



3 February 2023

“Respect, Ambition, Community”

Dear Parent/Carer,

Thank you for your patience and understanding as we dealt with the recent industrial action. We were pleased to be able to keep the school open. As it stands, we intend to be open to all students again on February 28th, however we need to undertake a new risk assessment for every strike day, and I will update you on this the week before half-term.

We were proud of our 6th form students last week who delivered assemblies to all year groups following their visit to Auschwitz, spoke at the Quadrant and attended a memorial at St. Marys Lighthouse. The annual reminders are poignant and important. We received some lovely feedback from those who attended a presentation at St Marys lighthouse where Peter, Emma and Ethan spoke so well. A teacher from another school came over to say how well they had done and how inspiring they were. She said both she and her colleagues felt safe knowing there were wonderful students in the world and role models like ours.



In our staff professional development session on Tuesday, we focused on the opportunities for careers to be developed across the curriculum. We are the only school in North Tyneside that has kept dedicated careers lessons, as we understand how important strong advice and guidance is to ensure our students are supported and are on the right pathways for the careers they want. This session was working with staff on ways local businesses could support the promotion of careers in particular subjects and was a real success. It was a pleasure to host some key people who worked with our departments identifying opportunities to work together and to continue to enrich the quality of our careers provision.

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Deputy Headteacher:

Peter Douthwaite BSc (Hons)

Kathryn Williams BA (Hons)

Louise Dunn BA (Hons)



From left to right: Mr. Douthwaite (Headteacher GSHS), Dion Smith (Bernicia), Alex Weatherstone (North East LEP), Tom Nightingale (Equinor) Victoria Beattie (Port of Tyne), Angie Patterson (North Tyneside Learning Trust), Luke Dargie (Bernicia), Leon Allan (Careers Lead GSHS)

On Thursday, our NE12 Sixth Form Open Evening at Longbenton High School was very well attended. The 6th form provision we can offer between the two schools is excellent and ensures access to a broad range of subjects. We already know the students well, so it allows us to provide personal support from the moment they start their courses. In 2022 our A level results were amongst the best in North Tyneside (The first time they had been sat properly for three years) with an average grade of a B. Results were higher than the national average and much higher than the local average across the board. We strongly recommend students make the NE12 sixth form their first consideration if they are thinking of further education after year 11.

In the last newsletter we said we would signpost some materials on misogyny and how to talk to your child about this. We continue to engage with students about this and social media in general, but the article [here](#) is a quick read with some useful parental advice. Please also keep an eye on our school twitter account and website for additional resources.

We have almost finished the work across school asking all groups about our core values. Those that have come through consistently are **Respect, Ambition and Community**. It is important that they are not just words on a wall so we will spend time refining and unpicking these, so we explicitly incorporate, share and develop these across the school and use them to underpin and drive our improvement plans.

Finally, a new feature of the newsletter will be 'Meet the Staff'. This will introduce you to staff from all areas of the school and provide an insight into them, their role, and their thoughts on George Stephenson. We have asked our new Deputy Headteacher, Mrs Dunn to be the inaugural staff member.

Best wishes,

Mr P. Douthwaite
Headteacher

Meet the Staff: Mrs Dunn

What is your role at GSHS?

As of January, my role is Deputy Headteacher with responsibility for care, guidance and support.



How long have you worked here?

I began my career here as an NQT way back in September 2000, so this is my 23rd year here at George Stephenson High School. I consider myself to be very fortunate indeed to have had the opportunity to work with so many children (and often their children!) in a school which really does put young people at the heart of everything it does.

What do you teach?

I teach English and Media.

Do you have any hobbies?

I like nothing better than a good book but also love being active, especially Zumba classes!

Favourite thing about GSHS?

Undoubtedly, the happy and positive atmosphere that pervades our school. Many people tell me that our school feels like a 'family' and in many ways it is. Everyone is valued and supported: we look after each other.

Favourite memory of GSHS?

There are so many of these to choose from; both in my time here as a student myself, and more recently as a teacher.

I still remember the excitement of waiting backstage for my cue in a play about a school trip to Mars - interestingly, I played the part of the teacher.....

Still now, our school productions are such memorable moments in the year. I am always so proud of what our young people can achieve.

Over the years, I have been privileged to teach so many young people. There is always lots of hard work, from students and staff alike, plenty of laughs and sometimes a few tears but in the end, they all get there. Nothing beats that feeling when you see them achieve their goals, pass those exams, get that job and still a favourite of mine, bumping into them years later, and hearing them tell you, "I did it, thanks Miss."