

Head of School Newsletter Half Term 5 2025/26

Dear Parent/Carer,

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself as the Acting Head of School at North Gosforth Academy, following Susanna Cooke's move to Callerton Academy. I previously served as Deputy Principal at Jesmond Park Academy for 10 years before joining North Gosforth Academy. I will be fulfilling this role on an interim basis until the end of the term.

Since taking on this role, I have been made to feel incredibly welcome by students, staff, and parents alike, and I am very grateful for the warmth and support I have experienced. It has quickly become clear that North Gosforth Academy is a school community built on strong relationships and shared values. The students consistently demonstrate politeness, a strong work ethic, and respect for one another and for staff, which creates a positive and purposeful learning environment. It is a pleasure to be part of such a committed and supportive community.

Year 11

This half term has seen the start of the summer examinations for our Year 11 students. The vast majority of students are presenting as confident and as relaxed as they can be which is testament to the support that they have received from you. Thank you.

There is light at the end of the tunnel for our Year 11 students with their final Leavers' Assembly on Wednesday 17th June at 9am and their Leavers' Prom on Wednesday 1st July. Full uniform is required for the Leaving Assembly, so please do not discard or donate this until after this event. Further information in relation to both of these events will be disseminated in due course.

Mental Health Support

It was a pleasure to interview a range of candidates for a full time Counsellor position within the Gosforth Group. The Student Counsellor will be in place by September and will spend their mornings at North Gosforth Academy. This will allow the school to provide wellbeing workshops to small groups of students and more intensive 1:1 counselling sessions for students that may need that.

Safeguarding update - Child on Child Abuse

It is important to recognise that abuse isn't always perpetrated by adults; children can abuse other children too. This is referred to as child on child abuse and can include:

- Bullying (including online/cyberbullying)
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment (including online)
- Physical abuse (such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting etc.)
- 'Sexting' (also known as 'youth produced/involved sexual imagery' or sharing 'nude or semi-nude' imagery)
- Initiations, hazing type violence and social rituals

You can be assured that North Gosforth Academy will not tolerate any form of child on child abuse. This behaviour will never be normalised and will always be challenged. Issues such as

these are addressed through our pastoral programme and within the Learning for Life curriculum area. The pastoral programme and our curriculum equip students with the knowledge and understanding of what is right and wrong, how to keep themselves safe and how to report incidents.

If you believe your child to be a victim of child on child abuse, please contact the school and ask to speak to Miss Binns who is the Designated Safeguarding Lead in school or one of the pastoral members of staff.

After a report is made, the safeguarding leads will inform you of the next part of the process so that you can make the decision that is right for you and your child. This may include the school sanctioning students for inappropriate behaviour and working with local safeguarding partners to support students within school. Child on child abuse incidents are very rare in school due to our robust systems and procedures; however, it is important that we signpost parents to where they can find support if they need it.

I wish you all a restful and enjoyable break.



Chris Aitken
Acting Head of School

Important School Dates Half Term 6

Monday 1 st June	First day of term
Friday 12 th June	Year 10 Geography Fieldtrip
Monday 15 th June	Start of Year 10 Mock exams Year 10 Geography Fieldtrip
Wednesday 17 th June	Year 11 Leavers Assembly Year 6 Transition Evening
Monday 22 nd June	Year 10 Geography Fieldtrip
Wednesday 1 st July	Year 11 Prom
Thursday 2 nd July	Year 8 Parents Evening
Monday 6 th -Tuesday 7 th July	Year 6 Transition Days
Thursday 9 th July	Year 7 Parents Evening

Monday 13th July

Year 10 Work Experience Week
Yellow Week
Barcelona Residential
London Residential
Ford Castle Residential

Friday 17th July

Last day of term (1pm finish)

Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Expedition

On Friday 24th April, 12 students completed the final stage of their Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Award with a two-day expedition along Hadrian's Wall—marking the first DofE group at North Gosforth in over 20 years.

Students set off in two teams from Gilsland, each carrying all of their equipment, and completed a challenging 15km route to The Sill in warm conditions and over demanding terrain. Along the way, they demonstrated strong navigation skills, completed a group project, and, most importantly, showed excellent teamwork and resilience.

