



## HT1 Autumn 2021

### Message from the Principal: Mrs Corbett

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Dear Parents and Carers,

As we come to the end of our first half term of this academic year my message is one of thanks.

We would like to whole-heartedly thank all our families for the strong partnership that has been clearly evident since the students returned in September. Our Ethos of Excellence has shone through all aspects of life at George Spencer Academy. Our students have been exceptional, both in the classrooms and in the positive manner in which they have presented themselves over the past 7 weeks – we continue to be immensely proud of them.

We have been very excited this half term to be able to host many parents' events on site, with parents being able to come and meet us and visit our site and meet our students. Our Year Group Information Evenings saw over 600 families come in to school to listen to our presentations and collect their child's Curriculum Booklet to support learning at home. Thank you to all of you who have already logged many activities through the Read, Watch, Visit curriculum within the booklet. Our Year 6 Open Evening saw a further 800+ families visit us and meet our fantastic students. And finally, our Sixth Form Open Evening last week which saw a further 300+ families visit our Sixth Form and meet with teachers and Sixth Formers on the bespoke offers we have for our future Year 12 cohort.

It has truly felt like a very special place to be this half term and we look forward to continuing this trend after the October break. We look forward to the many more opportunities coming up, including expanding our extra-curricular offer for our students, taking part in Anti Bullying week with long term goals of continuing to deepen our culture of kindness, and starting the reaccreditation process for our World Class Schools Mark. As per normal routine, November will see the start of our winter routine which means that all students are confined to hard surfaces only and should keep off all grass areas. We provide outdoor spaces for each year group plus indoor areas for students to eat their lunch. As you start to consider winter outerwear please may we remind you to refer to our uniform expectations which can be found on our website or in your child's student planner. Please consider purchasing an umbrella and a hooded black coat for your child for when they are outside.

Our Year 11 students will be sitting their Pre-Public Examinations (PPEs) from Monday 1<sup>st</sup> November to Friday 19<sup>th</sup> November. This is a very important time for our Year 11s and we have guided them towards spending time during the half term break revising for these exams. The outcomes of these exams will greatly support teacher predictions and suitable interventions to ensure all students are able to 'strive to be the best they can be' at George Spencer Academy.

I look forward to continuing to work with you all and wish you a relaxing half term break.

Kind regards.



## **Read, Watch and Visit:**

### **Mr Allen, Assistant Principal**

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We have been impressed by the response of many students to the 'Read, Watch, Visit' activities which were launched in September and are designed to deepen and extend your child's learning outside the classroom. This is valuable for all students, especially those in older year groups who are considering their subject choices or building towards a personal statement. Students who have completed a particularly strong range of activities are rewarded in assemblies at the end of each half term.

Please continue to log activities for your son/daughter at

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfDxOAEh5snHt1hihilJAjCRau-](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfDxOAEh5snHt1hihilJAjCRau-yGOWFjHQRKLhH82reIV28A/viewform?usp=sf_link)

[yGOWFjHQRKLhH82reIV28A/viewform?usp=sf\\_link](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfDxOAEh5snHt1hihilJAjCRau-yGOWFjHQRKLhH82reIV28A/viewform?usp=sf_link). The list of 'Read, Watch, Visit' activities are available in the Curriculum Booklets for each year group, viewable at <http://www.george-spencer.com/curriculum/>.

## **Extra-Curricular Clubs:**

### **Miss Jenkinson, Vice Principal**

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After 18 months of not being able to run our wide variety of clubs and activities, we are so excited to see so many of our students taking part again. The most up to date timetable of what is on offer will be on our website at the start of next half term and is shared weekly through Form Time Learning with the students. We are always looking out for opportunities to expand the list even further, so please encourage your child to speak to their Learning Manager if there is something they would like to see on offer.

## **The Student Aged Immunisation Service (SAIS):**

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The Student Aged Immunisation Service (SAIS) have asked us to share the attached information (2021 flu invite letter) regarding students in Years 7-11 having the flu vaccination. SAIS will confirm when they will be coming into school to administer the vaccine at a later date but have asked for consent forms to be completed as soon as possible. Information regarding consent is included in the attached letter.



