



## HT1 Autumn 2022

### Message from the Principal: Mrs Corbett

---

Dear Parents and Carers,

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

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. Thank you to all the families who turned out for our Year Group Information Evenings at the beginning of term. We hope the information gained has become useful for you and extended your child's learning at home. Our website hosts all our Curriculum Maps, alongside our Read, Watch and Visit programme that gives parents/carers inspiration to bring learning to the home. Please continue to log the events you complete on the Google document to ensure your child is recognised in school for their contributions. [Read Watch Visit participation log](#)

As a self-reflective academy we are planning to increase our communication with our families for individual student achievements. After the half term break, we will be launching our 'Light Bulb Moment' Award for every year group. At George Spencer Academy we talk about having an ethos driven curriculum that leads to thousands of light bulb moments every day. We want to publicly celebrate these 'light bulb moments' every week with our families and celebrate those students who achieve the award. Please look out for weekly emails of our winning students soon in to the next half term and follow us on Twitter to keep up to date with latest information. [https://twitter.com/George\\_Spencer](https://twitter.com/George_Spencer)

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 outer-wear 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. <http://www.george-spencer.com/uniform/>

I look forward to continuing to build or strong partnership and wish you a relaxing half term break.

Kind regards.

Mrs H Corbett



## Read, Watch and Visit Update: Mrs Floate, Associate Leader

---

Thank you to all of our students who have been engaging with our Read, Watch and Visit programme and logging their activities. For those of you not familiar with our Read, Watch and Visit programme we offer extended learning opportunities for all year groups that link to what students are studying in their subjects. You can find the list of activities in our curriculum booklets – which can be found here: <http://www.george-spencer.com/curriculum/>

It is great to see so many of you engaging with the Read, Watch and Visit programme. If you haven't tried any of our activities, now is the time to get involved and make sure you log your activities following the link below - as this enters you into an end of term prize draw. Link – [Read Watch Visit participation log](#)

### Here is what some of our students have been saying about the Read, Watch and Visit programme:

“It was really interesting to learn about how computers played such a vital role in ending WW2 and how advanced they have become today in comparison the large machines that were in the film. I was also fascinated, learning as to how mathematics and coding are so intertwined in the computers of the past and today.” **Year 9**

“It was a good story, interesting and empowering.” **Year 7**

“I thought it was amazing that the fields the animals (particularly the lambs) were reared in and that fruits were grown in, were visible from the farm shop; something that is virtually impossible in the current age as food is flown around the Earth for our demand. The food tasted better than in the supermarket too, as all of the food was in season and hand picked for their quality and because the food had virtually no miles on it, meant it was better for the environment too.” **Year 9**

“I learnt that bacteria have up to 7 new generations per day and that in the longest running evolution experiment they have evolved 74500 times.” **Year 10**

## Uniform and Winter Coats: Mr Hartley, Assistant Principal

---

As the colder and more inclement weather approaches, can we please take this opportunity to ask you to check the uniform expectations, in particular the section pertaining to coats and jumpers. It is an area that can cause confusion and conflict. Winter coats should be warm and appropriate for all weathers, meaning they should be waterproof. Could I also ask you to remind your child if the weather is poor, they need to bring their coat with them, last year we had a number of students arriving at school wet through in a morning.

Thank you for your ongoing support.



## **Personal Development Lessons: Mrs Randall, Head of Personal Development**

---

This half-term, students have been learning about Health and Well-being in their Personal Development lessons. It has been pleasing to see students discussing and engaging with topics about expressing and managing emotions, assessing the risks of alcohol, tobacco and vaping and strategies to promote mental and emotional wellbeing.

After the October half-term, students in Year 7 to 11 will be learning about Living in the Wider World during their Personal Development lessons. Year 7 lessons will focus on developing skills and aspirations; Year 8 will discuss community and careers; Year 9 will look at setting goals; Year 10 will be learning about financial decision making whilst Year 11 will be exploring skills for further education, employment and career progression.

Please visit our website to view our full curriculum offer - <http://www.george-spencer.com/curriculum/>

## **Extra-Curricular Clubs: Miss Jenkinson, Vice Principal**

---

Extra-curricular clubs are back up and running for another year and we have some exciting new additions including coding and ciphering and First Aid club. We have clubs running every day in both lunchtime slots and afterschool and the list is updated weekly and posted on the year group Google classrooms. PARs points are awarded for every attendance so it is definitely worth getting involved.

For more information about what where and when, click on the link that takes you to the full timetable <http://www.george-spencer.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Extra-Curricular.pdf>.