After camping overnight at Winshields, cooking their own meals, and enjoying a well-earned evening together (including a group rugby session and toasting marshmallows), the teams set off on day two for a second 15km walk, including a visit to Sycamore Gap, before finishing their journey at Brocolitia.

We are incredibly proud to report that all students successfully passed their expedition. Their efforts were praised highly by the assessors, who commented on what a “lovely group” they were and how well prepared they had been.

A huge well done to Joe, Lily, Evie, Daisy, Alex, Kai, Charlotte, Amelia, Jalon, Lewis, Max and Sam—you were a credit to the school. This achievement reflects the commitment they have shown across all sections of the award over the past year. Some student quotes from the trip:

“DofE was really good, I enjoyed the evening and the views.”

“DofE was a fun experience to spend time with friends, learn new skills and have one big sleepover”

Good luck to those continuing on to the Silver award, and if any students are interested in taking part in DofE, please speak to Mr Houldsworth.





Paul Hannaford Assemblies

We were delighted to welcome Paul Hannaford to North Gosforth Academy, where he delivered assemblies to our Key Stage 3 students, sharing his powerful personal story.

Paul spoke candidly about his past involvement with drugs and gangs, and the long-lasting consequences of those choices. Hearing real-life experiences such as these helps young people to better understand the risks they may encounter, and the impact that decisions made at a young age can have on their future.

At North Gosforth Academy, we are committed to working in close partnership with families to ensure that all students are supported, well-informed, and empowered to make positive choices, both now and in the future.

We are very grateful to Paul for giving his time and for sharing such important and thought-provoking messages with our students.



WW1 University Trip

Year 8 students recently took part in a fascinating Newcastle University-led workshop exploring the First World War and its impact on the local area.

During the session, students followed the wartime story of Thomas Baker, a teenager from Tynemouth who joined the army at the outbreak of WW1. They learned about his role as a

signalman, his experiences in the trenches, his bravery award, and his time as a prisoner of war in Germany before being liberated at the end of the conflict.

Students had the unique opportunity to view original letters, books and artefacts from the University's archives—even seeing Queen Victoria's signature up close. The morning was spent in the Robinson Library, where students explored these historical materials and deepened their understanding of Thomas Baker's life.

They also toured parts of the University that were used during WW1, when buildings were converted into a hospital to care for wounded soldiers returning from the war.

In the afternoon, students visited the Hatton Gallery, where they took part in a creative workshop, designing and making their own WW1-style postcards using collage techniques.

This was a memorable and enriching experience, bringing history to life and allowing students to engage with the past in a meaningful and interactive way.





Year 10 History Trip to Newcastle University Robinson Library and the Great North Museum.

Earlier this month, our Year 10 History students took part in an engaging and informative visit to Newcastle University's Robinson Library and the Great North Museum.

During the visit, students explored key topics from their Health and the People GCSE unit, spanning from the Middle Ages through to the First World War. The workshops, delivered by the Newcastle University Outreach Programme, were closely aligned with the GCSE History curriculum and provided valuable support to students' learning.

Students particularly enjoyed learning about medieval medicine, the development of antibiotics, and the discovery of a cure for smallpox. They were also fascinated to learn about ancient Egyptian embalming practices, including how and why bodies were preserved and the organs that were removed during the process.

In addition to the workshops, students had time to explore the wide range of exhibits at the Great North Museum. A highlight of the visit was seeing the Egyptian mummies, Irtyru and Bakt-en-hor, which have been part of the museum's collection since around 1820.

This was a highly enriching experience that brought their classroom learning to life and deepened their understanding of key historical developments.

Modern Foreign Languages Department

It's been all go in our MFL department as usual!

As part of our Culture Week in partnership with Newcastle University, our fantastic Year 9 students took part in the *Mother Tongue, Other Tongue* poetry competition. Students were invited to write and present poems either in Spanish or in their own home language, showcasing both their creativity and linguistic skills.

Their entries were beautifully presented, with students carefully decorating their work in preparation for submission. We are delighted to celebrate the success of Ariya, Amaya, Ava, Olivia, Aaron, Jake, Fearn and Lillie, who were each awarded a certificate from the University in recognition of their excellent contributions. Well done to all students who took part—we are incredibly proud of your enthusiasm and creativity!