## World Class Schools: Miss J Gordon, Vice Principal



In 2016 George Spencer Academy was awarded World Class status and this was reaccredited in 2019. Since then one of our students, Grace Dell (Year 10), achieved the World Class Community Award for being an active participant in George Spencer Academy, the local community and national community. This was through her participation in swimming, Army Cadets, music (drumming), fundraising for combat stress, Duke of Edinburgh Bronze award and taking a Humanitarian Engineering course. This is just one example of how our students are World Class wherever you put them, beyond the school, in any given situation.

In the coming months we are going for reaccreditation for a second time. This process is going to be presided over by our Head Boy, Thomas Playford who was part of the reaccreditation in 2019. The World Class Schools Quality Mark provides parents, universities and businesses with the knowledge that these schools provide the best for their students. This time, the criteria is going electronic with a specifically designed APP which collates all of the information. We are asking students who feel they could contribute to reaccreditation to download this app so they can use it to identify and demonstrate their [World Class characteristics](#).

The APP download link is [https://app.worldclass-schools.org/b/world\\_class\\_schools/10033/10052/home](https://app.worldclass-schools.org/b/world_class_schools/10033/10052/home) Once downloaded students can begin to upload any evidence as to how they meet the criteria. The flow chart on the next page outlines this process. If you have any questions regarding this process please contact Miss Gordon, Vice Principal on [jgordon@george-spencer.notts.sch.uk](mailto:jgordon@george-spencer.notts.sch.uk)

Students can start uploading evidence whenever they want, however the final submission date will be March 2022.



Click on an area to start

### 1. Click



### 2. Complete

c...am efficient

Click for Example

Give a short explanation

I ran the charity cake stall for our form class this year. I had to be highly efficient, because I was organising a team, making sure the cakes got sold, managing the finances, getting everything completed in one break time. We made the largest amount that any cake stall had made at our school.

Type of Evidence 3

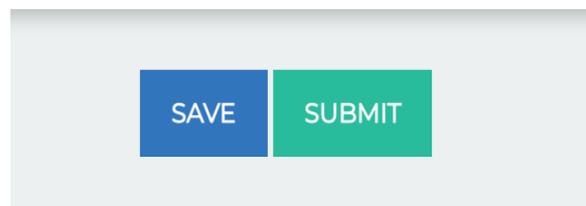
Our cake stall. ✓

Date of Evidence 3

09/10/2019 ✓



### 3. Save or submit





## **Year 11 Pre-Public Examinations (PPEs) :**

### **Miss Jenkinson, Vice Principal**

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Year 11 students have been busy preparing for their first round of PPEs which begin on Monday 1<sup>st</sup> November and we have been so impressed with their focused attitude and determination to be the best they can be. Subject staff have given students plenty of revision material and have been posting resources on the Google classrooms to access over the half term break. We also encourage the use of online packages such as Hegarty Maths, GCSEpod and Seneca, all available via the Student Hub on our website. We know that they will continue this positivity throughout the exam period and we are here to support them every step of the way.

Some tips to help support your child prepare;

1. Quiz them on certain topics, ask them for revision questions and guides they have.
2. Check they have all equipment, including stationery, maths set and scientific calculator
3. Monitor their rest breaks, revision is best in 30-60 min chunks with regular breaks.
4. Remove distractions whilst revising.
5. Highlight their exams on a copy of the timetable and help create a timeline for revision.

## **Year 10 and 11 Top Pocket Target Cards:**

### **Miss Jenkinson, Vice Principal**

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This half term, our Year 10 and 11 students have been given their Top Pocket Target Cards.

These cards are kept in their top blazer pocket and help our students to take ownership of their learning journey and give a sense of direction by knowing their target grades. Through a whole year assembly, students have been asked to question where they are in relation to their target grades. Are they working towards aspirational grades or striving to exceed them? Whichever it is, the target card enables our students to articulate what they need to do next and how we will help them get there.

