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Another Busy Term at GSHS

Welcome to our termly newspaper, which will give you an insight into the life of our school. Our young people continue to be the greatest ambassadors and advocates for our school and they have been a real credit to the school in many ways this year.

We endeavour to support them throughout their time at George Stephenson High School to achieve in everything they do. We continue to be very proud of our young people and I hope they are proud too of their achievements and their school.

I would like to thank all of our parents and our community for your continued support you have given our school again this year and for your attendance at events and parent evenings. We have had several parent evenings now this year and there has been an excellent attendance at all of them.

Our most recent parents' evening in February for Year 9 was a record for us with 90% of parents in attendance. We are delighted that so many parents are supportive of our school. We are also very pleased to announce that we are oversubscribed again for next year and we will welcome 228 new students into Year 7 in September.

The DFE have recently published the School Performance Tables and we are delighted how well our students did last year. Our Average Attainment 8 score was 48.3 – an increase on the previous year and the third highest in the local authority. This means that the average grade at GCSE in the summer was just below a Grade 5. In the new assessment and examination regime, a Grade 4 is a standard pass equivalent to a Grade C and a Grade 5 is now classed as a strong pass, equivalent to almost a Grade B. When prior attainment is factored in, we are even more proud of these results.

Our Progress 8 score this year was -0.04 and effectively means that students across

the board make expected progress. On this measure, we were the second highest performing school in North Tyneside.

Academic results are important but equally as important is where our young people go after they leave us. As has been the case for many years now, our Destination Data, both Post-16 and Post-18 is very strong. Out of a year group of 218 Year 11 students last year, 88% are still in education, 11% are in employment or training and less than 1% of them are currently NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training).

This NEET figure is well below the national and local average and a real testament to our young people and the support and guidance our school provides for them. This is now the fourth year running where our NEET figure at this stage is around 1%.

Our Post-18 destination data was again very pleasing this year. Out of the 55 students who were in Year 13 last year, 39 of them (71%) secured a place on a Higher Education course, the majority at their first choice University. 11 out of the 39 university students have gone to a Russell Group University (28%, compared to 19% last year). Of the remaining students, eight secured an Apprenticeship (including three at degree level), four entered full time employment, three entered Further Education and one entered the Armed Forces.

Our current Year 11 and Year 13 students are working very hard at the moment in the run up to their exams and we wish them the very best for the weeks ahead.

Mr I Wilkinson: Headteacher



Diversity Games. See back page for article.

Celebrating Attendance

The best Form Group Attendance during the first half term was 7AI. Mr Ingham was delighted to be informed of this.

"I am very proud of my tutor group 7AI who have collectively had an outstanding attendance in their first half term at GSHS."



A message which is shared by all of our staff at GSHS.

Well done 7AI.

Best punctuality in Key Stage 3 winners are 9HST with a punctuality rate of 99.3%.

Best punctuality in Key Stage 4 winners are 10RKN with a punctuality rate of 98.6%.

We would like to pass on our thanks to parents for their continued support around attendance and punctuality. The overall school attendance up until the end of the first term was 95.6% which is a significant improvement.

Our school target is 96% and we hope to continue improving and supporting students to attend as fully as possible in order for them to make outstanding progress and maximise all learning opportunities at GSHS as the year progresses.

Mr F Patrick: Educational Welfare Officer

Suffragette Project

Last year marked the 100th anniversary of the Representation of the People Act of 1918. 7G1 have been working with Newcastle University and a professional animator to create peg doll puppet animations.

To help us learn more about suffragettes, we went on a 2-day trip to the University. While we were there, we looked at artefacts from the time. One of them was a book called 'Votes for Catherine, Susan and me'. We got the ideas for the peg dolls from this book.

When we were there we went on a guided walk in town and found out about different Suffragette events that took place here in Newcastle.

For the past few weeks in our DT and Art lessons, we have been making the puppets in the workshop.

We have based our animations on things like marches, force feeding and The Epsom Derby accident.

Our work is being displayed at the White Swan Centre in August and on the Newcastle University website.

Mrs A Douglas: Curriculum Leader; Art and Design

Children's Christmas Party

Once upon a time in the year that was 2018, the wonderful students of Mr Ingham's Year 12 Health and Social care class ran a children's Christmas party.

Children came and enjoyed a fun time with crafts, singing, dancing, games and even a visit from Santa. Christmas cards and baubles

were decorated and taken home to add to their trees.

Everyone enjoyed singing and dancing, including the Christmas favourite Rudolph the Red Nose Reindeer. Like every good party, we had a fabulous game of pass the parcel where every child was a winner.



