



INSIDE THIS ISSUE...



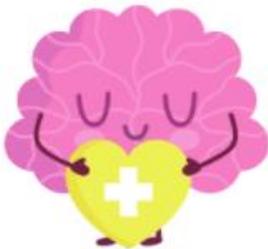
All the news from around the school including: community and charity events, sports round-up, excellence days and an interview with Mr Dakers.



Energy saving week - how you can help save the planet and save some money!



The Big Garden Birdwatch - all you need to know to take part and help the RSPB



'Time to talk' Mental Health Day and Wellbeing

Thank you for picking up the latest issue of The GSA Times, giving you another glimpse into life at GSA and our community. We hope you will enjoy reading this issue and if you have any feedback or ideas for future features, we would love to hear from you. You can find details of how to contact us at the end of this issue.

- The GSA Times News Team, January 2022



AROUND THE SCHOOL: CHARITY AND COMMUNITY

Report by Emma Geddes, Year 9

During the first term, Miss Hembrow, our 'excellent opportunities' leader has helped organise several fundraising events across the school.

For Children in Need day students could wear whatever they wanted in exchange for donating £1 to this great cause. There was also a 'Grow your £1' competition where students could do different activities to try and raise money to increase their donation. Over one thousand six hundred pounds was raised for Children in Need through these events.



In December the school took part in Christmas Jumper Day for Save the Children UK. Students were able to wear some festive knitwear in place of their usual school jumper and raised almost four hundred and fifty pounds.



Year 7 collected shoeboxes filled with treats, which were distributed to vulnerable members of society by Sewa Day. They also took part in the Race to the North Pole challenge raising money for Young Lives vs Cancer and Billy's House by walking, running or riding a collaborative 2,700 miles which is the distance to the North Pole.

Years 8 and 9 collected books for the children's book project which were then distributed to children who don't have regular access to reading material.



Years 10 and 11 participated in a 'reverse advent' for the Mayor's Christmas appeal, collecting items to fill boxes for Montrose Court and Eastwood Food Bank, bringing the community together through tough times.

There are more events planned this year, including a year group charity week at the end of March. Take a look at the [awareness calendar](#) on our website to see what else is planned for this year..



SPORTS ROUND-UP

Report by Mabel Collinson & Priscilla George, Year 7

George Spencer Academy has got an exciting season coming up with the Year 9s football team who are hoping for a successful win when playing on the County Court for the semi finals crown (fingers crossed.)

The Year 11 Netball team finished 3rd in the County Championships, a fantastic achievement.

Triumphantly, the Sixth Form Netball Team has qualified for the regional finals and are looking forward to challenging for the title. We all wish them the best of luck.



Year 11 Girl's Netball team

Striking a victorious win of 4-1, the Year 7s are off to a good start to the football season and are sure to maintain their title. Last but not least, the Year 7 Futsal team also finished runners-up in the Broxtowe competition. Outstanding!

OUR EXCELLENCE DAY!

Report by Mabel Collinson & Priscilla George, Year 7

Year 7 had an amazing Excellence Day on the 8th of December.

S half enjoyed a variety of fun outdoor challenges with our visitors from Walesby which included: the moving climbing wall, circus skills, bushcraft, laser tag, tomahawk, archery and the cave bus. In order to succeed, students needed to demonstrate communication, concentration, resilience and teamwork. They all were extremely successful.

P half put their detective skills to the test to try and solve a murder mystery challenge. Once again, teamwork and good communication was essential to help them to collect evidence and pick up vital clues to lead them to success.

Our next Excellent Day is coming up soon and we're looking forward to swapping activities and putting new skills together.



INTERVIEW WITH MR DAKERS, ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL

Report by Evelyn Hornsby and Sophie Spray, Year 9

Bullying doesn't just happen in school, it happens at work and all around the world. That is why preventing it now is so important. We have interviewed Mr Dakers to find out more about preventing bullying. Here are his replies to the questions we asked:



What is your role in the school?

"I am the assistant principal for personal development of pupil wellbeing and within that I am also the senior designated safeguarding leader for the school."

How do you define bullying?

