



13 December 2024

"Christmas is not a season, it's a feeling."

Edna Ferber

Dear Parent/Carer,

As we approach the festive season, I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Thank you for your ongoing support throughout the year - it has been a fantastic term at George Stephenson High School.

This past week has been filled with exciting events and enriching experiences for our students. A group of students had the wonderful opportunity to visit the Baltic Centre to contribute to the Schools of Sanctuary project. Our Year 11 students enjoyed a trip to see *A Christmas Carol*, while Year 7 had an amazing time during their Dimensions Day and had a fantastic trip to Seven Stories, organised by our librarian Mrs Spencer.

We also had a tremendous response to our Teddy Appeal and have received some kind words from the Newcastle United Foundation for making lots of children happy this Christmas.



And the fun doesn't stop there! Next week, we will be holding a non-uniform day as a reward for student's excellent conduct this term and as a thank you for raising funds for Mercy's Mighty Foundation, and I am pleased to report that we have already raised over £1,000 for the cause. A huge thank you to everyone for your generosity!

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Deputy Headteacher:

Peter Douthwaite BSc (Hons)

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I would also like to extend my heartfelt thanks to everyone who contributed towards the food baskets and hampers for the Bay Food Bank. We delivered a significant amount last week, and the food bank staff mentioned that this may be the largest donation they've received this year—a truly remarkable achievement that we can all be proud of.

On the school front, our students are working hard and making great progress, and attendance has improved significantly this year, thanks to your continued support and we want to keep this going until the end of term as key assessments will be taking place. We also appreciate the feedback we've received on our recent survey about joining the Pele Trust, and governors would be grateful if you could take a moment to complete a brief survey. It's quick and easy 'Yes', 'No' or 'Don't Mind', and [you can find the link here](#).

Yesterday, we also held our Christmas Showcase concert, which was a wonderful celebration of our students' talents. Many of our young performers took to the stage for the first time, and it was heartwarming to see so many budding musicians and performers shine.



As we near Christmas, it's a time to reflect on what truly matters: our loved ones, our values, and the sense of community that binds us together. We are incredibly proud of the values of ambition, respect, and community that we instil at our school, and we will be celebrating these in our end-of-term assemblies next week, where we will be rewarding our students for all their hard work and dedication. We will also have our last Golden Ticket of the year where staff choose a student who they feel best represents these values and they will go into a draw for a £50 voucher.

All that remains for me to say is that I hope you have a wonderful Christmas, a joyful holiday, and a Happy New Year. We look forward to welcoming all of our students back in the new year on Monday 6th January, ready to take on another exciting and successful term.

Best wishes and a very Merry Christmas,

Mr. P. Douthwaite
Headteacher

Student support and safeguarding

Designated Safeguarding Leader: Mrs Louise Dunn
Deputy Safeguarding Leaders Mr Alex Lunn
SENDCo: Mrs Rebecca Bennett

Please remember that we are here to support you and your child at any time.
You can contact us via the main office (phone) or by email enquiries@gshs.org.uk
For queries regarding attendance or absence, please email absence@gshs.org.uk

As we approach the Christmas break, please remind your children to stay safe online. There's a link here <https://www.ceopeducation.co.uk/parents/> to a really useful online resource which provides comprehensive advice tailored to children, parents, and carers. This website includes: guides on protecting children from online risks, age-appropriate advice for discussing online safety with children, information about apps, games, and social media platforms and reporting tools for online abuse or exploitation.

As the nights draw in, it's even more important for young people to stay safe in the community - staying with trusted friends, being respectful of other residents and making sure they have a safe way to get home and a reminder not to step on the ice on the lake under any circumstances!

Whilst school is closed, support is available from the NSPCC, Childline or The Samaritans if they feel stressed, lonely, or overwhelmed during the break. Upon return to school, as always, we are here to support them with any issues.

Job Opportunity

If you are looking for a change in the new year and want to work in a school that strives for the best for all students, both personally and academically, and where the investment in staff and their development is valued - then we want to hear from you. We are currently looking for an enthusiastic and dedicated person to be a cover supervisor. This would be ideal for someone who would be interested in teaching in the future, and we would help them develop with this in mind. Please visit [Vacancies | GSHS](#) if this is an opportunity that interests you.