At the end, each child received a special gift from Santa to take home and enjoy. Parents and carers enjoyed a cup of tea and biscuit with the chance to chat while watching their children play.

A great atmosphere was created by everyone's enthusiasm and support, which got everyone in the Christmas mood.

A great Christmas party enjoyed by all has allowed the students to get practical experience to support their Health and Social Care coursework Unit: Creativity and Activity for Children and Young People.

Samuel Blake: Yr12 Health and Social Student

Photograph by: Rachel Alexander

The Walking Dead

The following Year 9 piece of Imaginative Writing was inspired by "The Walking Dead" and is focused on preparing students for their English Language GCSE. In it, a man awakens in hospital from a coma and begins to realise that something strange is happening...

Walking Dead

Beep. Beep. Beep. That sound repeated itself over and over again in my head. The room was silent; not a noise was made. The light was blinding; a dark figure towering over me. The silence was eerie. My body began to shake mechanically. A fever sweat began to glisten on my forehead. I cocooned myself, seeking warmth that wasn't there. Everything stopped: the clock, the phone, but the beep continued...

Silence...

The lights flickered. My body froze. My breaths became short; they puffed from my mouth in feeble wisps. An intense darkness surrounded me... My legs were weak, as if a heavy weight was pushing me back down. I shouted frantically for a nurse. No answer. The silence continued to follow me into the hallway. I struggled against the wall, looking back at every moment.

The only sound I could hear was the sound of my heavy breathing, and of course the beep. The sound of the beep followed me. Tormenting my mind. It got faster, louder. Almost like a cry for help. I clutched my chest in pain. Papers scattered all over the floor, thick blood-red handprints stained the wall. The flowers were drooped and rotten.

I struggled against the wall gripping it with all the strength I had left. I looked back and forward constantly. The absence of sound scared me. I sought for any person I could find. There was no one. The only warmth I

could find was myself. The air was ice cold. As I touched the metal handle I was jolted by a chilling frost that rapidly flowed through my spine. The sound of the beep tormented my ears, following my every move. My head was pounding as if something needed to be released. My breathing became loud and desperate. My legs almost gave way as I stumbled against the wall.

My heart stopped. My veins bulged out of my neck. A woman like figure lay innocently on the hospital floor. She looked as if she had been violently mutilated. Her mangled lip and obviously broken nose were caked in dry blood. The now browning blood drizzled down her face like so much rain down a window pane. When I managed to get close enough to see her face I froze. Her eyes were wilder than a deer caught in a trap. She was lifeless. I couldn't look anymore... I had to go...

Year 9 Student: Rhiannon Coates

Hara Band Performance

The Hara Band performed to Years 9 and 10, aiming to deliver their message about online safety, mental health and cyber bullying through the medium of song!

After the performance some of our students commented that

'It was the 'best morning of [their] lives'

...and that they felt that they could relate to Hara more talking about mental health as they are their age so they could understand them better!

The HARA, formed in July 2017, is a lively energetic theatrical Alternative Pop Rock band. The BBC have tipped them as the next big UK band. 'Made To Be' from their debut EP achieved #2 in the official iTunes Alternative Single Charts.

They have already completed two headline tours. All band members were bullied / cyber bullied as youngsters so feel they are the perfect advocates for delivering such a positive message to young pupils.

This program has toured to more than 4,800 schools around the UK and Ireland, with a mix of different artists who've had outstanding reviews.

During the performance, students watched a unique and entertaining performance from the artists, which was followed by a Mental Health / Online Safety educational message.

The main message of the presentation was to empower students to make the right choices in regards to Online Safety and Cyber Bullying, as well as to inform students not to discriminate and to treat everyone fairly.

They have a lot of adoring fans!

After having their own issues with online

safety, stress and mental health, they wanted to discuss these issues with the younger generation.

Certainly, the message that they are promoting was well received by our students and all students that were asked really enjoyed the morning.

Mrs K Williams: Deputy Headteacher



The Buzz

On 20th November 2018, our Year 12 students were treated to an afternoon with David Hodgson as part of our ongoing commitment to help our students to access further and higher education. The session content was based on The Buzz, David's renowned book and personality quiz used widely by UCAS, icould.com, schools, colleges and universities across the UK and abroad.

The Buzz allows students to discover their own personality strengths in an interactive and fun session. They can apply newly found self-awareness to boost their confidence and learning and understand their strengths and relationships.

