

1 May 2026

'Walk slowly but never backward'

James Clear

Today's quote is from 'Atomic Habits' by James Clear. It is a book about the importance of getting systems right, rather than focusing on outcomes, and the changes we can make that really make a difference. If you are simply trying to improve in one area of your life or perhaps move on from something difficult, it is worth a read. I am sure that the new marathon world record holder, Sebastian Sewe, will have had to develop some key habits to achieve his phenomenal feat in the London Marathon on Sunday but it's also something I see every day in our students studying for their exams. Small changes making a big difference.

One of the most helpful things that students fed back to us last year was how much the exam slams and revision booster sessions helped them in their exams. It is therefore important that students attend these and is at least one good habit that they should adopt during this key period. Your support of this will be a huge help too.

It has been a great start to the exams, with Art and Photography getting us going and the languages speaking tests running really smoothly this week. The Year 11 students were fantastic, all turned up on time, on the correct day, and without any drama! We are sure they will keep up the good work.



We are proud to share a truly exceptional achievement from our FIRST LEGO League team, who competed at the National Finals against 68 teams from across the UK and internationally, including teams from Brazil, France, and Kazakhstan.

Our students were awarded the prestigious **Core Values Award**, recognising the team that best demonstrated the values at the heart of FIRST: collaboration, respect, teamwork, learning, and community involvement. These values reflect the wider FIRST philosophy of *Gracious*

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Professionalism® and *Coopetition*®, where teams support one another while striving for excellence.

This award means our team has been recognised as the strongest in the UK for how they worked together—an outstanding accomplishment on both a national and international stage!

It also marks a historic moment for our region. They are the **only all-girls team from the North East to have ever won a trophy at this level**, and just the **second team from the region to do so**.

We are immensely proud of our students, who demonstrated not only technical skill, but also kindness, resilience, and integrity throughout the competition.

Families may wish to watch the moment the award was announced [here](#).

The Newcastle Rugby Foundation are in school over the next few weeks working with girls in Year 8 and 9, providing fun based activities followed by a body confidence seminar. The girls who have been involved so far with Brooke have been amazing and loved every minute.



Last week we had 36 Year 8 students take part in a Discover ChemEngLive workshop

The day gave students a chance to explore the exciting and impactful world of chemical, biochemical and process engineering. Students worked in teams through a series of activities that sparked curiosity and creativity. These were fast paced, team based activities giving students the opportunity to enhance communication skills, share ideas and culminate in a product pitch presentation.

Our students were engaged, the general buzz in the room was fantastic. It was lovely to hear students' problem solving and using their learning to develop solutions together. Everyone was intrigued by the transformation of everyday materials like seaweed, prawn shells and coffee husks into products we rely on.

Josh, Kathryn and Dawn who hosted the session commented on how much they enjoyed working with our students, how enthusiastic and engaged they all were with the content and are looking forward to working with GSHS students with future opportunities

We also welcomed our students back from an amazing trip to Iceland over Easter. They visited Thingvellir National Park; Mid Atlantic Ridge; Geysir Geothermal Area; Gullfoss; Seljalandsfoss, Skogafoss, Dryholaey coastal features; Town of Vik; Reynisfjara Black Sand Beach; Reykjanes Peninsula a lava show and even had some time to relax in the Sky Lagoon!

They had a fantastic time and have memories of a lifetime.



We have also had some lovely feedback from M10 last week. This is a 10-month mentoring programme which strategically links students with mentors and role models who are industry professionals to facilitate an enriching journey of exploration and development. Mentors help to equip students with the necessary skills and confidence to stand out amongst their peers and prepare them for the transition into higher education and the world of work. Following a recent session this is what they had to say:

“I just wanted to drop you a message to say how amazing your students were yesterday. They had a bit of a wait due to other schools running late, however they sat so well and behaved so maturely.

They participated with such positivity and politeness for the entire morning. They really represented GSHS in the most amazing way. Thank you for allowing them to come along again, we loved having them.”

Finally - the next Parental Partnership meeting will be on Tuesday 19th May, from 6pm to 7pm in the library. Thank you to everyone who attended the first meeting. Your input is important to us, and we look forward to working with you as part of our whole school community committed to continuing to move the school forward.

I hope you all have an enjoyable bank holiday weekend.

Best wishes,

Mr. P. Douthwaite

Headteacher

Key dates and the half term ahead (Please check the school website for updates)

May

School closed for Bank Holiday – **Monday 4th May**

Summer Exams begin – Thursday 7th May

Year 10 Parents' Information Evening – Thursday 14th May

Year 10 and Year 11 Newsletter – Friday 15th May

Parental Partnership meeting - Tuesday 19th May 6pm-7pm

School Closed for Half Term – **Friday 22nd May**

School reopens **Monday 1st June**

Student support and safeguarding

Designated Safeguarding Leader: Mrs Louise Dunn

Deputy Safeguarding Leader: 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

For queries regarding attendance or absence, please email