If your child is in Year 10 or 11, ask to see their card and encourage the conversation at home too.



## **Excellence Day 1:**

### **Mr Furber, Assistant Principal**

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Thursday saw the launch of the new 'Excellence Days' which are a crucial part of the school's provision, acting as a bridge between our formal, wrap-around and wider curricula. Students in Years 7-10 engaged in a sequence of lessons that saw them learn about the 'science of learning' to help them become more effective in the classroom and when completing work beyond the classroom. They learnt about how memory works and how to revise effectively through the use of high-quality mind maps (Years 7-9) and flashcards (Year 10) and some of the resources produced were truly excellent. These are skills which students will re-use again and again in the future.

They also spent the afternoon engaging with George Spencer's Core Values, reading stories that exemplified being polite, fair and honest, supportive, resilient and learning about identity and how they can respect individuality. All pupils designed a 'display' to represent these Core Values and the best ones from each year group will be chosen to adorn a space within the school – winners will be announced next half term and prizes presented to the winners in assemblies.

The day also saw the school showcase the opportunities on offer to students in Year 11 in the George Spencer Sixth Form and beyond. Many students attended a wide variety of A-level 'taster' sessions to sample the broad and extensive KS5 curriculum we offer and experience the culture of aspiration that runs through the Sixth Form. While attending thought provoking and informative subject sessions, they also became Sixth Formers for the day, 'taking over' the block and fully utilising its fantastic facilities. Students in Year 11 were also able to attend workshops from post-16 providers including Nottingham College, Confetti, Rolls Royce and Nottingham Trent University Brackenhurst which were organised by Mr Burrows, the Director of Futures. The workshops gave the students a real insight into the world of work and further study as well as broadening their horizons with regards to the different pathways into future employment.

It was a great day, and a wonderful way to bring a close to the first half term, here's to the next one.

## **Parent Forum: Mr Hartley, Assistant Principal**

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Our close partnership with our parents is very important to us and we welcome our parents to be involved in discussing key items with our senior leadership team. Our remote Parent Forum, which runs each term is a great place to get involved in your child's education at George Spencer Academy. If you would like to join our Parent Forum please email me to raise your interest – [Khartley@george-spencer.notts.sch.uk](mailto:Khartley@george-spencer.notts.sch.uk)

The agenda for this term's Parent Forum will include plans for our anti bullying week and our open communication with home. The forum will take place on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> November at 5:30pm via Google Meet.



## Y7: Ms Wilkinson, Director of Learning for Y7

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All of the students in Year 7 have made an excellent start to their journey through George Spencer Academy. It is wonderful to see how our Core Values are becoming a daily part of their learning experiences as well as their involvement in extra-curricular activities and how they conduct themselves in their free time. New friendships have been made, and students are enjoying working with a wide variety of their peers.

Student Leaders have recently been elected and they have successfully run their first Form Time Learning session. Many congratulations to them.

Students are looking incredibly smart and they are taking real pride in their uniforms as they represent the academy.

Several Year 7 students have been selected to take part in this year's school production and we have had a win for the boy's football team in a recent fixture.

Lessons are focused and productive and students speak positively about what they are learning across all of the curriculum areas. I am told regularly by staff how polite and well-mannered the Year 7 students are and how hard they are working in their lessons.

Our first Excellence Day of the year has provided students with opportunities to work in different environments and with different staff; it has been a valuable and enjoyable experience for them all. I am very proud of how the Year 7s have embraced their first half term at George Spencer Academy and taken on many challenges already. We are recognising and celebrating the many successes of this half term in an assembly and I look forward to seeing how students continue to demonstrate their excellence next half term. I hope they have a well-deserved break.



## Y8: Mr Smith, Director of Learning for Y8

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Students have made an excellent start to life in Year 8. We have seen an increase in the number of clubs and extra-curricular activities for students this year and already a great uptake from the students, something we hope will only continue to grow as the year progresses.