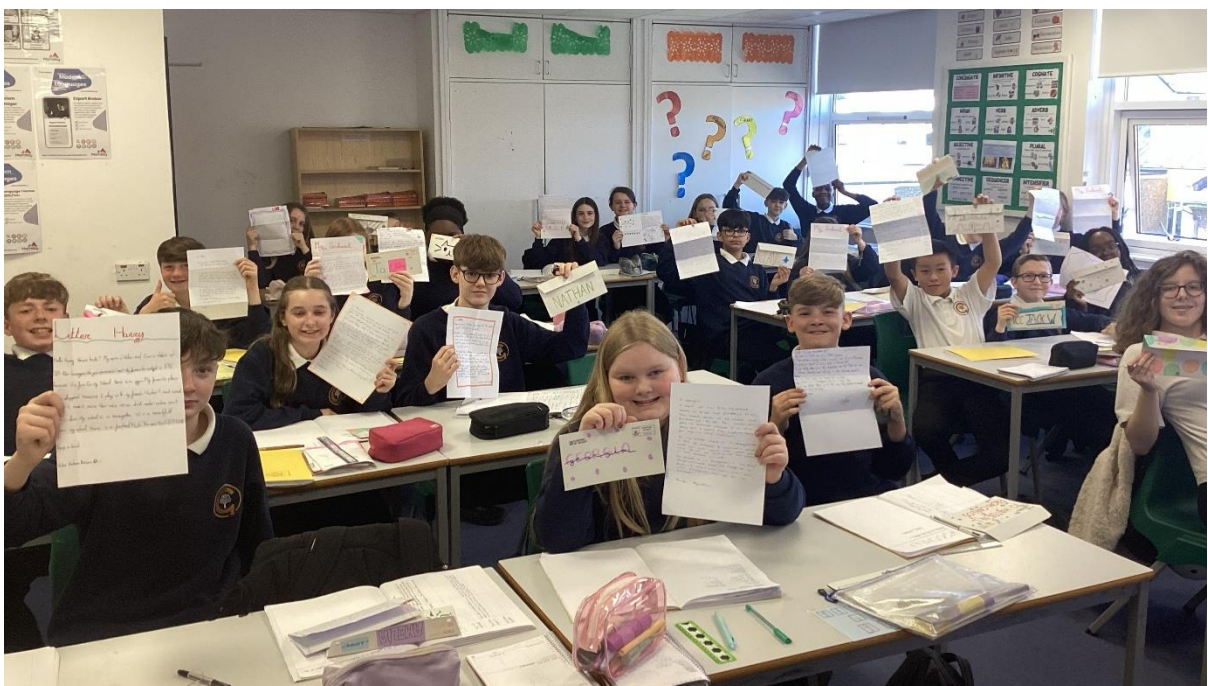


As part of our Culture Week project, our students' beautifully designed butterflies were proudly displayed at the Civic Centre in Newcastle throughout April. Newcastle University praised our students for their creativity, effort and enthusiasm, recognising the high quality of participation and entries submitted. We are incredibly proud of all students involved for representing the academy so positively.



Our Year 7 students have continued to make great progress in their international project and were delighted to receive letters from their pen pals at a school in Zaragoza, Spain.

Through this exchange, students explored the similarities and differences between their school experiences, using this inspiration to create informative posters for display. It has been wonderful to see their curiosity and enthusiasm, and they are very keen to continue building these connections.



Sporting success

On 12th May, 15 students from across all year groups took part in the North Tyneside Schools' Athletics Championships. This event provided a fantastic opportunity for students to compete in a wide range of track and field events against some of the best young athletes in the area.

Despite challenging weather conditions, our students showed great determination and enthusiasm, enjoying the chance to try both new and specialist events.

We are particularly proud that four of our students qualified for the County Championships, which will take place at Wentworth in Hexham on Saturday 6th June:

- Haden – 100m and 300m
- Lily – 800m
- Josh – 1500m
- Joe – Shot Put

Well done to all who took part—you represented the academy brilliantly!

We are delighted to celebrate Amelia in Year 7, who recently competed in a gymnastics competition where she achieved an impressive 5th place overall. As a result of her excellent performance, Amelia has secured a place on the North of England team and will go on to compete at the National Finals in Stoke.

Amelia has shown great dedication and commitment in working towards her goals, and we are incredibly proud of her achievement. We wish her the very best of luck in the finals!

