



HT3 Spring 2023

Message from the Principal: Mrs Corbett

As we say goodbye to the dark mornings and evenings of January, we have observed how well our students have maintained their high levels of engagement, motivation and energy in a half term that has flown by. This half term we have continued to embed our 'light bulb' moments across the academy, with those students who are committed to one of our GSA Ambassador groups being awarded with a light bulb to wear on the lapel of their blazer. We have urged students in all year groups to get involved in one or more of the groups we have on offer. I hope you have continued to enjoy reading the weekly light bulb moment winners, in school the students who have achieved these awards have really valued the recognition, certificate and of course the queue jump pass and free lunch for them and a friend.

When the students return after the half term break, they will start to see large external displays appeared around our site which will ask them to question their light bulb of the day. We urge families to also ask students at home – asking them what learning excited them today? What do they know now that they didn't know before? What knowledge have they gained that they want to know more about? Our aim is to continue to encourage our students to reflect so they continue to take responsibility for their learning alongside developing their thirst for knowledge and their love of learning.

We hope you enjoy reading our latest bulletin and I thank you for your partnership and support in engaging your children in all we have to offer at George Spencer Academy.

I wish you and your families a peaceful and relaxing half term break.

Kindest regards.

Mrs Corbett

Personal Development: Mrs Randall and Mr Dakers

This half-term, students have been learning about diversity, discrimination and relationships in their Personal Development lessons. It has been pleasing to see students discussing and engaging with topics.

During the next half-term, students in Year 7 to 11 will be learning about Health and Well-being during their Personal Development lessons. Year 7 lessons will focus on health and puberty; Year 8 will learn about emotional well-being; Year 9 will focus on healthy lifestyles; Year 10 will be exploring the influence of drugs, gangs, role models and the media; whilst Year 11 will be focusing on independence and responsible health choices.



Reading Culture: Mr Furber, Assistant Principal

As the third half term comes to a close, I want to commend all the students who have made a start on the Reading Bingo challenge that started just before Christmas and will run for the whole year. 'Bingo' cards with a series of reading challenges that students should try to check off are available from the library with prizes available for 8, 16 and ALL of the challenges being completed. One of the categories is to read a book with a colour in the title or the author's name, so this half term's suggested reads are all linked to this theme, enjoy.

Year 7 – The Squad, Black Op by Tom Palmer (e-book) – Teenage spies with the perfect cover as members of the England youth football team.

Year 8 – Voyages in the Underworld of Orpheus Black by Marcus and Julian Sedgwick (e-book) – Two brothers in conflict amidst the devastation of World War II London.

Year 9 – The Boy in the Black Suit by Jason Reynolds (e-book) – Matt wears a black suit every day, but why?

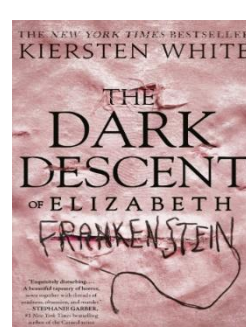
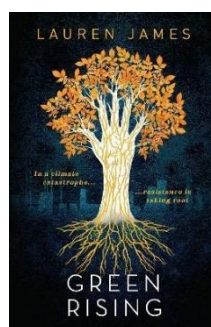
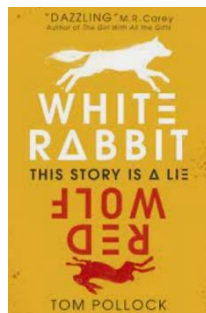
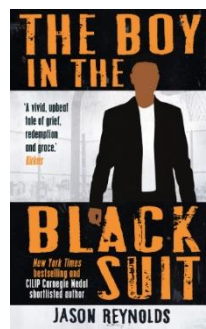
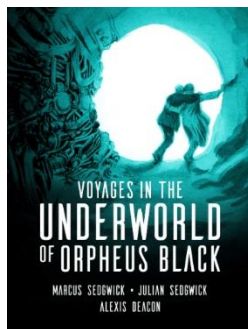
Year 10 – A Blade So Black by L.L. McKinney (audiobook) – A fantasy, urban re-telling of Alice in Wonderland.

Year 11 – White Rabbit, Red Wolf by Tom Pollock (e-book) – A taut thriller about murder, maths and the mind.