If any students have an idea for a club that is not currently running, we are always willing to find a way to get it started so please encourage them to speak to their Learning Manager.



## **Trips and Visits Update:**

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

---

This half term, our students have already been getting involved and been out and about on various trips and visits. On National Poetry Day, a group of Year 10 and Year 8 students visited an independent living scheme in Stapleford to jointly recite a poem with the residents. This was part of the Poetry Together campaign, aiming to get young people more interested in poetry as well as connecting different members of the community and the trip was a real success.

The Year 11 students who study Construction were also out visiting Stanton Precast, a widely recognised leading UK manufacturer of precast concrete pipes, manholes, culverts and linear drainage. The students were able to see the realities of working in the construction industry and gained some valuable careers and employability advice from those they met.

Our students on the Excellence programme had a fantastic day in London, visiting both the Science museum and having a tour of the Houses of Parliament. They also had the opportunity to have a discussion with their local MP.



Coming up next we have a trip to Oxford university, Sixth Form Spanish day and a visit to Liverpool art gallery. A full list of our trips and visits can be found on the school website - <http://www.george-spencer.com/extra-curricular/>



## Pride Club: Mrs Carr and Mrs Coutts-Smith

Pride Club has been running since the beginning of last academic year, and we meet every Monday after school. We aim to create a safe, inclusive space where people feel free to be themselves. In the past we have created displays describing the different genders and sexualities to help dispel confusion about identities. We also have games sessions and fun activities as well.

On a termly basis, with the senior leadership team, we have our voice heard and present our views on the school environment and the presentation of inclusivity.

It's a place to have fun, feel safe, hang out with and make new friends.



## Student Presidents:

Hello all. We hope you have all had a wonderful break over the summer. This upcoming year provides the opportunity to build on and improve the positives of the previous year for all students. Support of pupils will be essential throughout their studies, therefore your continued help is extremely appreciated. We believe this year will be a great success for all.

It was great to see so many form reps and student helpers supporting the school at the two open days for Year 6 students and Sixth Form. We are looking forward to working with the school council this year in sharing the views of the student body and helping to strengthen our ethos of excellence here at George Spencer Academy.

Zain Al-Asadi and Thomas Deeley (Student Presidents)





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

This half term has been productive across all cohorts in terms of career learning. In Y7-9, students have focused on a range of topics to support their wider understanding of themselves and skills linked to future earning potential during their Form Time Learning Futures slots. In Y10-11 the focus has been around the GCSE processes and the step into correct post-16 learning opportunity, through making informed choices about their career progression. Post-16 learners have been supported by the Sixth Form team with post-18 planning and making the most of level 3 learning. We've also had our first 'At lunch with...' event with an ex Olympian who now works in premier league football.

Next term is also looking busy (& exciting). Y10 will experience a community project called 'Think Big' led by Ideagen and Nottingham Forrest in the Community. Y11 have the 'mock interview' day as part of Excellence Day 2 on 05/12/22. We also have the chief financial officer for the EFL lined up for our next 'At lunch with...' amongst other things.

### **Family half term homework project:**

Y7-9: get your son/daughter to show you the range of materials shared on Google Classroom under the heading 'Futures – Careers & Employability' from our work-related Wednesday sessions.

Y10: Can you find any online experiences of work or MOOCs (Mass Open Online Courses) to complete over half term that could enhance your CV (check Unifrog for MOOCs).

Y11: Continue to discuss and explore post-16 pathways. You will need to have submitted at least 2 applications by Christmas. This break is the ideal time to do at least half of this task.

**Excited by what you hear as an employee, business owner or entrepreneur? Then please contact [pburrows@george-spencer.notts.sch.uk](mailto:pburrows@george-spencer.notts.sch.uk) to get involved and enhance our GSA Futures offer.**