Our students were guided through a series of questions to help them find out the most effective ways for them to learn, how they can reduce stress, and the type of jobs and courses that might best suit them in the future. The performance was very engaging

and exciting, and helped our students to reflect on how they make decisions, take in information, gain energy, and develop their attitudes to life and learning. It was a really

rewarding experience for both students and staff alike.

Mrs K Williams: Deputy Headteacher



NECOP Future Me Project

Between October half term and Christmas, 10 of our Year 9 students were involved in a Future Me Project co-ordinated by Northumbria University.

Every week, all students in the group accessed a group session with undergraduate students Josh and Kendall which was then followed up by a 15 minute 1:1 with them throughout the day.

The aim of the project was to support students through seven higher education modules to deepen their understanding of higher education and develop important attributes for success, both in and beyond school.

The feedback from the university project co-ordinator was superb. He said our students were some of the best behaved of all the schools involved in the project.

Mr. Cartwright (Progress Support Co-ordinator) said that he was "delighted with how the students had taken to the mentors and their effort and attitude in the sessions was brilliant". One student said, "It helped me plan my life and boosted my confidence" and another said "I now know what university is like and how to manage finances".

Mrs K Williams: Deputy Headteacher

Hooray our first Red Run



Year 8 students celebrating having just completed their first Red Run.

89 of our students ranging from Year 8 to Year 13 visited Amade, near Salzburg, Austria. They arrived on Sunday 17th February and had 5 full days of skiing.

The students had a wonderful time and thoroughly enjoyed skiing in the beautiful Austrian, Alpine scenery.

Miss Prescott: Acting Curriculum Leader English

A Life Changing Experience at The Theatre

Macbeth, The Theatre Royal, November 2018

Those of you who were lucky enough to know our late chair of Governors, Peter Latham, won't be surprised to know that he bequeathed the school £5000 to enable students to have experiences that they may not otherwise have. I have no doubt that he would have thoroughly approved of the first way we used some of this money back in November...

Macbeth is currently a set text on the GCSE English Literature course and, as soon as we heard that there was to be a performance at The Theatre Royal, we immediately booked tickets for an evening performance. Over 50 students attended the performance and thoroughly enjoyed the modern interpretation of the play, not least because of the Geordie Porter!

Whilst we were at the show, I kept thinking of my own Year 11 class, none of whom had booked tickets when they originally became available, and of how much they would love to see the performance. Not thinking that it would even be a possibility, I called the theatre the following morning to see if any tickets were still available and was delighted to find that there were 15 tickets available for the following day's matinee performance. At the time, unaware of the money that Peter had left to the school, I provisionally booked the tickets and hoped against hope that I could find some way of sending my class to see the performance...

Somehow, all of the stars seemed to be aligned that day and not only was I delighted to find that there was a way of funding the tickets, our new Deputy Head, Kath Williams, and our Family Liaison worker, Sarah Graham, were available to supervise the trip, and the mini bus was free!

Without exception, the students were thrilled to be given the opportunity to go to the theatre and to see a live performance of the play that they were studying in class. To see the play live, in a theatre, brought them a very different level of understanding and enthusiasm for the play, and they all felt spoiled rotten!

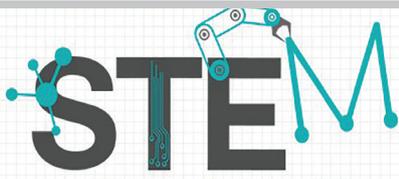
I know that Peter would wholeheartedly approve of spending his very generous gift in this way, and that the students were certainly extremely grateful to him and his wife and daughter. What Peter has given them is not only a better knowledge of and enthusiasm for the play, and hopefully better examination results as a result, but a love of the theatre that will no doubt last a lifetime, and a profound understanding of the incredible generosity that some people are capable of.

Ms L Simpson: Assistant Headteacher



Dissection Month





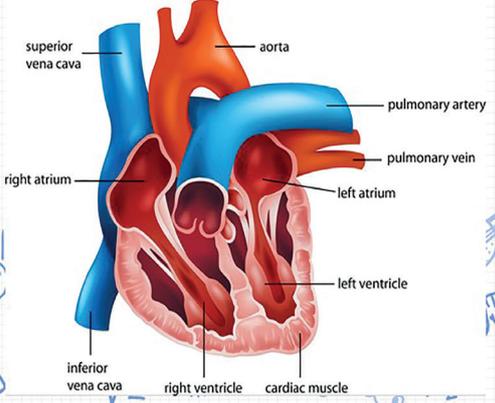
Dissection Month

STEM Club: 3-4pm in C33

Anatomy of the Human Heart

Thursday the 14th March:
The Heart

Follow us on Twitter
@GSHS_STEM



Stem Club-Science , Technology, Engineering, Maths

STEM Club is held every Thursday between 3 - 4pm. A different topic is covered each session, and all students are welcome.

