



HT4 Spring 2021

Easter Message from the Principal: Mrs Corbett

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we end the spring term and begin our Easter break I would like to personally thank all of our families for the support and feedback we have received throughout, what has been, a spring term we had not anticipated. At George Spencer Academy we are very proud of our World Class School status that was reaccredited in 2019. Our primary reason for being so proud of this award is because it is centred on our fantastic students and recognises that our students are 'world class wherever you put them'. To achieve the award, it is the students who are assessed rather than the school, focusing on the competencies and characteristics that young people need to flourish in the emerging global economy.

Over the past year, throughout the pandemic, our students have shown that the World Class School status is very much alive at George Spencer Academy and we remain extremely proud of each of them as they all showed their potential to be 'World Class'. Along with this bulletin is a copy of the Learner assessment criteria for the award. I am sure, having read the attachment, you too will feel proud of your child's achievements, resilience and dedication to learning.

We look forward to welcoming our 'World Class' students back in the summer term. Until then I wish you all a peaceful and enjoyable Easter.

Kind regards.

Year 11 Pre-Public Examination (PPE) preparation: Miss Jenkinson, Vice Principal

Year 11 will be taking their PPEs 19th- 30th April and subject teachers have been preparing with them over the past two weeks to help strive them to reach their potential. We encourage all our Year 11 students to make a revision timetable that will balance the need to prepare and revise, with the need to relax and enjoy the break. Learning Managers have been helping them to create a schedule and sharing revision techniques within their Form Time learning sessions. Staff will be posting helpful tips and guidance onto the Google Classrooms to support revision and as always, students can contact Ms Wilkinson (Director of Learning) through the 'cohort 2021' classroom if they are worried or anxious at any point. We have been incredibly proud of the way they have worked since returning to school and the way in which they are all striving to be the best they can be.



COVID-19 Track and Trace during the Easter break:

If a student has symptoms for COVID-19 and/or tests positive for COVID-19 between Friday 2nd April until Wednesday 7th April the school will need to track and trace due to the possibility of them being in school during the infectious period. If your child receives a confirmed positive COVID-19 test result during the above timeframe please inform the school via our info@george-spencer.com email address. In the email, please provide your child's name, when they first developed symptoms and your contact number. A member of our leadership team will then get in touch with you to start our track and trace process.

Once we have completed our track and trace process, we will inform parents if their child has been identified as a 'close contact' to the positive case via text and email. The text will ask that the email is read to gain details from Public Health England on the actions you would need to take and the date for the end of the self-isolation period for your child.

Home testing will continue over the Easter holidays. Mr J Dakers sent further information out regarding this on Tuesday 30th March.

Remote Education Journey: Miss Gordon, Vice Principal

It has been a challenging year since March 2020 and one in which George Spencer Academy students have shown continued resilience and truly epitomised our Ethos of Excellence. Lockdown 3 from January to March 2021 saw an enhanced offer to remote education as detailed on our website and further reliance and use of technology increased significantly.

Staff, students and parents saw the use of Google Meet and Loom become part of our everyday language alongside the continued use of Google Classroom thus enabling synchous teaching to take place effectively. Our students rose to the challenge of seeing and hearing their teachers at home as they continued to strive to be the best they can be. In total 797,050 documents were created or edited by students within the 8 weeks of remote education which is a phenomenal achievement and resulted in 2,364 'Lockdown Learning Legend' postcards being posted out which embodies our core value of 'a love of learning'. Additionally, 4,513 opportunities for form time Google Meets were seized which enabled students to meet up informally with their Learning Manager alongside the formal curriculum lessons delivered.



The National Scholars Programme/Brilliant Club at George Spencer Academy: Mr Musson

Throughout this year, students across year groups have been taking part in the Scholars Programme. This is a national organisation that provides students aged 8-18 from non-selective state schools the opportunity to work with a PhD researcher/student to experience university-style learning. It helps them to develop the skills, knowledge, confidence and independence to [secure a place at a highly-selective university](#).

The programme is structured around seven tutorials, complemented in 'normal' times by two trips to highly-selective universities, this year, these have been done online. Students are taught in groups of six, working alongside the PhD student to learn and complete a challenging final assignment, which is marked and moderated using university grades.

This year, we have 48 students going through the programme: -

- 12 students in Year 12 Topic: Biomedical 3D printing and it's business potential.
- 12 students in Year 10 Topic: Telling Tales: The Craft of Writing Fiction.
- 12 Students in Year 9 Topic: Why was there a French Revolution?
- 12 students in Year 8 Topic: STEM-Engineering: Illuminating the Human Body.