Year 12 – Green Rising by Lauren James (e-book) – A supernatural tale that asks how we might save the planet from climate change.

Year 13 – The Dark Descent of Elizabeth Frankenstein by Kirsten White (audiobook) – A disturbing reimaging of the original Frankenstein.

All of the titles are available on the e-platform <https://georgespencer.eplatform.co/> along with a whole host of the other recommended reading lists and new titles.





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 over this past term. Our students can find all of our Read, Watch and Visit activities and participation log on in our student hub found on the school website

So far, our students have logged over 328 activities and here is an example of what some of our students have said about these activities:

Read

Science activity – Year 7 student: “Every living thing in the world is made of cells but humans have over a billion cells”.

Watch

Maths’s activity Year 9 student “It was a different way to think about Maths which was good”.

Visit

Drama activity – Year 9 student “I enjoyed Frankenstein the production it was quite simply a masterpiece seeing this monster being created and learning about the world”.

As you can see our students are enjoying our Read, Watch and Visit activities – please encourage your child, if they haven’t already, to try an activity and log what they enjoyed about to be entered for our end of term prize draw.

Y11 Recruitment: Mrs Brown Director of Sixth Form

It was a real pleasure for the Senior Leadership Team to have individual meetings with the Year 11 students early this half term. Spending time discussing their futures and suitable pathways was of such value and it was with real interest that we heard about their plans. From students who have clear career aspirations, to those who are wishing to keep their options open, the advice was individually tailored. With the George Spencer Sixth Form offering such a wide range of A level and vocational courses, it is of course a popular choice for many varied reasons. It was wonderful to hear feedback from the students about making a careful choice based on the security of quality teaching, the Sixth Form culture and seeing how the Sixth Form provides them with that next step, but is fully supportive as they make the transition to more independence.

Please contact GSA_sixthform@george-spencer.com if there are any questions or for those wishing to make a late application.



Online Influences: Mr Dakers, Assistant Principal

The impact of social media on young people continues to be the focus of much discussion and scrutiny. Online influencers have grown in popularity over recent years. An 'online influencer' is a person who has a large number of online followers through gaming and social media. They are also referred to as a 'YouTuber', 'Social Influencer', 'Streamer', or 'Gamer'. Online influencers influence their followers by being entertaining, offering advice, appearing to lead a desirable lifestyle or appearing to be extremely wealthy. Young people are often impressed by the content influencers share online and can consequently replicate the attitudes and behaviours displayed by influences. **However**, online influencers are not regulated and for many, their aim is to grow an audience that they can then sell products to and make money from. Some influencers can be poor role models who show children negative behaviours such as drugs, alcohol, bad language, fake news, violence, dangerous pranks, misogynistic attitudes and behaviours.

What you can do to help keep your child safe online

- Always discuss regularly with your child what they watch and follow online.
- If your child follows an online influencer, then if you do the same, you will be able to receive the content as well and be better prepared in helping to advise your child.
- Discuss regularly the positive and negative elements of online influencers.
- Always let your child know that they should never purchase anything online without gaining your permission first.
- Always let your child know that they should always say if they see or hear anything online that makes them feel scared or uncomfortable and to never arrange to meet someone who they have met online.
- Let them know that they do not have to feel as though they have done something wrong, nobody is going to get cross and it is not their fault.
- If you are concerned with anything you or your child has seen or been asked to do, please inform your child's Pastoral Manager of the school's safeguarding team.

You can find further guidance on the link below;

<https://www.internetmatters.org/hub/question/how-can-i-help-my-child-think-critically-about-the-social-media-influencers-they-follow/>



Student Presidents: Miss Whalley, Excellence Pioneer

So far, as student presidents here at George Spencer, we have had opportunities to be involved and help organise many projects for the academy. As a team we have helped to plan a Sixth Form challenge day where we held a dodgeball tournament and also got to present awards at the end of year prize giving ceremony. Zain also hosts a really successful chess club for many students at lunchtime.

One of our most recent projects involves every year groups getting to choose a charity with which they have to research and ultimately raise money for. Currently the student council members for each year group have chosen the charity they want their year to raise money for and we have all presented our ideas in year group assemblies to the entire school, a daunting but very rewarding experience. We are continuing to have meetings to further develop this project and think of new ideas for projects in the future and are excited to see what else we can do to become more involved with the wider school.