It has been exciting to hold assemblies for the entire year group, rather than the remote assemblies we became used to in Year 7, particularly this week as we had the opportunity to reflect upon and celebrate what has been an incredibly successful half term for students, not only in the phenomenal number of PARs points achieved but also in the way students have approached this half term and made the most of the opportunities available to them.

This half term has seen the initial launch of this year's community focus, including students researching and nominating a charity they would like to work alongside and fundraise for as a cohort, as well as donning their yellow t-shirts, headbands, jackets etc in support of YoungMind's #HelloYellow campaign for Mental Health Awareness, fitting in perfectly alongside the focus of this half term's Personal Development sessions in Form Time Learning which have been centred around positive mental and physical health and wellbeing.

Students also took advantage of the additional opportunities available to them with some inspiring entries to the MFL European Day of Language's competition, including some spectacular cake-based Leaning Tower of Pisas, entries to the Principal's Challenge which saw seven worthy winners in Year 8 whose quotes will be placed upon banners and displayed proudly around the school site, and to all students that have been ambassadors for the school – whether representing the school in football, basketball or cross-country or assisting with school events. A particular thank you to the Form Reps and all other students in Year 8 that helped at the Year 6 Open Evening and did an excellent job welcoming and guiding visitors, and were a real credit to the year group and to the school. I am especially aware that this was the first real opportunity for students to represent the school in this way, so want to express my gratitude for the way that students conducted themselves and how impressed and proud I was on the evening.

We hope this is a restful break and we look forward to welcoming students back after the half term to build on the strengths of this half term and continue to make the most of the opportunities available.



## Y9: Mr Richardson, Director of Learning Y9

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May I say a warm welcome back to our new Year 9 students. As we begin our third year together I am excited about the challenges ahead and I look forward to seeing what amazing successes lie around the corner. Sports have returned after what seems an eternity, with both the Year 9 girls and boys football teams having reformed and seen success.

Away from the sports arena, we were fortunate to also gain notable achievements in the Principal's Challenge, where five of our students were selected to have their slogans about George Spencer Academy printed on banners. I look forward to seeing those words of wisdom dotted around the school.

Positive PARs points continue to roll in and currently our Year 9 students sit on 20,037 positive points. A fantastic achievement you would agree.

The student reps took on one of their first duties this half term by helping out at the Year 6 Open Evening.

Their conduct was exemplary and showcased all that is good about being a George Spencer student.

Not resting on their laurels, they have also begun the task of researching suitable local charities that reaffirm the school's commitment to our wider community.

This half term, we have launched both the Duke of Edinburgh awards scheme and the Club Correze adventure week and responses to both have been fantastic.

As I alluded to in my first assembly upon our return, Year 9 is a time of opportunities. Sports, trips and extra-curricular clubs are all back on the timetables and I hope the students take as many of them as they can.

## Y10: Miss Johnson, Director of Learning Y10

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Well done to all of our Year 10 students for a positive, calm and productive start to their GCSE courses. It has been a pleasure to visit the students in their lessons and see their high levels of focus, enthusiasm and drive to achieve; it is clear that the cohort are striving to be the best that they can be and their love of learning is shining through. In assembly this week, the students listened to an extract from Marcus Rashford's book "You are a champion" and reflected on the 'small wins' that they have made this half term. I encourage all students to continue reading this book and a full audio version of this is available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IPyJwcNyTjQ&t=474s>

In addition to the excellent work taking place in lessons, the students have fully immersed themselves in extra-curricular opportunities and we have had great success with various sporting events, a baking competition set by the Languages faculty and summer challenges set by the Library. A number of our students also assisted with the recent Year 6 Open Evening and were an absolute credit to the school with their infectious positivity and school spirit. In Form Time Learning, students have accessed the GCSEPod website, received their 'Top Pocket' cards and immersed themselves in our 'Self-concept, mental health and well-being' topic within Personal Development. When we return from half term, the students will be researching local charities and planning fundraising events for these, plus starting a new topic on 'Healthy Lifestyles' during Form Time Learning.

