



13 March 2023

“My mother told me to be a lady. And for her, that meant be your own person, be independent”

Ruth Bader Ginsburg

Dear Parent/Carer,

I hope you had an enjoyable half-term break – sadly, it wasn't the year to bring any silverware back to Newcastle but hopefully it's just a matter of time!

We have had a busy couple of weeks since we returned. Last week we had our Year 9 options evening. It was such a positive atmosphere having everyone in school and it was great to see so many parents in attendance at this key time. The pathways appointments were well attended but it was also reassuring to hear how many students had already thought carefully about their options through the guidance they had received previously. Those who still weren't sure felt confident that that options they were choosing were right for them and would keep their pathways open. We also hope that many of our young people will opt to stay on into our NE12 sixth form which had the best results in North Tyneside last year.

In the week where we celebrated International Women's Day, we may well have discovered our very own Ruth Bader Ginsburg. Thanks to the support of students across the borough Sharon Zeng (Year 9) was elected as Member of UK Youth Parliament for North Tyneside for 2023/24 with a staggering 1925 votes out of 6222 cast. Sharon ran an excellent campaign, reaching out to young people across the borough and sharing presentations within her own school and beyond.

Sharon's pledge is to raise awareness about the importance of financial education in schools, informing students about their financial choices and career choices. Sharon has already met with me to discuss how we can not only move forward with this idea as a school, but we have also been contacted by the local authority to develop a unit of work which could be used across schools in North Tyneside which is a really exciting opportunity. We wish her all the best for the future. Sharon's announcement can be viewed [here](#) (27mins-29mins).

Congratulations to our Year 11 students who have been impeccable over the last two weeks with their mock exams. Revision should be underway by now and we hope that any areas of development from their mocks have been identified and this helps focus their revision as they approach the summer. We continue to provide as much support as possible at this time and students should attend our after-school support sessions. The days specific sessions take place can be found [here](#).

Southgate, Killingworth, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE12 6SA

T: 0191 216 1115

E: enquiries@gshs.org.uk

W: www.gshs.org.uk

Headteacher:

Peter Douthwaite BSc (Hons)

Deputy Headteacher:

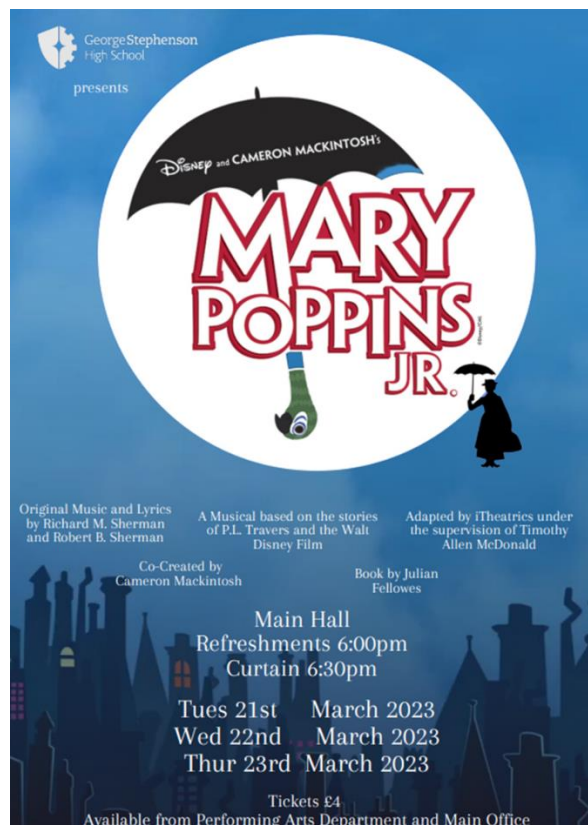
Kathryn Williams BA (Hons)

Deputy Headteacher:

Louise Dunn BA (Hons)

If you have a free evening next week please try and support our young people by putting a date in your diary for our school production of Mary Poppins – it's guaranteed to be an excellent performance so I hope you can come along and enjoy some live theatre. You won't be disappointed.

We want George Stephenson to be a school to be at the heart of our community and any support we receive as a school is always appreciated so a special thank you must go to Hays Travel in Killingworth for organising a raffle to raise funds for the show.



