



30th March 2023

“Winter, slumbering in the open air, wears on its smiling face a dream... of spring”

Phil Connors

It has been an action-packed term but the highlight has to be last week’s amazing performance of Mary Poppins Jr. which I think many would agree was our best to date. The spontaneous standing ovation on the final night and the tears of emotion backstage were a testament to everyone’s efforts. I would like to say a massive thank you to all of the support shown and to Mrs Lee and all of the staff and students involved. More than 600 people watched the show and were not disappointed. It was quite emotional on the final night, in particular for several of our 6th formers Kiersten, Erin, Summa, Aidan and Richard for whom it was their final performance. We wish them well in their studies when they leave us and really hope they keep up their involvement in theatre bringing joy to audiences in the future.



To mark the beginning of Spring, the poem “Plum Tree Amongst the Skyscrapers” was written for the National Trust by poet laureate Simon Armitage (listen [here](#)). It is about a tree blossoming in the middle of an urban area and reflects the relationship between nature and people. The National Trust plan to plant 20 million trees by 2030 to tackle the climate and nature crisis. At George Stephenson High School this week we were please to play our part with our Eco-Enthusiasts planting 15 silver birches on the school grounds.

In the last update we wished our dancers well for performing at the Whitley Bay Playhouse for the North Tyneside Dance Festival. They had a fantastic evening and were once again excellent ambassadors for the school. To quote Mrs Patrick directly... “Last night was

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AMAZING! Everyone performing at The North Tyneside Dance Festival was incredible! The atmosphere was fantastic and the girls were a true credit to the school! Yahooooooooooooooooo!”



I would also like to make you aware that the prestigious North Tyneside Learning Trust STAR awards nominations are now live. We have nominated students within school, but you can also nominate your child or another in a range of categories. Last year we had three students who made the shortlists, and we had two winners. It was a pleasure to attend and support them and their families at St. James Park. The link to the nomination form can be found [here](#). On the 10th anniversary of the event, it would be fantastic to have as many George Stephenson Students nominated as possible as we have many worthy recipients.

NTLT STAR AWARDS
NOMINATION
FORM 2023



THERE ARE TEN AWARD CATEGORIES FOR WHICH A CHILD OR YOUNG PERSON MAY BE NOMINATED:

<p>ACHIEVEMENT AWARD <small>SPONSORED BY CAPITA</small></p> <p>To recognise the personal achievement of a child or young person</p>	<p>INSPIRATION AWARD <small>SPONSORED BY CAPITA</small></p> <p>To recognise a child or young person who goes to extraordinary lengths to enhance the life of others</p>
<p>BREAKTHROUGH AWARD <small>SPONSORED BY STERLING PHARMA SOLUTIONS</small></p> <p>To recognise a child or young person who has worked hard and shown significant improvement in any area including attitude, behaviour or commitment to their studies</p>	<p>LEADERSHIP AWARD <small>SPONSORED BY MUCKLE LLP</small></p> <p>To recognise a child or young person who has demonstrated the qualities of leadership</p>
<p>CAN DO AWARD <small>SPONSORED BY CULLERCOATS COFFEE</small></p> <p>To recognise a child or young person who demonstrates a positive attitude in everything they do</p>	<p>LOCAL HERO AWARD</p> <p>To recognise a child or young person who has improved the lives of those around them in their community</p>
<p>FUNDRAISING AWARD</p> <p>To recognise a child or young person who has raised money for a good cause, however large or small the amount</p>	<p>RESILIENCE AWARD <small>SPONSORED BY THE EDWIN GROUP</small></p> <p>To recognise a child or young person who has demonstrated courage and determination in overcoming adversity</p>
<p>INCLUSION AWARD <small>SPONSORED BY NORTHUMBRIA HEALTHCARE NHS FOUNDATION TRUST</small></p> <p>To recognise a child or young person who has demonstrated an understanding and acceptance of other people and actively promotes tolerance and cohesion</p>	<p>USEFUL AND KIND AWARD <small>SPONSORED BY KARBON HOMES</small></p> <p>To recognise a child or young person who strives every day to be useful and kind</p>




Our young people continue to be the greatest ambassadors and advocates for our school. We endeavour to support them throughout their time here to achieve in everything they do. We continue to be very proud of them 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 the support you continue to give our school and for your attendance at events and our online parent evenings. We have had several parent evenings so far this year and there has been an excellent attendance at all of them. It was also a pleasure to have parents in school recently for the year 9 options evening. Later next term we will be asking you about your views on the format of parent evenings having ran for a year with online appointments.

