is [here](#) and provides an opportunity for students to get that extra bit of personal help if they need it.

Our new advent attendance challenge is well underway. Congratulations to all of those students who have attended school since Monday 27th November and have been to all their lessons. The competition runs until 12th December. To be in with a chance of winning a prize, students simply need to be in school. Prizes range from lunchtime Domino's treats, Amazon vouchers and tickets to see Newcastle United v Nottingham Forest on boxing day. We are looking forward to rewarding students in the run up to Christmas by recognising those that are coming to school each day and giving their best.

With the upcoming introduction of Martyn's law (following a campaign to commemorate Martyn Hett, one of 22 people murdered in the Manchester Arena attack in 2017) schools across the country continue to develop their lockdown procedures. We have been working through our updates with our students and will carry out a drill before the end of term. To avoid any unnecessary worry, we will warn students and parents in advance whenever a lockdown drill is going to take place.

Our academic spotlight this week is on the music department and in particular our peripatetic teachers who for a long time have been an integral part of the development of our musical talent. We currently have a team of 7 visiting peripatetic tutors- Mr Wilde- Piano, Mr Clarence and Miss Boehringer- vocals, Mrs Tickel- strings, Mr Byrne-McCullough- guitar, Mr Flood- Brass, Miss Purvis- drums and Mrs Lee teaching Woodwind in house.

We have 82 students learning across these instrumental families, with many additional students having access to these tutors through additional clubs, workshops and GCSE/BTEC support.

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The majority of our GCSE and BTEC students have instrumental lessons to support their solo and ensemble performance units of their qualifications and many of our previous music students have gone on to brilliant things after leaving school. For example, 2/3rds of last year's year 13 cohort went on to study Music at University.



The quality and output of the performing arts department continues to impress us all and we look forward to this being showcased in our Winter Showcase performance on Thursday 14th December at 6.30pm for approximately 90 minutes. If you are interested in a fun-filled festive musical evening tickets are available for £2 from the student reception or on the door



Finally, well done to Sharon (right) for once again proudly representing George Stephenson High School (and the Northeast) at the House of Commons as part of the UK youth parliament last week.

Wishing you all the best,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'P. Douthwaite'.

Mr. P. Douthwaite
Headteacher