Keeping with the community theme one of the things we are really looking forward to developing as a school are closer links with the local community organisations. On Friday we hosted the second Youth Partnership meeting exploring ways local groups can support our young people by speaking with our students and developing close links with them and the school.

We are also very excited to have The North Tyneside Dance Festival back after a pause due to covid.

This year's theme is 'New Beginnings' and will take place at Whitley Bay Playhouse on Tuesday 14th March. A huge thank you to our sixth form students Erin Kerr and Eve Robinson – who have not only worked tirelessly to choreograph the routine but also to teach it to our younger students who will be performing it. We have focused on 'The Beginnings of the modern Woman'.

Taking inspiration from popular 1920's Jazz music and dances such as the Charleston, our number is upbeat and highlights the beginning of a new woman, The Flapper, in American society. Thank you to Ms Connor who has also helped with the costumes and rehearsals. We will have photographs in the next newsletter.

We have also been very busy on the sporting front where we enjoyed competing in the Girl's Active Disco Dodgeball event at John Spence on Wednesday 8th March. The Year 11 boys football team beat St. Cuthberts 4-3 in the county cup 4-3 last Monday and we wish our Under 13 Girl's football team the best of luck at a Football Festival on Thursday March 16th.

Through links with the Newcastle Falcons the school has recently secured a specialist rugby coach who will be coming to school to run sessions for free every Monday night straight after school. This is open to all year groups and genders, so we hope to see many students taking part.

To celebrate World Book Day, we had a range of activities across the school. The English department organised door decorating and assembly readings where teachers read passages from their favourite books.



In the library we explored the Crime genre. Students used problem-solving skills to crack a Murder Mystery using evidence, deciphering codes and secret messages. They redesigned a book cover for 'Hound of the Baskervilles' and took part in a 'Guess the Book' Quiz. All students were given access to a WBD £1 token and a free WBD book - we would like to thank The Bound independent bookshop in Whitley Bay for supplying 600 free books. In Accelerated Reader lessons all week, Years 7 and 8 have listened to 'Chapter One' - where authors read the first chapter of their latest young adult books.

We also announced the winners of our Crime Writing Short Story Competition - we had so many fantastic entries, everyone received a certificate and star badge for taking part.

Winners

Yr7 1st Molly Laws, 2nd Eleanor Dixon, 3rd Marnie Clewes

Yr8 1st Sophie-Mae McAllister, 2nd Caitlin Simmons, 3rd Ruby Smith

Yr9/10/11 1st Amy Ward, 2nd Sophie Innerd, 3rd Caitlin Turnbull

Well done to the winners who received vouchers or goody bags and Sophie-Mae and Amy won tickets to Bay Tales Live which was attended on Saturday. This was a fantastic day, listening to panels of well-known authors talk about their writing process and inspirations with the chance to meet them at book signings. The organisers, Vic and Simon, kindly announced our winners and invited them on stage to meet Ann Cleeves and collect a signed book! We'd like to thank them for their hospitality and can't wait for next year.

Finally, from my previous correspondence you will be aware there is further industrial action taking place across the country on Wednesday 15th and Thursday 16th March. I can confirm that as on previous strike days we will be open for all students. There are no further strike days scheduled however I will let you know if any are announced.

Best wishes,

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

Mr P. Douthwaite
Headteacher

Meet the Staff

Name: Mr Gilmore

What is your role at GSHS? Caretaker

How long have you worked here? 17 years in total

What does your job involve?

My job involves school security, repairs and maintenance, deliveries, event set up's and much, much more!

Do you have any hobbies?

My main hobby is Theatre. I have been a member of Tynemouth Priory Theatre for 31 years, where I am involved in running the club as a member of the Committee.

I am also heavily involved with all aspects of putting on the five productions we produce each year, from lighting to set building and my main responsibility is the Sound Department.

The highlight for myself is our annual Pantomime which we put on in early January, we like to think it is as good, if not better than any of the Pro pantos, but very reasonably priced too!

Students from George Stephenson have also appeared in our pantomimes acting, singing and dancing and also in a production of Great Expectations.

Favourite thing about GSHS?

I was delighted when I joined the school staff full time, in 2011. I also help out with the annual school productions. My first show was Blood Brothers and I think this remains my favourite production.

Favourite memory of GSHS?

I love the variety in my role and all the happy smiling staff.

I have lots of good memories but I've loved being involved in so many fantastic school productions.