We plan to continue to take part in more projects and opportunities like the ones we have already participated in, allowing us to make the school a better place.

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

We recently completed the Y11 S-half mock interviews. Students demonstrated their personal 'excellence' and this was reflected in the employer feedback. We are currently fully immersed in National Apprenticeship Week (#NAW2023) which is designed to showcase the multitude of career pathways where people can combine learning with earning. Over recent years we have seen increased numbers of students choosing this route at both Post-16 and Post-18. Our work with Futures+ continues as we ensure that all KS4 students have received independent guidance.

Half term challenges:

- KS3 (Y7-8): Explore some of the skill challenges linked to 'essential' employability skills (<https://www.skillsbuilder.org/homelearning/skills-challenges>)
- KS3 (Y9): Support for students and families as they explore the GCSE options process (<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/zrjh92p>)
- KS4 (Y10-11): Have you explored MOOCs. Mass Open Online Courses in UNIFROG are a great addition to your CV or LinkedIn profile [must be 16yrs old for LinkedIn] (<https://www.unifrog.org/sign-in>)
- KS5 (Y12-13) Continue to build your 'work related' network and follow influential (<https://www.linkedin.com/>)

We are always looking for businesses, employers, employees to support our students to become informed learners related to the workplace. Get in touch with pburrows@george-spencer.notts.sch.uk to see how you can add that little extra.



Community: Miss Hembrow, Excellence Pioneer

Last half term each of our Year Groups selected the charities that they will be raising awareness and fundraising for throughout the year:

Year 7: Young Lives versus Cancer

Year 8: Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Families Association

Year 9: Operation Orphan's Forget Me Notts

Year 10: PASCIS Cancer Support

Year 11: Broxtowe Youth Homelessness

Each of these charities has visited and delivered an assembly to their Year Group. They have explained the important work that they do and given the students ideas of how they would like to fundraise. The students are voting on a fundraising activity that they will be completing as part of our Raising and Giving Week between 27th – 31st March.



Our Community Ambassadors also worked really hard in an appeal for Shoe Aid. We then took all of the shoes that were kindly donated to the charity's headquarters where our ambassadors were given a tour and insight into the important work that they do.

We have also hosted our first community cooking class where Miss Baylis demonstrated how to cook a lentil cottage pie and gave advice on how to shop and cook effectively. This was really well received and we will be running more throughout the year.



Meanwhile, our Sixth Form Community Ambassadors organised a Nations and Cultures Week. Throughout the week there were different activities to help raise awareness of the diversity in our Sixth Form. Activities included cultural food tasting, a demonstration of how to tie a turban and students coming in their national or cultural dress.

There will be plenty of charity events for students to get involved in during the RAG week next half term. Our community ambassadors are also busy arranging other community events such as a visit to the Beeston Memory Café and the community dress rehearsal of the school production.





Extra Curricular: Miss Jenkinson, Vice Principal

We have had another eventful half term with some exciting trips and visits taking place.

Our Year 10, 12 and 13 Art students took a trip to Liverpool to visit the Walker and the Tate art galleries and see this year's Turner prize nominees and winner. They were given a talk and then able to take in the artwork as they explored the gallery. Some were very excited to have seen a real Picasso!

16 Year 10 students taking part in The Brilliant Club have visited Oxford University and were treated to a tour of the campus and experienced a lecture and talks from current undergraduates.

Our Inclusion Team have taken some of our students to take part in the dodgeball festival this week and our A level biologists and Psychologists are visiting the Freud museum.

Over the half term week, we have our annual ski trip taking to the slopes once again in Austria and an exciting trip to New York for the Sixth Form STEM students.