"At George Spencer Academy we consider someone doing something repeatedly on purpose to someone else that has a negative effect on their wellbeing over time as bullying. It is usually where there is an imbalance of power or social status."

Why does bullying happen?

"Research says that it is an element of young people wanting to establish themselves in the natural hierarchy of young people. Students who want to be seen as popular do negative things to one another to get to that stage, which we see as unnecessary as you can be perfectly respected by being kind."

What is the school doing to prevent bullying?

"In terms of bullying, we have a really strong Ethos of Excellence which gives a platform for ensuring our community and school is a positive and inclusive environment. We have our personal development curriculum where key areas are linked to bullying and students understanding the effects, we make sure to deal with bullying seriously and for young people who report it to be supported as well as the victim. We have sanctions for those who bully, but we also make sure to educate them on why what they have done is wrong."



INTERVIEW WITH MR DAKERS (cont'd)

Report by Evelyn Hornsby and Sophie Spray, Year 9

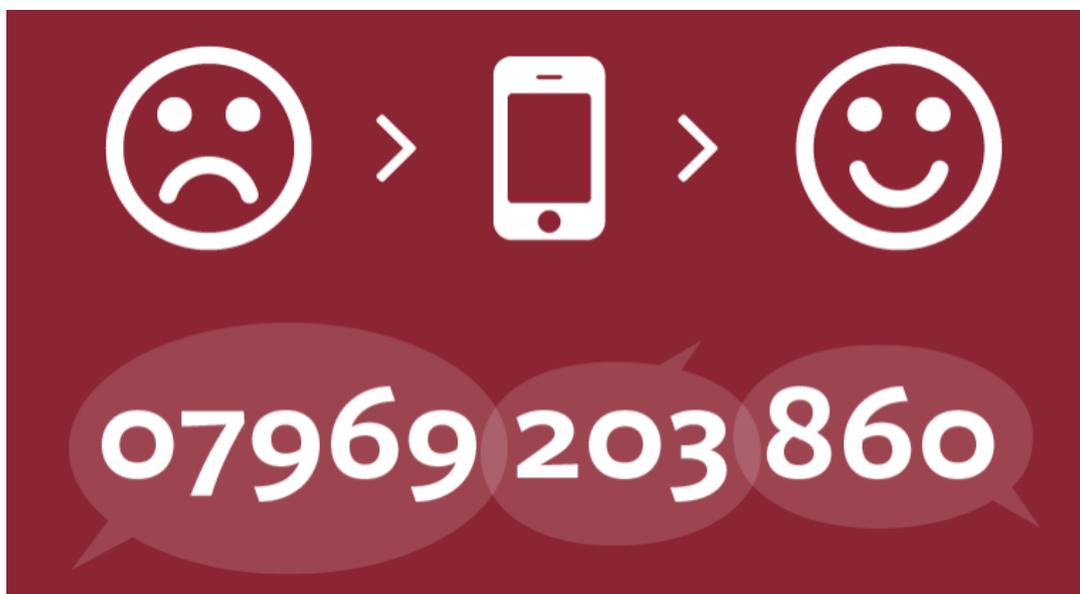
What is your advice to a student if they are somehow involved in bullying?

"My advice for someone who may be a bully is to reflect and think how they would feel if they were in that person's position. We can't have a community where people are made to feel bad due to other people's actions. So those people need to strongly reflect on how they are representing themselves, their families and the school. As a senior leader of the school we would do everything we can to change the behaviour. For somebody that is on the receiving end of peer abuse, we strongly encourage them to speak to members of staff so that it can be dealt with and they can be supported. We also encourage people to have a positive outcome on the situation, including using our wellbeing lines to inform a member of staff."

What can a student do if they need help?

We have lots of support teams within the school, like the Pastoral Team, the Wellbeing Team (where we have specialists in different areas to help students), a Safeguarding Team, the Linc team and all our staff in school are trained to listen and deal with peer on peer abuse. We strongly encourage pupils to speak to staff about any worry they may have."

