



**“Hours roll like summer clouds, and summer clouds don’t worry about tomorrow”**

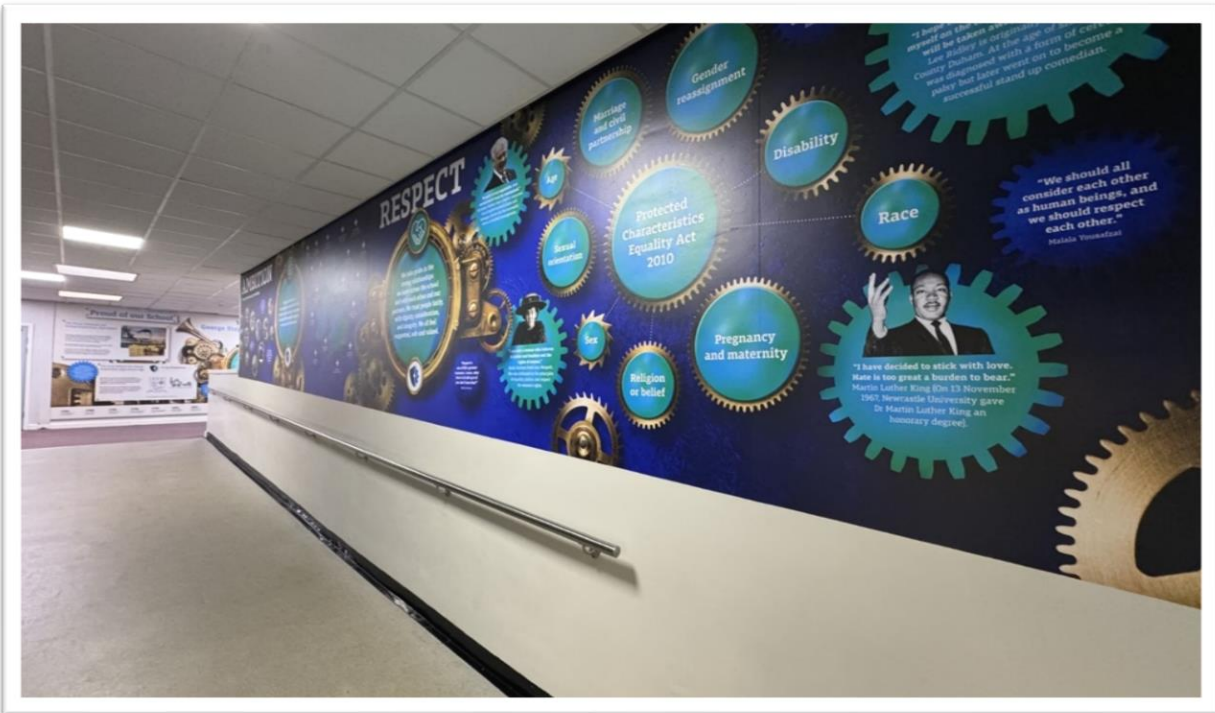
**Ray Lamontagne**

Dear Parent/Carer,

As we enter the final half term and are well into the exam season, I would like to say what an absolute credit the students have been to both you and the school in how they have approached the exams. We are proud of them and hope they all get what they deserve on results day. Year 11 I am sure will enjoy their prom on 20<sup>th</sup> of June. More than 30 staff will also be in attendance, which shows the strength of the relationships that are built with students over their time at GSHS. I always enjoy this evening as it is a wonderful opportunity to speak to them all and see the impressive young adults they have become.

After an illness earlier this year I put a few milestones in my diary to build back up. Yesterday I completed the Blaydon Race, then hopefully in September the Great North Run and then next April the Manchester Marathon. It made me reflect on setbacks and how we can set ourselves goals to work towards to get over them. I read the Diary of a CEO by Steve Bartlett over half term and it is incredible how many skillful and talented people did not do particularly well at school but went on to be very successful. Their personality, resilience, desire to keep on learning and setting themselves realistic goals helped them achieve this. At George Stephenson we will always aspire for our young people to do as well as they can in their studies but just as importantly to have developed the skills and outlook to know that this is just one measure of who they are. This year I have shared several success stories with you about what students have done after they have left GSHS. As a result, I am receiving more and more of these from ex-students who are keen to let us know what they are now doing and how GSHS has helped them get there. This is a great source of pride for us as a school and community.