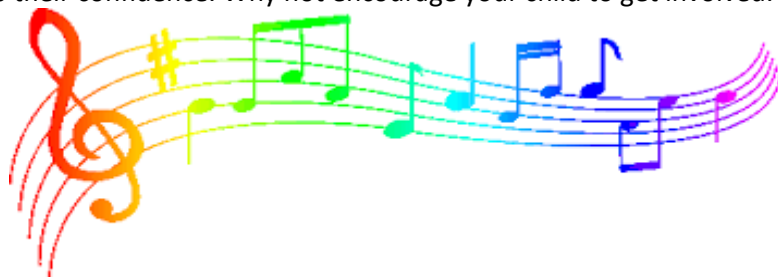
We look forward to half term 4 and more overseas trips including the year 8 and 9 visit to Barcelona and the computing live event in Paris.

We also have our gold and silver Duke of Edinburgh practise expeditions braving the March weather and our geography students will complete part of their field work element in Devon for the A level the local community for the year 11 GCSE students.

We are so proud of our students for grasping these great opportunities.

GSA Choir: Mrs Floate, Associate Leader

After half term I will be holding auditions for students from all year groups to form the GSA choir – this will be launched through assemblies in the first week back. We will be looking at a variety of musical genres from current hits to musicals. It is a fantastic opportunity for our students to build new friendships, take on challenges and develop their confidence. Why not encourage your child to get involved.





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

We have had another busy yet productive half term in Year 7 as the students have continued to impress us with their hard work and positive attitude. The year group have been awarded over 19000 positive PARs points by staff over the past few weeks, a fantastic achievement in what has been a shorter half term. Year 7 are now busy thinking up fund raising initiatives for our chosen charity 'Billy's House', following a visit from a representative from the charity who gave us an insight into the fantastic work they do for young people undergoing Cancer treatment.

We look forward to our annual 'RAG Week' after half term where we'll be working hard to raise as much money as possible for this cause. During Excellence Day, the year group spent the day with the Science Faculty undertaking a science led investigation to solve a mystery, and it was fantastic to walk around and see such engagement with the day from our students. Earlier this week, I had the pleasure of leading our half termly celebration assembly which gave us the opportunity to reflect on the half term and give students the recognition they deserve. Our form group attendance league is again up and running with 7HMD currently sitting top of the table and on route for an Easter reward at the end of Half Term 4, though there is still plenty of time for the other Year 7 forms to take the prize. Well done to Year 7 on a successful half term and enjoy your break.

Y8: Mr Hartley, Director of Learning for Y8

Another half term is over, I cannot believe we are half way through the academic year already.

Your children continue to amaze us and me in particular with their enthusiasm and engagement both in and out of the classroom. This was really highlighted during the recent Excellence Day, where the students were really engaged in debating and how to formulate constructive persuasive arguments. Apologies if they are trying this out at home! In the afternoon the students looked at how they/we as a school could contribute and improve our environmental impact, they came up with some fantastic ideas which I look forward to exploring further with them.

It has been lovely to see so many Year 8 students take up the Ambassador opportunities and contributing so well across different elements of George Spence Academy life.

I spoke to the students at the start of half term in assembly about the importance of maximising their attendance and the opportunities a positive attendance can have. It is really pleasing to see what they have achieved, Year 8 attendance has been excellent during this half term, with over 170 attending for 100% of the time. It has been really nice to be able to celebrate this during our 'Excellence' assembly this week. Thank you for your continued support and co-operation in relation to this.

I hope you all have a restful and relaxing half term, whatever that brings and I look forward to celebrating even more successes as we move into the next half term.



Y9: Mr Hopkins, Director of Learning Y9

Another half-term has flown by and this has been a very important one in relation to the rest of the Year 9's journey at George Spencer Academy as Year 9 Pathways began in January. We were delighted to see the number of students and families that attended the Pathways Evening in mid-January. I was lucky to be able to speak to a number of you that evening and I could see the students were excited about the Pathways that they would be following. February started with the Year 9 Excellence Day which allowed students to have a "taste" of some of the options subjects. Walking around the classrooms on this day I saw students fully engaged in the activities that were put on for them. Many students used this to make the final decisions on what they would like to put forward for their options for next academic year. We were also very happy to receive lots of positive feedback from the staff who had nothing but praise for the students and their engagement on that day.

As we head into the next half term, I want to reiterate a message that was passed onto all the students in the first Pathways assembly - no matter whether they are intending to take a subject next year or finish this subject in Year 9 we still want them to be doing their best in every lesson and continue to 'Find Your Greatness' every day, in line with our theme this year. I hope the students have a good rest over the break and come back refreshed for the next half-term.