At the current time in the year, Years 12 and 9 have completed the programme and have successfully achieved their grades, with many achieving 2:1 or top 1st class awards. One Y12 student achieved 96% in the final assignment, which is an outstanding result and two Y12 students were awarded reduced offers from a leading university in recognition of their excellent grade with the Scholars programme.

If you would like to find out more about the Scholars programme, please follow the following link:-
<https://thebrilliantclub.org/the-scholars-programme/>

Computing Competitions: Miss Fell, Head of Computing

Many of our students have taken part in computing challenges over this academic year with some notable successes. These competitions span the entire age range and the following students deserve a special mention:

- A Year 11 student competing in round 2 of the Perse Coding Challenge. This competition pits teams of students in Years 7 to 11 against each other in a timed automated, programming challenge.
- A Year 8 student competing in the semi-finals of the CyberFirst Girls Competition. This is a competition designed to provide a fun but challenging environment to inspire the next generation of young women to consider a career in cyber security.
- The Year 12 Cyber Centurions who made it through to the third round of the challenge.



Well-Being Support: Mr Dakers, Assistant Principal

At George Spencer Academy, mental health and well-being continues to be of paramount importance. Please take some time to ensure your child is aware of the following ways in which they can access support if they need it:

- All students can access well-being support by texting or calling the well-being line on **07969203860**. One of our well-being team will answer or reply offering support and guidance.
- Parents or students can contact the Director of Learning or Pupil Support Assistant for their year group who will be able to offer guidance or will liaise with the well-being team if more bespoke support is required.
- The well-being team is made up of specialist intervention caseworkers who are able to provide one to one support and intervention. Daniel Steane oversees the well-being team and can be contacted via email (dsteane@george-spencer.notts.sch.uk)
- We have also recently appointed a school counsellor to provide an in-school counselling service. Parents or students can enquire about accessing this service by initially contacting the Director of Learning or Pupil Support Assistant for their year.
- In addition, students can access 'help and advice' section on the student hub. This section provides useful links and phone numbers of services and agencies that can also offer support on a range of different issues.

Futures – Careers Education Information Advice and Guidance (CEIAG): Mr Burrows, Director of Futures

The start of March was National Careers Week (#NCW2021) and a chance for George Spencer Academy students to interact with a range of outstanding resources. All shared through the cohort Google Classroom pages – the amazing Virtual Careers Fair is still available [here](#). Form Time Learning sessions have resumed and cohorts continue to focus on relevant aspects of their development (Yr7 effective use of Technology, Yr8 - STEM, Yr9 – Understanding self, Yr10 – Skills for Employment, Yr11 – Transition, Yr12 – VESPA, Yr13 – Transition).

If you are an ex- student then please add us to your [LinkedIn profile](#) as an educational experience. Contact: pburrows@george-spencer.notts.sch.uk if you are interested in finding out more.

Useful reads:

[Future of Work Guide](#)

[Apprenticeships Guide – March 2021](#)



Y7: Mr Smith

It has been a pleasure to welcome our Year 7 students back to life at George Spencer Academy and, in many ways, students have continued where we left off at Christmas – showing an extraordinary level of positivity and resilience and demonstrating daily our Core Values and Ethos of Excellence. Students have adapted well to life back in school, behaving impeccably throughout the asymptomatic COVID testing process, demonstrating a love of learning in lessons and continuing with high standards of uniform and daily routines.

Teachers of Year 7 continue to share words of positivity and praise for students who are fully prepared for their lessons, engaged in their learning and consistently show kindness, politeness and fairness to other students and staff in school. Myself, Miss Sipson and the Learning Managers continue to be immensely proud of students in Year 7 and as a team we would like to wish you all a restful holiday.

We look forward to welcoming students in Year 7 back to school after the Easter break.

Y8: Mr Richardson

Happy Easter to all our Year 8 families from the pastoral team. It may have been a short time back but we have not let that diminish our drive and determination to ensure all the students were welcomed back to George Spencer Academy. The students once again have showed great resilience in quickly adopting our Ethos of Excellence and those core values that underpin what it makes to be George Spencer Academy student. The way the students conducted themselves during the In-school COVID testing was nothing short of exemplary and helped facilitate a smooth operation in getting the students through.

Notable highlights include finalising the Year 8 student leadership team who are already busy introducing themselves to the cohort and they look forward to performing their democratic duties when we return. Next term will also see us continuing with our personal development focussing on Relationships and Futures, where we will be looking at STEM careers.

As always, have a great holiday, spend that quality time with your families and we look forward to seeing you when we return.



Y9: Miss Johnson

Happy Easter to all of our students and their families from the Year 9 pastoral team. It has been a busy fortnight since we welcomed the cohort back into school with students returning to lessons, GCSE options being finalised, the in-school COVID testing taking place, plus much more.