## Reading Update: Mr Furber, Assistant Principal

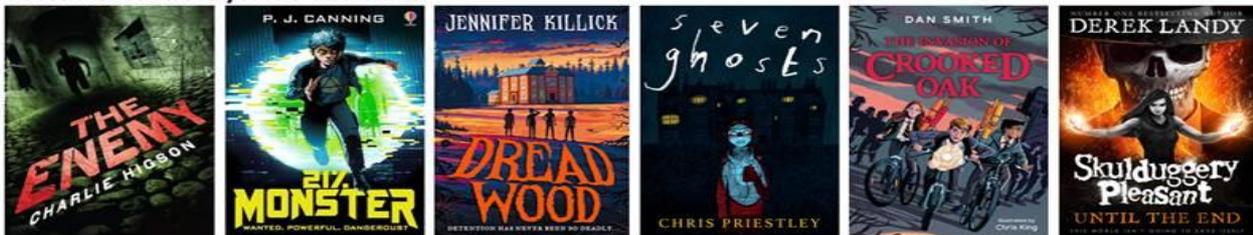
*"The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you'll go."* Dr. Seuss. Well, if this half term is anything to go by then students at George Spencer have been learning new things and going to new places through reading like never before. Miss Stevens, our amazing librarian, has seen enormous engagement in the library at both break times and this has translated into record levels of withdrawals with nearly 1200 books borrowed so far this year. By half term, Year 7 students will have a copy of their free 'BookBuzz' book after the copies arrived in school last week and I hope they can get stuck into their new reads over half term and can complete one or more of the BookBuzz challenges (see image). All students should continue to have a go at the Principal's Challenge which encourages them to complete some reading activities as a form group, with the best entries winning prizes after the deadline of **Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> November**. Finally, Halloween is nearly upon us and spooky season is at hand, so encourage students to have a look at these 'spooktacular' reads over the half term break.

### Bookbuzz challenge



<p><b>Read your Bookbuzz book</b></p> <p>Who would you recommend it to?</p> <input type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>Design a new cover for your book</b></p> <p>Will you draw it by hand or use the computers for your design?</p> <input type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>Discuss your book with someone at home</b></p> <p>Get a note in your planner to show you've done this task.</p> <input type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>Read another Bookbuzz book</b></p> <p>Swap with a friend or borrow one from the library</p> <input type="checkbox"/>
<p><b>Write a review of your book</b></p> <p>Collect a review sheet from the Library</p> <input type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>Design a game based on your book</b></p> <p>Will it be a board game, card game or online game?</p> <input type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>Send a question or letter to a Bookbuzz author</b></p> <p>What would you like to know?</p> <input type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>Super secret Bookbuzz task</b></p> <p>Come up with your own task. Ask if you need help.</p> <input type="checkbox"/>

Recommended for years 7 and 8...



Recommended for years 9 and above...





## Attendance: Mr Hartley, Assistant Principal

Attendance to school is a key priority at George Spencer and we aim for all of our students to have an attendance of 97% or above at the end of the academic year, as we recognise the impact a lower attendance can have. If a student has 97% at the end of the year, that is the equivalent of having had 5 days off. If that falls to 95% it is the equivalent to 9 days and for those at 90% it is the equivalent to having missed 4 weeks of school in one year. If this is repeated over your child's time at George Spencer it can have a huge impact on their overall achievement. It is therefore imperative we work together to maximise the attendance of all pupils.

We will be writing to all families where their child's absence is below 95% for the first half term to see if there is anything we can do to support. The students whose attendance is below 95% will be being monitored and supported by their Director of Learning or our Attendance officer.

### ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL

Children are required by law to attend school 190 days per year. The Government states that every pupil's attendance should be at least 95%.

How do YOU measure up?

Attendance	Days Absent	Weeks Absent	Lessons Missed
95%	9 Days	2 Weeks	50 Lessons
90%	19 Days	4 Weeks	100 Lessons
85%	29 Days	6 Weeks	150 Lessons
80%	38 Days	8 Weeks	200 Lessons
75%	48 Days	10 Weeks	250 Lessons
70%	57 Days	11.5 Weeks	290 Lessons
65%	67 Days	13.5 Weeks	340 Lessons

In order to support your child if they are absent, we will be reintroducing our 'catch-up' system, this is in place to ensure students missing lessons do not have gaps in their knowledge, as a result of their absence from school. How this will work has been explained to the students during assemblies this week. If your child is impacted by this, they will receive a 'catch-up' card, on the reverse is a letter with further information for you as parents. If you would like further information on how this works, please contact your child's Director of Learning.

Thank you in advance for your support and co-operation.



## Community: Miss Hembrow, Excellence Pioneer

This half term we have been raising awareness of multiple different events and important topics through our awareness days. These have included, National TA Day where pupils and staff recognised the hard work of our Learning Progress Assistants.



We also took part in MacMillan's 'World's Biggest Coffee Morning' with students being able to purchase MacMillan cakes with the money being donated to help those facing cancer.



Most recently we have been raising awareness of Black History Month. Students have had valuable discussions in Form Time Learning, whole school assemblies and the option to complete a research activity on Black British figures.

For National Poetry Day a group of Year 8 and Year 10 students visited an independent living scheme in Stapleford, Rockwell Court, to share some poems. Both students and residents thoroughly enjoyed listening to each other's poems and reciting a few together.

