

4 April 2025

**"Success is the sum of small efforts, repeated day in and day out."**

**Robert Collier**

Dear Parent/Carer,

As we approach the end of a busy and productive term, it's a pleasure to share some of the wonderful things happening across our school community—especially now that the sun has finally decided to join us!

Students in Year 7 and Year 9 have had 10 weeks of a songwriting course working with our wonderful singing teacher Miss Eleanor Boehringer to create songs about the weather, they wrote their own lyrics and chose chords to match. Students also performed in assembly this week. The lyrics to one of the songs '*Closer to Change*' is at the end of this newsletter.

We also had former student Summa Daniels join us, to perform a couple of songs she has written and that are currently being produced. Summa is now working with the School Music Hubs leading choirs and other projects for students across the North East. All the while she is studying to be a primary school teacher.



Year 11 have worked hard on their mock exams and are hopefully well prepared for the real exams ahead. Languages speaking exams are next Monday to Wednesday and Easter is a key time for revision for Year 11 and Year 13. It is important that students maximise this time but also find time to relax too. Further information about Year 11 revision will be coming soon.

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**Headteacher:**

**Deputy Headteacher:**

Peter Douthwaite BSc (Hons)

Kathryn Williams BA (Hons)

Our Year 10 students are out of school on work experience next week - the perfect opportunity to gain new knowledge and skills to enhance their future plans. We have had lots of support from families and the community as a whole so thank you! One parent has helped by hosting nine students which is just amazing. Students have secured fantastic placements with employers such as the NHS, YMCA, Tyne Tunnel and NUFC. There are so many successful local businesses which are kindly hosting a student for the week too, planning engaging opportunities for our young people. We wish students the best of luck for their week!

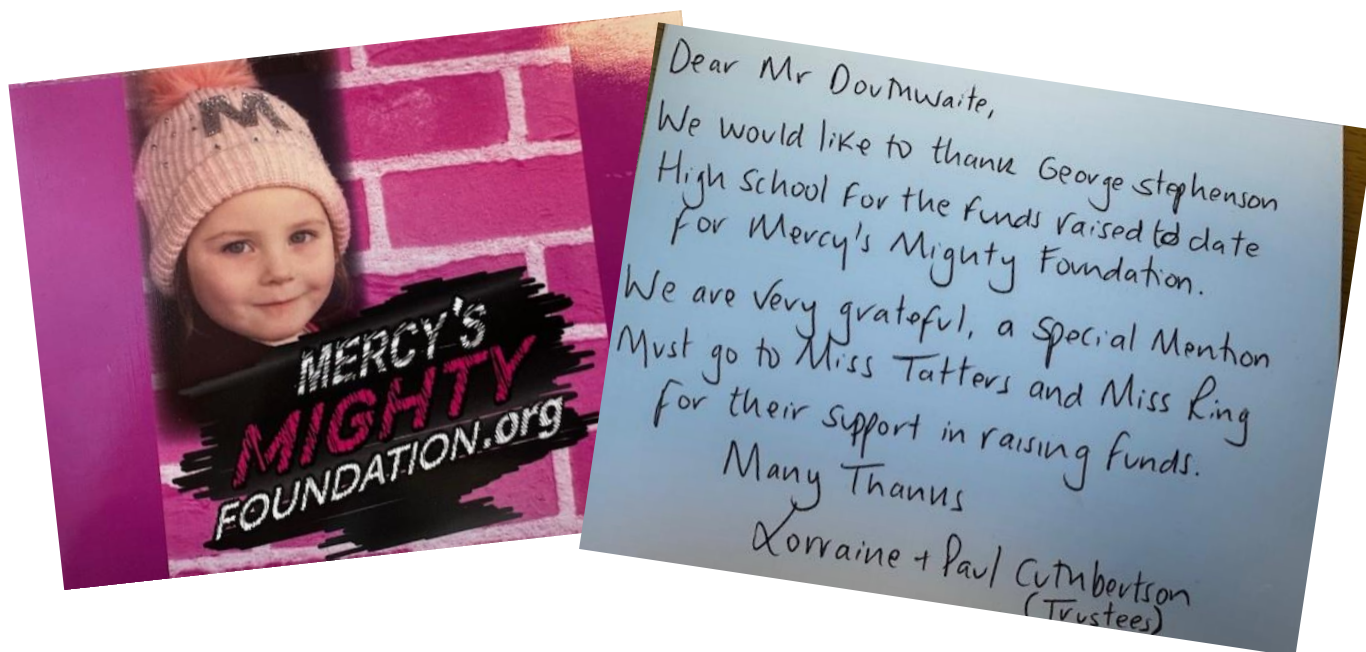
The vast majority of our students continue to represent the school exceptionally well in the wider community, upholding our core values of **ambition**, **respect**, and **community**. However, we have received a few concerns from local residents regarding behaviour in public areas, such as the **bus station**, **shopping centre**, and **parks**.