The Year 9 students have conducted themselves brilliantly during this busy period and continue to exemplify our core values within our school environment. In Form Time, as part of our pastoral curriculum, we have been focusing on the themes of discrimination, respect and overcoming challenges; the students have really impressed their Learning Managers with their mature and insightful contributions in these sessions. Next term, in Form Time Learning, the Year 9 students will be focusing on the topics of relationships, conflict resolution and raising aspiration. There will also be opportunities for students to 'cash in' the PARS points they have accumulated so far for prizes.

As we approach and progress through the Summer term, I encourage all students to make the most of the full range of subjects studied in Year 9 and strive to complete Key Stage 3, as 'the very best they can be'. Well done on your efforts in this unusual term Year 9 and enjoy the break.

Y10: Mr O'Toole

It's been fantastic to see the way Year 10 have settled back into school life since returning this half term. The students have once again demonstrated their resilience and love of learning, as Year 10 lessons continue to be hugely positive. It has been lovely to walk around classrooms and see all the hard work taking place. The in-school COVID testing during the first two weeks back was yet another example of the students needing to adapt in these strange times and yet again they rose to the challenge.

It is clear that as a cohort, our Ethos of Excellence is at the core of all we do and Year 10 continue to strive to be the best we can be. During Form Time the students have been continuing to work on their weekly Futures and Personal Development sessions. This will carry on into the new term as the year group learn to develop key skills such as CV writing and financial literacy, preparing them for life after George Spencer.

I hope you all have a lovely Easter break and I look forward to welcoming back the students in the new term.



Y11: Ms Wilkinson

Year 11 students have returned to school from the 8th March with a determination to succeed and a commitment to their learning. It is always a pleasure to visit lessons to see how engaged and enjoyable the atmosphere is, and students have particularly relished the face-to-face learning that they missed during lockdown. Students are arriving punctually and smartly, as role models for our younger students and have taken on board the changes and requirements of the assessed stages of their courses. It has not been an easy time, but the resilience and support that students have demonstrated has meant that Miss O'Donnell and I are incredibly proud of our young people. They have also taken great care in their applications for sixth form, colleges and apprenticeships, organising Futures and careers advice and ensuring that they are working hard to achieve grades that will open up multiple opportunities to them at post-16. Time spent with Learning Managers has been invaluable, as they foster revision skills and independent learning, preparing them for exams and supporting them with their well-being. Our Year 11 students are showing themselves at their best and they have grown into sensible, mature individuals during their time at George Spencer. I feel privileged to have seen this and I know that their positive time here will have positive repercussions for years to come.

I wish all Year 11 students a restful – but productive – Easter break, so that they return after the break fully re-charged to perform at their very best in their PPE exams.

Y12: Mr Spears

It has been so good to see all students back in the classroom. As I mentioned in last half term's bulletin I have been impressed with the way Year 12 adapted to remote learning and once again this half term, I have been impressed with the way that they have adapted back to face to face learning. Once we have returned from Easter we will be focussing on gearing up for the 'progression exams' at the end of the year and we are going to start to look at post-18 options in more detail. Considering options, researching courses, universities and apprenticeships to help towards our Vision, a key element of our VESPA framework. During this half term, we have had more students obtain their Silver Duke of Edinburgh Awards. The longevity of their commitments outside of the classroom is remarkable and the difference they make in and around the local community. Another achievement outside of lesson time is with the Brilliant Club, this is something that some students have done outside of their normal lessons, it has been fascinating seeing the work that this group of students have produced. All students embodied the school 'Ethos for Excellence' whilst completing their projects, 2 students took this even further and from the work that they submitted the University of Bath has promised to offer them lower offers as a result of this Club. One of these students' work is going to be taken forward to be a 'National example of excellence' where students up and down the country will be able to take inspiration for their structure and content of the final report. Huge congratulations to all of these students.



Y13: Mrs Fawcett, Head of Sixth Form

Year 13 have settled back into face to face learning and are continuing to engage effectively with all of their subjects. There has been a lot to take in in such a short time particularly the requirements for teacher assessed grades and signposting of content. Students are now fully aware of what they need to complete through the support of their subject teachers and Learning Managers.

During form time students have been set a 9-Day Challenge, where each day they have been asked to focus on an aspect of well-being and preparation for assessments to enable them to achieve success in the summer. The students continue to be extremely supportive of each other, this will be particularly important over the coming weeks. We are also continuing to prepare for plans Post-18 to ensure our young people are prepared for the next steps.

As yet we are unsure of the leaving date, but we are looking at ways to celebrate their time in Sixth Form and wish them all the best for the future.

OUR CORE VALUES



We strive to be the best we can be.

We show resilience.

We are supportive.

We respect individuality.

We are polite, fair and honest.

We have a love of learning.

ETHOS OF EXCELLENCE