Next term each year group will have chosen their Year Group Charity and will be planning activities to fundraise for them. We will also be attending Christmas music events in the community and gathering donations for local causes who need extra help over the festive period.



## Year 11 PPE Preparation: Miss Jenkinson, Vice Principal

Our Year 11s have been 'striving in their own time' and making the most of the study areas and Strive sessions that are available at lunchtimes, before and after school. With the PPEs starting straight after the half term break, we are ensuring they have a revision timetable in place and the topics they need to revisit. Staff have put together 5 top tips for each subject and these can be found on the school website under 'exam support'. At home, you can support by checking their revision schedule and supporting them in sticking to it. Help with memory retrieval by quizzing them and asking questions, ensure they have the necessary resources and equipment. Use the revision guides to test them on key terms and assessment objectives. If you would like further advice please get in touch with the Year 11 team.

### How Can Students Revise Effectively?

by @inner\_drive | www.innerdrive.co.uk

**TEST YOURSELF**  
Research has shown that testing yourself helps you remember significantly more than just re-reading information. Testing yourself can also help reduce the negative effects of stress associated with exams.

**USE SPACING**  
Spread out your learning of material across several days and revisit it. This helps transfer information to your long-term memory.

**STOP PROCRASTINATING**  
Schedule the revision of harder topics for the morning when you will be most awake. This stops you using tiredness as an excuse for leaving the harder topics until the next day.

**MANAGE YOUR TIME**  
Break your revision down and give yourself a certain amount of content to learn each day.



## Y7: Mr O'Toole, Director of Learning for Y7

I would like to start by saying that myself and Mrs Hazell are immensely proud of the way in which our new Year 7 cohort have made the transition and adapted to life at George Spencer Academy. The key themes for our year group this year, alongside our whole school core values, are kindness, teamwork and excellence and we have seen these three traits in abundance over the past six weeks. As a year group team, we have supported this transition through the delivery of our Personal Development curriculum during Form Time Learning in order to give advice to the students and allow them the opportunity to discuss their experiences.

This half-term we have celebrated Black History month by learning about significant black British figures both past and present. Also, our extra-curricular activities are now up and running and it has been fantastic to see such high attendance from Year 7. Congratulations to the boys' football team who beat Minster School 1-0 in the County Cup in their first game together. This half-term has also seen the launch of the Principal's Challenge, which has a reading focus as each of our form groups compete to produce the best photos of them reading. In our final week of the Half Term, Year 7 experienced their first Excellence Day as they took part in a day of problem-solving activities. The focus for the day for our year group was teamwork and it was fantastic to see each form group building their team ethos.

A huge well done to Year 7 for all of their achievements this half-term, and I hope you all have a fantastic break. We look forward to welcoming you back very soon.

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

Wow, I cannot believe we are at the end of the first half term already. It has been an absolute pleasure getting to know your children. They have been an absolute credit to themselves, you and George Spencer this half term. They have all displayed excellent manners, behaviours and values when communicating with staff, other students and in particular towards Miss Phipps and I. Having taken on the role of Director of Learning, it has allowed me to spend even more time in Year 8 lessons witnessing the fantastic work they are all accessing and engaging with. The willingness to contribute in lessons has been fantastic and is really appreciated by their teachers, this is evident through the vast number of positive points awarded this half term.

As well as all the exciting opportunities taking place inside the classroom, it has been fantastic to see so many Year 8 students getting involved with the extra-curricular activities on offer at George Spencer. I would like to take this opportunity to formally thank all those students who helped out at the recent Year 6 Open Evening, the parents and students were very complimentary of all the student helpers. Thank you for all the responses regarding the residential trip for Year 8, it has been overwhelmingly positive. This is something we will look to provide for the students after February half term. However, we are very mindful of the current financial climate and want to give every student the chance to be able to take part, we will share details early next half term to allow as much of a lead time as possible. The students are certainly very excited about the thought of a trip, it has been high on the list of things they have been coming to talk to me about at break and lunchtime.

Finally, I would like to thank you for your ongoing support and wish you all a very happy and relaxing half term break, whatever that looks like. We look forward to welcoming everyone back on the 31<sup>st</sup> October, ready to continue with the great start they have made.



## Y9: Mr Hopkins, Director of Learning Y9

As the new Director of Learning for Year 9 since September, I have been wowed by how fantastic this year group are in their hard work in lessons, behaviour around school and willingness to get involved in our school community through volunteering and extra-curricular clubs. Our focus for this academic year is to Find Your Greatness, in every day and in everything that we do. In our first assembly together, we looked at people who have gone on to change the world in being great at what they have done in their life, often selflessly without thinking what is in it for me. These are people who have lived out the Core Values of our Academy, even without walking through the gates of George Spencer.