If you need any help, you can message or call the GSA help line





AROUND THE SCHOOL: ENERGY SAVING WEEK

Report by Emma Geddes, Year 9

This January the school tried to raise awareness of how to save energy through our Energy Saving Week activities. But why do we need to save energy?

We rely on nature to fuel our lives but we should never be complacent, using energy in the wrong way at wrong times can damage entire ecosystems. Schools around the globe are estimated to use around 10 kilowatts of energy per square foot a year.

So how can we help? By getting involved in things such as our Energy Saving Week is a great way to start, with a chance to earn points, while doing your part by helping to turn off lights and shut down computers when they are not in use.

There are many ways you could help out;

- Encouraging more family walks and bike rides instead of using a car.
- Don't leave electrical items like TV or games consoles on standby when not in use.
- Eat a more balanced and local diet to reduce the carbon footprint.
- Turn off the lights when leaving a room.
- When filling the kettle, only fill it with the amount needed.

There are lots of little ways to help save energy that could end up in a bigger saving for the planet.

For more ideas and advice on energy saving, take a look at these sites.

**energy
saving
trust**

<https://energysavingtrust.org.uk/>



[https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/
consumer/energy/](https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer/energy/)



THE BIG GARDEN BIRDWATCH: ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW!

Report by Helen Barnes, Year 8

What is The Big Garden Birdwatch?

It's a free event run by the RSPB which up to one million people from all over the UK take part in. It allows the RSPB to monitor trends with different species of birds and see how they are doing. If a species is declining, they then know where that species needs to be helped so they don't die out.

When is it?

The Big Garden Birdwatch takes place on Friday the 28th of January to Sunday the 30th of January. You can take part once at any time between those dates.

How can I sign up?

You can sign up on the internet by going onto the RSPB Big Garden Birdwatch website or clicking this link [Big Garden Birdwatch](#). You must be 18 or over but that doesn't mean that you can't take part. Just ask your parent or guardian to sign up for you and you can do the counting.

There is a guide that you can get either by post or online (you can write on it to record your results) to help you identify the birds that you see.

What do you have to do?

Count the birds you see in the garden, from a balcony or in a local park for one hour between 28 and 30 January 2022. Only birds that land need to be included, birds flying over shouldn't be counted. Count the highest number of each bird species that you see at any one time, otherwise you could count the same bird twice. For example, if you saw a group of four starlings, and towards the end of the hour you saw two starlings together, please write four as your final count.



How do you record your results?

To record how many of each species of bird that you saw (even if you saw none), go to [rspb.org.uk/birdwatch](https://www.rspb.org.uk/birdwatch) by the 15th of February. Please join in and give nature a helping hand.



'TIME TO TALK' MENTAL HEALTH DAY, FEBRUARY 3RD

Report by Saul Radford, Year 9

Did you know that one in four people suffer from mental health conditions each year? Or that over half of all mental health disorders begin before the age of fourteen? At George Spencer Academy we know how important mental health is especially for those in a young age category and we have many ways to support those who need it. January is the "celebration of life" month which lets us take a step back from our daily life and appreciate our lives and who we are.

Shelf help

The school library has a "shelf help" space which can be found in the non-fiction area, there are many books there detailing how to get help and help to find your voice. It includes a selection of non-fiction books about a range of topics such as depression, consent, anxiety, eating disorders and more. There is a range of fiction available on these subject like Wonder by R.J Palacio. There are motivational books like "You Are A Champion" by Marcus Rashford and guide books on a variety of topics such as



"The Teenage Guide to Friends" by Nicola Morgan. There are even more on the [E-platform](#) which can be accessed via the student hub.

The Wellbeing Team

If there are any problems you would like to speak to someone about in school then the Wellbeing team is always ready to help. The head of the Wellbeing team is Mr Steane who you can find around school or in the Wellbeing office. Of course any teacher will be happy to help or lead you to other people who can.

If you feel nervous about speaking to someone in person then you can always call or message the GSA Wellbeing line at anytime.

There are also lots of resources available on the [Wellbeing page](#) of the student hub.

Wellbeing GSA Wellbeing line

You can call or text this number - 0796203860 - and a member of our pastoral team will offer support and guidance.