In addition, the school will be offering new extra-curricular opportunities that we encourage all students to get involved with. Well done on a fantastic start to your GCSE's Year 10 and enjoy the half term break.



## **Y11: Mr O'Toole, Director of Learning Y11**

It's been great to welcome back Year 11 to school this half term. Both myself and Miss French have been hugely impressed with the way the year group have returned to school and have demonstrated a real maturity and love of learning as they embark upon a vitally important year. This half term 20,756 positive PARS points have been awarded to Year 11 by staff in recognition of all their hard work and positivity. It has been fantastic to see the return of extra-curricular activities and Year 11 engagement in these through various sporting events such as the football and netball teams, the Duke of Edinburgh award and our various clubs on offer here at school. Year 11 Strive sessions are also up and running and are providing our students with the extra support and guidance in their specific subjects. The Year group have showed their support for YoungMind's #HelloYellow campaign for Mental Health Awareness by wearing a yellow item of clothing to school, along with the year group researching and nominating a charity that we as a cohort will support for the remainder of the academic year. Half Term 1 has also seen our first Excellence Day during which Year 11 have got to experience life in Sixth Form, as well as attending workshops providing invaluable information on apprenticeships and vocational future careers. On our return to school after the half term, Year 11 will be sitting their second set of PPE's, another important milestone for the year group and I know the students have been working hard in preparation for this and are showing a real determination to be the best they can be. Please have a restful half term and we look forward to welcoming the students back to school very soon.

## **Y12: Mr Spears, Director of Learning Y12**

What a strong start to Year 12 our students have had. It has been very pleasing to see that the vast majority of students have had a clear vision on what they wanted to do right from the word go. We have had some great results and performances over the half term, this is largely in part to the systems that our students have developed. The step up to Sixth Form is a huge one to make, getting organised in folders and time, is a vital part of ensuring that the next 2 years really does move from stress to success.

We have introduced the VESPA model to the students which looks at the non cognitive qualities of successful students: their Vision, Effort, Systems, Practice and Attitude. We are going to develop this further as we go through the year.

We have also had a great focus on multipacks of crisps. Not literally, admiring the packaging, but looking at a multipack of crisps being their CV and personal statements when they leave George Spencer Academy. Each flavour represents a different part of them: their academic interests, their extracurricular endeavours, their interests outside of Sixth Form...the list could go on. Ensuring that each flavour is full of flavour will make personal statement, interviews and CV writing easier as a result.

The levels of support from the students in helping out at the Sixth Form Open Evening really demonstrates how passionate they are about their subjects and about learning in our Sixth Form. But also the want to give back to the school community in assisting younger students with their own academic development.

Their effort has to be applauded. As we roll into the next half term, let's move from strength to strength, support each other and celebrate each other's successes along the way.



## Y13: Mrs Brown, Director of Sixth Form

As we come to the end of a busy half term for our Year 13 students, it is a good time to reflect. Not only have they returned to studying, but they are also spending a lot of time preparing for their future pathways. Students can find this tricky to balance, but we are here to support them every step of the way. Registration sessions are focused on individual guidance, UCAS applications and working on personal statements. In addition, apprenticeship workshops have commenced for those looking to pursue this route. Our students are also relishing taking part in the varied opportunities that are available. It was a real pleasure to see so many volunteer to help out at the recent Sixth Form Open Evening. They can be proud of being such wonderful role models; portraying our core values and showing the visitors just how encouraging the Sixth Form environment is.

In addition, the Sixth Form is filled with a real buzz on Wednesdays after school, with peer mentoring for younger students demonstrating our supportive culture. It is proving to be really fulfilling for those involved. We are looking ahead to next half term as the students are now preparing for the November PPEs, and are putting together revision timetables. We have introduced 'the weekly review' and a revision 'power hour' which assist them in developing effective study habits for a successful year ahead.

## 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**