What Next for Year 11?



Longbenton High School &
George Stephenson High School

On Thursday 31st January we held our annual Destinations Evening for Year 11. The event was held at Longbenton High School with whom we share our post 16 provision, NE12 Sixth Form.



The evening was a fantastic opportunity for Year 11 students and their families to find out what is on offer for our young people post-16. Representatives from a number of employers were in attendance including: HSBC, NHS, Uniformed Services and Kier, as well as a range of other advice and training providers such as National Citizens Service, Lomax Training and Connexions, along with representatives from local colleges.

“I wasn’t sure if sixth form was for me but after talking to teachers and seeing the school at Longbenton, I’ve decided that it would be the best choice because I will get the best of both worlds - teachers who know me and also the chance to make new friends.”

Year 11 student

Students and their families were able to find out about the range of exciting courses on offer at NE12 Sixth Form by talking to staff and students as well as attending an informative presentation from our head teachers, Mr Quinn and Mr Wilkinson.

In the weeks running up to the open evening, students also enjoyed a range of taster lessons in new and exciting subjects offered at A Level such as Psychology, Sociology, Philosophy, Photography and Politics.

During the Spring Term, we will be working closely with our Year 11 students to discuss the options available to them post-16. Everyone is working so hard in the run up to the GCSE examinations but of course, it is also important to think about next steps once these are completed.

The sixth form team wish our Year 11 students in both schools every success in the summer and look forward to welcoming lots of them back in September as part of our growing sixth form.

“It was really useful to talk to teachers and students about what each course covers and what careers they could lead to.”

Year 11 student

NE12 Sixth Form really is unique. A broad and varied curriculum offer is complimented by an exciting and tailor made enrichment programme which ensures that our students leave with the skills they need to take their next steps into the world of work or higher education.



The close, long standing partnership between George Stephenson High School and Longbenton High School means that students benefit greatly from exceptional teaching and learning as well as care, guidance and support, which are second to none. We like to think of it as two campuses but one great learning experience.

“I didn’t realise how many options were available to me after Year 11 so it was great to talk to lots of different providers.”

Year 11 student

If you would like to find out more about what NE12 Sixth Form has to offer, you can visit our section of the school website or contact me or Ms Tate directly.

Mrs L Dunn: Assistant Headteacher



Design Technology and Art Go Travelling

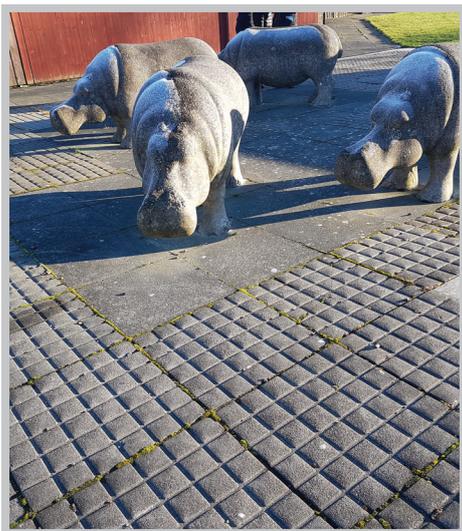
Since September, we have been working hard to develop the curriculum in DT and Art to include a number of visits to places of interest in and around Newcastle in addition to a trip to London Art Galleries and Museums.



On the 7th March we visited The Victoria and Albert Museum. to view collections and Christian Dior: Designer of Dreams Exhibition



“The whole trip was such an amazing experience and I was so grateful to be involved.”
Emily Westerby, Year 10 Student



A group of Year 10 students visited the Baltic Art Gallery on the Quayside to view exhibitions and attend a seminar on Contemporary Art with Baltic Education Team.

The exhibitions viewed included: Labaina Himid 'Our Kisses are Petals', Idea of North Group exhibition.

Our photography students have also been able to utilise the local environment in and around the school. However, the visit to Newcastle Quayside and The Sage has inspired creative work back at school which also enhances the curriculum.