Year 9 is a significant year for each student within their education journey, as they reach the end of key stage 3 with lessons in all subjects leading towards supporting their progress to their GCSE pathways. Over the course of this year, we will continue to look at how we can make our impact on the world, caring for others and being determined to #FindOurGreatness and be the best we can be. This is achieved by attending every day, doing our best and following instructions. I am delighted to inform you that 164 students achieved 100% attendance in September and as a year group at the time of writing we have nearly hit the target I set of 20,000 Positive PARS points, this was the target for the whole academic year and the students have achieved this in a half term. To the class of 2025, keep working every day to #FindYOURGreatness.

## Y10: Mr Richardson, Director of Learning Y10

The start of the new academic year is a time for Year 10 to reflect on the three years already completed and use what we have learnt to make impact on those subjects. Options have been picked and the students are where they want to be, to take them where they need to go.

When I spoke to the students back in September, I introduced our tagline for the year. "Seize the day". Seize each lesson, each moment and each opportunity with both hands and see where it goes. It may frustrate from time to time, it may be stressful and it will be hard. However, nothing of value comes without hard work, but I am sure our students are up for the challenge. As always, Miss Gill and myself will be walking that journey with them and I hope that will give them the pastoral support needed during any tough times they may have. You the parents/carers are the third element in this process and as always, your support will be invaluable here. We look forward to working with you on this new key stage 4 journey and will see our students seize whatever comes their way.



## Y11: Miss Johnson, Director of Learning Y11

Well done to all of our Year 11 students for a focused, positive and calm start to the year. In our first assembly together this term, I introduced to students our Year 11 motto, "THIS IS YOUR YEAR" and urged them to make the most of the multiple opportunities that are on offer every day at George Spencer Academy to support them in achieving their full potential. Attendance at our 'Strive' sessions has been high and it has been fantastic to see our LSRC full of students revising independently every lunchtime, plus staying after school to partake in subject specific activities. For each Strive session attended, students will receive a raffle ticket and we have some excellent rewards on offer for our first prize draw after half term.

When we return from the half term holiday, the cohort will complete their first round of Year 11 PPE's and we are encouraging all students to try their very best, so that our wraparound support can be further tailored to individual needs. In Form Time Learning this week, we will be discussing how to manage exam stress, completing aspirational activities for students to visualise their upcoming success, plus discussing the importance of work / life balance. The Year 11 students continue to have access to a range of fantastic resources outside of school to assist them with their independent revision over half term, including GCSEPod and resources on The Student Hub. However, it is important that all students return refreshed and energised to 'hit the ground running' upon our return. Well done to all Year 11 students for a fantastic start and enjoy the half term break.

## Y12: Mr Spears, Director of Learning Y12

Year 12 has made an excellent start to the year. They have settled in very well to their next stage in their education. Over the next 2 years they will grow to become more independent and flourish under their new study program.

They are a very exciting year group for us as they are the first year group to benefit from the formal enrichment offer on a Wednesday afternoon - in a similar way to what universities offer. The enthusiasm that they have shared for this offer is truly special, we have got a plethora of different opportunities available for students. This will further develop them into the next chapter in their life, after George Spencer Sixth Form, whether that be at university, in an apprenticeship or in employment.

Please help us in keeping the curiosity in their subjects going by engaging them with the read, watch and listen activities in your curriculum booklets which were handed out at the information evening and the electronic copy on the school website. Particularly if your son/daughter is wanting to go to university after Sixth Form - engagement in their chosen subjects outside the walls of the classroom is what they want to be hearing about.



## Y13: Mrs Brown, Director of Sixth Form

---

It has been a busy and productive start to the new term, and the students' final year at George Spencer Sixth Form. Form time has been filled with conversations about their futures, making plans and getting ahead with applications, supported by their Learning Managers. Many students enjoyed helping out at the recent Open Evenings, and it was lovely to see their enthusiasm for the Sixth Form and for their subjects really shining through. They were true ambassadors and we were proud of them. Students have also volunteered for roles including Study Skills Ambassadors in which they mentor Year 11 students, and supporting Year 7 tutor groups with their transition to secondary school.

Looking ahead, the students are preparing for their PPEs after half term, and further information will be sent to you regarding this. In addition to this academic focus, Year 13 will also have the opportunity during the next Excellence Day to develop a range of life skills, including financial awareness, in line with the wider curriculum on offer.

## 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**