Y10: Mr Richardson, Director of Learning Y10

As we approach the half way point in Year 10, it is nice to reflect on what I feel has been a productive time. Rather a shorter half term than before Christmas, it has been no less busy. As always, the students have been making the most of this time, working hard to make it count. This half term saw our Student Ambassadors lead a portion of our assembly, introducing themselves and their vision for the Year 10 cohort. We were fortunate to be able to invite our nominated charity, PASIC in for an assembly. They let us know of the fantastic work they do and how no matter the amount of money, it all helps.

Excellence Day saw the students given opportunities to "Boost their Learning" with effective mind-mapping and revision habits. With their PPE's happening next term, I am hopeful these sessions will hold them in good stead. As with each half term, I as their Director of Learning was able to celebrate their successes from attendance, positive PARs points, Reading Superstars. It is at these that I get to show how proud I am of them and all that they do.

I wish them all a relaxing half term break.



Y11: Miss Johnson, Director of Learning Y11

Well done to all Year 11 students on a positive, calm and focused start to 2023. It has been an exciting start to 2023 and we have certainly filled a lot into the last five weeks. Last week, the year group took part in our third Excellence Day of the year, which was led by the English faculty. This included a 'walking / talking' mock, exam technique sessions and a 'rapid revision' workshop'. We were incredibly impressed with the Year 11's focus and determination during the day - well done Year 11. In addition to the plethora of English activities on offer, the 'S Half' of the year group participated in 1:1 mock interviews with external professionals from our local community. Our visitors were extremely impressed with the students and many were highlighted as 'star performers' who would be offered jobs in their organisations based on their excellent interviews.

In Form Time Learning, we have focussed on revision technique, motivation, and maintaining a work/life balance. It was fantastic to see students' enthusiasm with the 'revision mission' activities that were set and to discuss individual revision timetables with students. Well done to all students who submitted their revision timetables for the 'Principal's Challenge'; I was thrilled to present three students with their prize of a prom ticket in assembly this week. The Year 11 students continue to have access to a range of fantastic resources to assist them with their independent revision over half term, including GCSEPod, resources on The Student Hub and revision sessions within school. However, it is important that all students return relaxed and recharged for the final round of PPE's and put their work/life balance ideas into practice.

Well done to all Year 11 students for your continued efforts and enjoy the half term break - you have certainly earned it!



Sixth Form: Mrs Brown, Director of Sixth Form

A highlight of the half term was our recent Culture and Nations Week, which was requested and organised by our students. Student voice is always of key importance, and it was wonderful for them to turn their ideas into reality by hosting a quiz, food tasting and a day of cultural dress. It is also great to see students having the opportunity to broaden their horizons with a recent day trip to London and the New York trip happening over half term.

The Year 12 students have enrolled on their second enrichment activity of the year. New additions to the programme include a female wellbeing programme facilitated by an external provider and the opportunity to be in the student working party whose current focus is on 'creative communications' to enable better sharing of key information. We are impressed by the energy Year 12 students and parents are putting into seeking out appropriate work experience placements. Regardless of whether your son/daughter is in year 12, if you or your employer can provide a work placement for a student. Please contact gsa_sixthform@george-spencer.com and your details can be added to a directory for students to use. The sixth formers follow their personalised study programme, which incorporates so much more than their academic lessons, enabling our students to leave us 'future ready' with the skills, wider knowledge and experiences that young adults need in the outside world. An important part of this are the Excellence Days, and the students benefitted from focused sessions on strategies for studying more effectively, as it is not just about time spent at a desk but using techniques to help our understanding and recall.

This half term has been an exciting time for Year 13 as we relish hearing about the offers of university and employment places that are being received by students, and we are proud of them all. It is a key time in which attention is drawn to how best to prepare for the upcoming PPEs and summer examinations. A combination of the recent Excellence Day and the Exams and Information Evening have ensured that parents and students have access to the support and guidance needed for a successful journey. The Excellence Day included further advice both on how to deal with exam nerves and how to revise effectively, supported by time to actively put the techniques into practice. Targeted sessions on student finance for those going to university and individualised apprenticeship application support for students seeking alternative pathways, were found to be very useful.



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