In terms of pride in the school. The next time you visit you will see our new wall art in the school reception and the hall. This has been designed by our students to reflect our school’s history and our values around Ambition, Respect and Community. We also now have a litter picking team and a group of students who are working on the grounds - planting plants and flowers to continue to improve the environment.



Photographs courtesy of Thomas Young – Year 10 GCSE Photography Student

Thank you for your feedback on our recent school survey – the findings were positive and an improvement on last year.

- My child is happy at school 87%
- My child feels safe at school 92%
- The school makes sure its pupils are well behaved 82%
- My child has not been bullied or it has been dealt with quickly and efficiently 94%
- The school makes me aware of what my child will learn during the year 72%
- The school has a calm, orderly environment which helps my child to learn 77%
- The school behaviour policy is fair and used consistently 75%
- The school had high expectations for my child 87%
- My child does well at this school 90%
- The school lets me know how my child is doing 82%
- My child is encouraged to have good attendance and punctuality 93%
- There is a good range of subjects available to my child at this school 88%
- My Child can take part in clubs and activities at this school 88%
- The school supports my child's wider personal development 70%
- The school has a positive respectful culture in which my child is well cared for 80%
- My child has a positive attitude to learning 85%
- I would recommend this school to another parent 86%

We aim to improve in all areas, however feedback on 'making you aware of what your child learns through the year' is lower than we would like. This is an area we will review but I would also like to remind you that we have a Parent Information evening at the start of the year for each year group (links to presentations [here](#)) and information on the content of courses in each year group can be found on the curriculum area of our [website](#).

We do a lot of work around personal development and our destination outcomes for our young people are higher than national figures and the rest of North Tyneside however this is an area we will continue to develop and communicate with you. Our new Assistant Headteacher Mrs. Robson has already begun to improve this area and has set up a student council to support this work.

Our Respect values also link to the environment. I am pleased to say we have finally surpassed our target of 3000 batteries with 5 days to spare. The Eco-Enthusiasts count showed that we collected 3172 in total. Thank you all for your support in helping to recycle so many battery products. Our battery collection for the year has now ended.

Our next environmental event is Clean Air Day on 20<sup>th</sup> June. We would like to encourage staff, parents and students to cycle or walk to work and school if they don't normally do so, or use public transport or car share if this is not an option.

You may be aware of the incredibly sad news that Mercy Cuthbertson died on May 19th following her fight against a brain tumour. Mercy's parents sent their heartfelt thanks to the school and to you for raising money for the Mighty Mercy Fund and have now set up Mercy's Mighty Foundation. This will support families who have a child diagnosed with a brain tumour. As a school and community, through your kind donations, we have now raised almost £1000 for the fund and foundation. If you would like to find out more information, please click the link [here](#).

Congratulations to the Year 11 boys football team who won the county league cup final against John Spence. In a tight game, where they went 1-0 down, they eventually won 3-1, which proved a fitting end to a talented team's time at George Stephenson.



The victorious GSHS Year 11 boys football team

We would also like to say well done to the 30 girls involved in the Girls Network for getting fully involved in the three workshops below. Every student said that the network had a positive impact on them.



Workshop 1: Developing your personal brand Girls learnt to recognise their key strengths and consider the pathways they can take to achieve their goals.

Workshop 2: Confident You Girls learnt the power of thinking about themselves positively and how to express this to others. They also considered challenges including growth vs fixed mindsets and how to build resilience

Workshop 3: Working Life Girls gained an insight into the world of work and got the chance to hear about a range of careers and ask professional women interview questions

Finally, this week you will be sent some information on a small change to the start and finish times for the school day next year. This is in line with DFE guidance, but I invite your feedback on this as part of the consultation.

Wishing you all the best,

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

Mr. P. Douthwaite  
Headteacher