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 validated results for 2022 and we are delighted how well our students did last year. Our Average Attainment 8 score was 5.17 compared to a local authority average of 4.85 and a National of 4.87. This means that the average grade at GCSE in the summer was just above a Grade 5 – a strong pass (a grade B on the old system). When prior attainment is factored in, we are even more proud of these results. Our Progress 8 score this year was +0.02 (Local Authority average -0.20) and effectively means that students across the board make more than expected progress during their time here. 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. Of our year 11 students last year, 97% are still in education, 2% 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 fifth year running where our NEET figure at this stage is around 1%.

Our Sixth form results were outstanding with an average grade of a B putting us amongst the highest achieving sixth forms in the local authority. Post-18 destination data was again excellent. Out of the 50 students who were in Year 13 last year, 31 of them secured a place on a Higher Education course, the majority at their first choice University. 40% have gone to a Russell Group University (compared to 28%% last year). Of the remaining students, eleven secured an Apprenticeship (including eight at degree level), six entered full time employment and two entered Further Education.

Following the exciting announcement before Christmas that we are part of the next phase of the schools rebuilding programme, there is nothing new to report at this stage. I was in a meeting with the DFE last week and we have been told we will find out in June or July our start date so I will update you after that.

Earlier in the year I mentioned some excellent training that our staff received on the mental health of our young people that we thought you as parents would benefit from. We asked for interest earlier this term and a large number of you said you would like to attend a session so there is clearly a need for this. Mr. Jarvie is arranging these sessions – further details about them and how to sign up will be sent out via parentmail prior to the Easter half term break.

We also recently consulted with you on our uniform and following feedback from all stakeholders, we have introduced some changes from September. Mrs Dunn will send out further details this week. If you have any questions, please contact the school.

Finally, I hope that you have an enjoyable Easter break. I have spoken to many students and am impressed by how hard they have been working. We know this break is a particularly key one for those in their exam years and all the staff wish them the very best of luck in their preparations for the exam season ahead.

Best wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "P. Douthwaite". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'P'.

Mr P. Douthwaite
Headteacher

Meet the Staff

Name Mr. Allen

What is your role at GSHS?

Curriculum Leader for Business and Careers Lead for whole school.

How long have you worked here?

I am just approaching the end of my sixth year at GSHS, but my 17th year working in teaching at North Tyneside.

What does your job involve?

Leading the Business Studies department and continuously evaluating my curriculum in terms of the needs of our students.

From a Careers point of view, my role is varied and wide. There is no such thing as a 'typical day'. Helping students to find work experience placements, organising year group events, communicating with local organisations and training providers and supporting staff with their delivery of careers within their curriculum areas all happen on a weekly basis. The job requires me to be proactive in my careers planning, but also re-active, taking advantage of the opportunities which may unexpectedly arise.

Do you have any hobbies?

My most unusual hobby is that I have a 'mini reef' at home, and I am very passionate about coral gardening. It is a growing community of enthusiasts, and we enjoy 'geeking out' together. I am also a huge DIY enthusiast (I can't sit still at home). I have recently taught myself how to plaster walls, it is fair to say that each wall is an improvement on the last (make of that what you want).

Favourite thing about GSHS?

Our wonderful students. Honestly, they make me laugh every day, no two days are the same. It has been fantastic to see Y7 students migrate all the way up to Y13 and I am very proud to be a small part in their development.

Favourite memory of GSHS?

I have two. The first has to be watching ten of our Y10 students present to Tesco's Bank Managers, teaching staff and their parents about what they learned from the week and how this may help them moving forward. This was a difficult ask and pushed them out of their comfort zone, I cried with pride. The second made me cry with laughter, it was Mrs. Williams's covid video that she made, showing students how to swab their nose and throat. It was hilarious as she was trying so hard to make it look easy, and as we all know, it wasn't - big respect to her for making that.

