



20 December 2023

**"I could have been someone"  
Well, so could anyone  
You took my dreams from me  
When I first found you  
I kept them with me, babe  
I put them with my own  
Can't make it all alone  
I've built my dreams around you**

**Shane MacGowan**

As we come to the end of term and Christmas is upon us everyone at George Stephenson wishes you all the very best for the festive break. I was fortunate enough to see the Pogues a couple of times and enjoy the lyrics of Shane MacGowan. He captures the season so well in the Fairytale of New York as a time when we appreciate the importance of the loved ones in our lives and think about others that maybe aren't as lucky. I often ask our students what they enjoy most at this time of year and it always lifts my spirits when they say it is spending time with their friends and family.

Over the last few weeks, we have looked at the importance of good interpersonal relationships with our students working on cross-curriculum lessons around Sikhism in Year 9 and Human Rights in Year 7. The students have been fantastic visiting the gurdwara in Newcastle and discussing the importance of respecting each other, shared values and caring, and reflecting on what this means to them.

We also continue to look at how we can support those who are struggling and recently hosted the first Mental Health Support Team Hub for parents with the North Tyneside Mental Health team. This was well attended and received as we continue to look at ways, we can further support our community, families and their children through more outreach work.

The final week of term is our chance to reward our students for all their excellent efforts in school and for demonstrating the values we promote. We have our rewards assemblies for every year group with certificates and prizes and the 'Golden Ticket' where students are nominated by a member of staff for something they have done. They will then go into a draw to win £50. This is in addition to our 12 days of Christmas advent attendance challenge where several excellent prizes have already been won by well deserving students.

As a school which works with the Newcastle United Foundation we have also been donated a signed Newcastle United Shirt which we will be raffling off as a prize from Mrs Riccalton. This would make the perfect Christmas Present. Tickets are still available and will be sold until the end of the day on Thursday at £1 each in the dining hall at break times and during registration. The draw will be on Friday so tomorrow is the last day to get tickets!

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**Deputy Headteacher:**

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Keeping up the football theme congratulations go to our Year 7 and Year 10 football teams who performed so well recently.



Year 7 Boys Football



Year 10 Boys Football



Year 8 and 9 Girls Clubbercise

Year 7 put in a great performance at North Gosforth Academy and Year 11 reached the next round of the county cup. We have a really strong team this year and hopefully they can go one better than last year's Year 11 who were narrowly beaten in the final. Keep up the great work!

Well done also to all the girls who took part in the North Tyneside School Girls Game Association Clubbercise Event session looking at dance aerobic routines. Mrs Patrick said they all had a fantastic afternoon.

Once again, I would like to thank you for your kind donations and generosity last week to help us make so many winter hampers. There was a minibus FULL of hampers to support The Bay Foodbank. As a reward to students, this Friday will be a Christmas Jumper day. This will be a non-uniform day where we encourage students to wear a Christmas jumper if they have one.

Finally, it was a pleasure to see so many students performing in our Winter Showcase last Wednesday. The students were excellent and had to overcome their nerves playing to a full house. They all did themselves proud and I'm sure everyone who left was full of festive spirit.



Winter Showcase

A couple of reminders for next term. Please be aware that it is our policy to keep the school open wherever possible. The Department for Education recognises the delivery of education as an essential service, as do we. If we do have to close, parents/carers will be informed through ParentMail, the school website [www.gshs.org.uk](http://www.gshs.org.uk) or the North Tyneside Council website [www.northtyneside.gov.uk](http://www.northtyneside.gov.uk) Please continue to assume the school is open unless you hear otherwise.

I would also like to take this opportunity to remind you of our school uniform requirements in advance of the holidays when some of you may be buying new uniform for your child. Please see the guidance on our website. I would like to thank parents and students who have supported our uniform expectations again this year.

If you receive travel assistance to and from George Stephenson, you will soon receive a letter from the Local Authority consulting with you about proposed changes to this service. Your voice is extremely important in this process so please complete the survey when you receive it. It can also be accessed by visiting [www.northtyneside.gov.uk](http://www.northtyneside.gov.uk) and searching 'Have Your Say'.

It has been a thoroughly enjoyable term at George Stephenson High School. Your kindness, care and generosity, as demonstrated by our charity collections this year and your kind donations to the Christmas hampers last week reflects the best of the festive season. I hope that you all have a peaceful, relaxing and enjoyable break, and we look forward to welcoming students back to school on Monday 8th January 2024.

Wishing you a very Merry Christmas,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. Douthwaite'. The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Mr. P. Douthwaite  
Headteacher