#### **Our Expectations in Public Spaces:**

- **Bus Station:** Students should wait patiently, respect other passengers, and be mindful of their language and noise levels.
- **Shopping Centre:** We ask that students conduct themselves responsibly, respecting shop staff, customers, and property at all times.
- **Local Parks:** These are shared spaces, and we expect students to enjoy them while ensuring they are safe, inclusive, and free from disruptive behaviour.

We understand that teenagers can sometimes be misunderstood, so it's important they consider how their presence might be perceived.

We work closely with local community representatives, including the police, council, and youth support teams, to help safeguard our young people both inside and outside of school. With your support and continued guidance, we're confident our students will continue to represent the school proudly.



The impact of working together was demonstrated this week when we received a lovely card from the parents and patrons of Mercy's Mighty Foundation thanking the school for our fundraising efforts over the last year. This is clearly not possible without your support, so this thank you is extended to everyone in our community who has contributed to this great cause.

There will be another non-uniform day next Friday with buckets on the gate for contributions but if you would prefer to make a contribution on line please use the link [here](#).

It was wonderful for our teachers to speak to so many of you in our recent Year 7 Parents' Evening and celebrate the achievements of our hardworking students. We're also delighted to share that we are once again oversubscribed for next year's intake. We can't wait to welcome our new families into the George Stephenson community.

Thank you all for your continued support. I hope you enjoy a sunny and restful weekend with your families.

Best wishes,



Mr P. Douthwaite  
Headteacher

**Key dates for next half term (Please check the school website for updates)**

**April**

Monday 7<sup>th</sup>-Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> – GCSE MFL Speaking Exams  
Monday 7<sup>th</sup> -Friday 11<sup>th</sup> – Year 10 Work Experience Week  
Friday 11<sup>th</sup> April – School ends for Easter. Geography Italy Trip Thursday 24<sup>th</sup>-Sunday 27<sup>th</sup>  
Monday 28<sup>th</sup> April – School Reopens

**May**

Monday 5<sup>th</sup> May – School Closed for Bank Holiday  
Monday 19<sup>th</sup> May – Year 10 Reports Issued to Parents  
Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> May – School closes for Half Term  
Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> June – School Reopens

**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](mailto:enquiries@gshs.org.uk)  
For queries regarding attendance or absence, please email [absence@gshs.org.uk](mailto:absence@gshs.org.uk)

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# Closer to a Change

by Tillie, Libby and Leah (Group 2)

This song tells the story of gradually overcoming the fear of going outside. The song's weather changes mirror the character's emotional journey throughout the song. At first, she watches outside her bedroom window, observing the bright sky, flying birds, and sudden downpour of rain. She feels enclosed inside and acknowledges the need for a change, taking one step at a time to overcome her fears. In the second verse, as she is dreaming of flying, she suddenly wakes to a blue butterfly in her bedroom and sets it free - a metaphor for her own path to freedom.

Starting pitches: C4 - E4

(high/mid chords)

VERSE 1:

C	E
Sunny streaks	brightening the sky
C	E
Birds are flying, and	passing by
C	E
From my window I feel	trapped inside

(mid-chords)

C	E
Rain drops down my window pane	
C	E
I feel enclosed, I	feel the same
C	F#4
Open the door,	make a change

(pulsing chords)

CHORUS:

G	C
I used to feel stuck,	shy and scared
G	C
Every step I take I'm	getting there
G	C
I used to feel	enclosed inside
G	C Bm
But who am I if I can't go outside?	

(mid-chords)

VERSE 2:

C	E
The clouds battle	against the light
C	E
They shield the dark	shadowy night
C	E
In my dreams I	just take flight

(flutter chords)

C	E
Open my eyes, there's a butterfly	
C	E
Bright and blue	as the sky
C	F#4
Unlock the shutter	say goodbye

(pulsing chords)

CHORUS:

G	C
I used to feel stuck,	shy and scared
G	C
Every step I take I'm	getting there
G	C
I used to feel	enclosed inside
G	C Bm
But who am I if I can't go outside?	

CHORUS:

G	C
I used to feel stuck,	shy and scared
G	C
Every step I take I'm	getting there
G	C
I used to feel	enclosed inside
G	C Bm
But who am I if I can't go outside?	

Bm	C
Go outside	
C	Bm
Go outside	
C	G
I can go outside.	