Mrs J Supriadi: Design Technology Technician

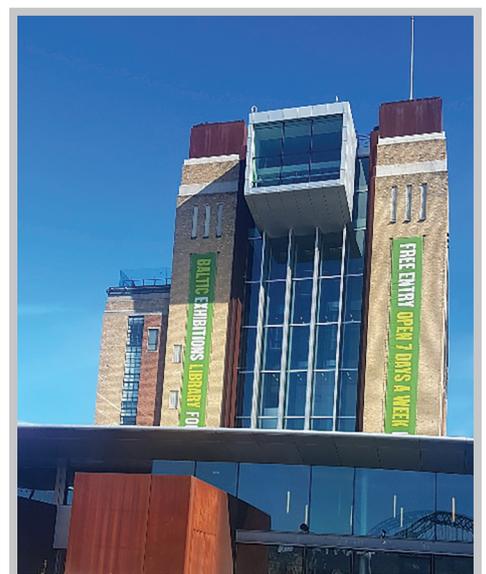


“That was amazing! I feel so privileged to have seen it and come to London.”
Nathan Douglas, Year 10 Student

The Victoria and Albert Museum can be a little overwhelming for anyone and our students handled it very well.

They worked independently in the museum researching ideas that linked to their curriculum work at school.

A small number of students who are studying Textiles were able to view The Christian Dior-Designer of Dreams Exhibition and were in awe. They have already started to develop creative ideas inspired by the trip.



Sporting Success

Passionate about Exercise



Ruby Nelson and Holly Sykes are two year 9 girls at George Stephenson High School. They are so passionate about exercise that they wanted to set up their own Running Club.

They approached their PE teacher with a plan that included a synopsis which read: 'This is a club, designed at bringing like minded athletic individuals together to help improve, motivate and advance their athletic skills, prowess and abilities.'

The club will be designed and managed by Ruby Nelson and Holly Sykes. Their aim is not to only accept individuals who are good at sports, but also encourage individuals who wish to break into athletics and advance and improve on their own abilities, whether they are the fastest and strongest in class or not. Neither matters when it comes to the club, instead we are looking for people who will commit to the training and take it as seriously as we do.'

Ruby and Holly created a six week training plan that would cater for all abilities, complete with individual scoring sheets to track progress. Ruby and Holly marketed their own club as inspired by the *This Girl Can* events that they had previously been to where other students had set up their own clubs, as well as by Amy Nugent who set up her own Zumba Club last year. Ruby and Holly spoke in assemblies to engage students. The club started off with eight students but more and more have been coming ever since and is open to both girls and boys of all abilities.

We are so proud of their achievements and hope that it will inspire others to engage in sport, feel confident, improve their fitness and have fun with new friends in the process.

Mrs C Patrick: Teacher of PE.

The Diversity Games 2018

A new North East initiative called The Diversity Games was set up by George Stephenson High school and Valley Gardens Middle School and took place on Thursday 5th July as part of the National Diversity Week. This sporting initiative brought Key Stage 3 students from across the North Tyneside together to compete side by side in a wide spectrum of sporting multi national games tailored to provide young people the opportunity to meet others from varying faiths, ethnicity, culture, sexual orientation, social class, abilities, and gender. The young people were mixed into teams giving them the experience of working together towards a common goal. There was an emphasis on:

- Building positive and supportive relationships;
- Providing a personalised and enriched curriculum;
- Promoting high aspirations;
- Developing strong partnerships;
- Enriching the fabric of local communities;
- Improving the quality of life for individuals within our communities.

The young people were mixed with groups of other young people that they may not have ordinarily met within their familiar demographic. The project aims to promote positive race relations and demonstrates what can be achieved when communities work together along with a sense of belonging and citizenship.

Students were mixed into teams and dressed in colourful t-shirts and diversity ribbons. They got to know each other through different team building exercises. They were also excited by a personal message of inspiration from Craig Heap, the Olympic Gymnast, to help inspire them to do the best they can do as part of their new team and to enjoy the day.

George Stephenson High School's CSI Team (Celebration of Student Individuality) worked hard to plan different ideas for how the day could run and the potential events that would bring everyone together.

Valley Garden Sports Leaders did a flawless job of running events such as Boccia, parachute games, rowing and team games, in which everyone competed in together.

A Korean Dance Group called 'K20' from Thomas More RC Academy ran Korean Dance Workshops that the students absolutely loved. They even got the crowd going with an energetic performance with two pieces of choreography. Which was the highlight of the day and they even managed to stay behind at the end and sign autographs!

Students came away from the event by saying things such as:

"That was epic!"

Pradeep Randhawa

"I was very apprehensive at first about meeting and working with people I did not know, but I have come away from the day with new friends and have had lots of fun." -

Ellie Preen

It is hoped that The Diversity Games will run again next year and be even bigger and better!

Ms Grimshaw, Mrs C Patrick: Teacher of PE and Mr F Patrick: Educational Welfare Officer



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