It's important to take time out for yourself, have a look at the resources on this page for ideas to help you.

EXAMS HELP FROM THE WELLBEING TEAM

- Exam Anxiety - How am I feeling about this?
- 10 ways to help you revise
- Dealing with exam stress
- Good reviews/Poor reviews poster

Heard about our new eBook collection?
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Check out the audio and eBooks available on our EPlatform for helping with exams, stress and mindfulness.

Or take a break and relax with and listen to a fantastic audiobook of your choice!

CALM ZONE -

*Please see table of notes for food intake. 30% about hydration

Take a break and have a look at the [Self Care page on The Anna Freud Centre website](#). There are lots of different strategies and activities you can try, and some important advice: "It's up to you to decide what helps. If it works, keep doing it. If it doesn't, stop and try something else!"



PRINCIPAL'S CHALLENGE: INSPIRATIONAL PEOPLE

Last term form groups in Years 7, 8 and 9 were given a Principal's Challenge to create a mood board for a person that inspired them.

They had to decide as a group on a person who had shown resilience, courage and achieved great things. Then they worked on their moodboard collecting information, quotes and pictures for their person. There were inspirational people from all over the world chosen including, Jess Kidd, Nelson Mandela, Malala Yousafzai, Rosa Parks, Marcus Rashford and Mr Beast.

8 SLG chose Eddie Kidd OBE as their inspiration and were lucky enough to receive personalised letters and signed photos from him after he saw their project on social media.



8SLG with their letters from Eddie Kidd OBE and their winning project

AUTHOR VISIT

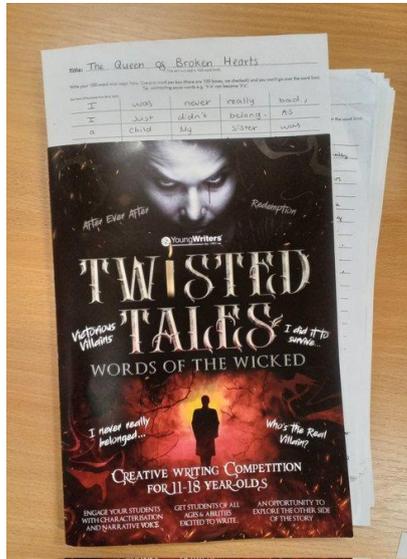
Report by GSA Reads Book Group

At the end of November the GSA Reads Book Group were lucky enough to have a virtual author visit from Sally Doherty. Her book is called 'Toby and the Silver Blood Witches' and it's an exciting magical adventure for readers aged 7+.

One of the things we learnt is that Sally used to be a student at George Spencer Academy and that one of the mysterious buildings featured in the book was based on Chetwynd Barracks! We were able to ask lots of questions about writing and get advice on writing our own stories which was really helpful. We hope that we will be able to talk to Sally again when the next book is published.

If you would like to find out more about 'Toby and the Silver Blood Witches' and Sally, you can visit her website at: <https://www.sallydohertyauthor.com/>





STOP PRESS!

Thirty four students will have their short stories published this March in the next Young Writers book called Twisted Tales: Fantastic Fiction.

This was a national competition that had over 19,000 entries so this is a fantastic achievement by the students. They each received a certificate and bookmark and are in with a chance of an extra prize if their story is chosen as one of the judge's favourites.

THE NEWS TEAM FOR THIS ISSUE WERE:

- ★ Year 7: Priscilla George, Mabel Collinson
- ★ Year 8: Helen Barnes
- ★ Year 9: Sophie Spray, Evelyn Hornsby, Emma Geddes, Saul Radford
- ★ The GSA Reads Book Group
- ★ Staff support: Ms Stevens

The team are already at work on the next issue which will be published in the Spring and will have a focus on reading alongside our usual school and community news.

We would love to hear from you if you:

- are a student and would be interested in joining the news team
- have an idea for an article
- would like to give us some feedback on this issue.

Use this link to go straight to our contact form

<https://forms.gle/tbWrMJAAGJ6XDXZW9>

You can also email us at gsatimes@george-spencer.notts.sch.uk

