

Head of School Newsletter
Half Term 6 2025/26

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we reach the end of a successful academic year, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support. Although I have only been at the academy for a short time, I have already been hugely impressed by the positivity, kindness and sense of togetherness shown by both our students and staff.

The strength of our school community is evident every day, whether through the achievements celebrated in this newsletter, the support students show one another, or the dedication of colleagues who work tirelessly to provide the very best opportunities for our young people. It has been a pleasure to begin my journey at North Gosforth Academy and I am excited about the future we will build together.

This edition of the newsletter highlights just some of the many successes from the final half term, including the achievements of our Year 11 leavers, sporting and academic successes, educational visits, attendance rewards, Duke of Edinburgh achievements, inclusion developments and the launch of further wellbeing support for students. I hope you enjoy reading about the many accomplishments and experiences that have made us so proud this year.

As we look ahead to September, I am very much looking forward to welcoming our new Year 7 students on **Wednesday 2nd September**, followed by the return of all other year groups on **Thursday 3rd September**.

I would also like to draw your attention to the uniform expectations outlined in this newsletter. As part of our commitment to maintaining the highest standards, there will be a renewed and consistent focus on ensuring students meet our uniform requirements from the first day of term. This includes expectations relating to jewellery and facial piercings, as well as appropriate school footwear. We want all students to arrive looking smart, professional and ready to learn, and these expectations will be implemented rigorously and consistently throughout September and beyond. We greatly value and welcome parental support in this area.

Finally, I would like to wish all of our students, families and staff a safe, enjoyable and well-deserved summer break. Thank you once again for your support throughout the year. I look forward to welcoming both familiar and new faces back in September.

Yours faithfully,



Gareth Smith
Head of School

Uniform

As a reminder from September 2026, the uniform requirements are:

Main School Uniform:

- A suitable warm and waterproof coat which can be stored in the school bag during the day (please see our website for further guidance)
- White polo shirt with logo*
- Navy round neck sweatshirt with logo*
- Plain black tailored school trousers or black knee-length tailored shorts or a black knee-length tailored skirt (none stretch/skin tight)
- Plain and smart black, sensible school footwear (trainers or boots are not permitted)
- Grey, black or white socks or plain tights (not patterned)
- A suitable bag which can hold your school equipment, books, PE kit and coat.

PE Uniform:

- PE plain navy or black shorts or joggers/ tracksuit bottoms or sports leggings
- Plain navy round neck sweatshirt. If you already have the royal blue PE jumper with the school logo, this is also still acceptable (PE jumper is an optional item)
- Pale blue polo shirt with logo*
- Training shoes with non-marking soles (not leisure shoes)

Food Technology

- Suitable apron



READY FOR SEPTEMBER



SCHOOL SHOES ONLY
Plain leather.
Trainers are **NOT** permitted.

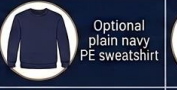
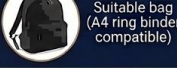
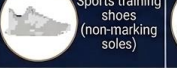


TAILORED SHORTS
Not sports or casual shorts. Must be smart and tailored.



PIERCINGS:
A SINGLE PAIR OF STUD EARRINGS
No multiple ear piercings.
No nose piercings.

DETAILED UNIFORM & PE KIT GUIDE

MAIN SCHOOL UNIFORM			PE KIT & GENERAL GUIDANCE		
 White embroidered polo shirt with logo	 Navy embroidered sweatshirt with logo	 Traditional black tailored trousers	 Optional plain navy PE sweatshirt	 Plain navy/black PE shorts or joggers (no logos)	
 Traditional black knee-length tailored skirt	 Suitable bag (A4 ring binder compatible)	Shoes: Plain black, sensible, no trainers/boots. Socks: Plain white, black, or grey. Tights: Plain black, no patterns.	 Sports training shoes (non-marking soles)	 Football boots	Hair: Natural color, no extreme styles. Makeup: Natural, no excessive makeup, false nails/varnish. Watches: Allowed, no smart watches. Mobiles: Switched off, kept in bag. Coats: Waterproof and stored in bags. Food Tech: Navy/white striped apron preferred.

Let's set the standard together! #TeamNorthGosforth

Mobile phone pouches

Following our communication regarding the introduction of phone pouches from October 2026, please find below further information.

BECOMING A PHONE-FREE ZONE: SECURING YOUR FUTURE.

FOLLOWING GOVERNMENT STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS FROM OCTOBER 2026



ENHANCED ACADEMIC FOCUS

With phones out of sight, students can deeply engage with lessons and improve concentration on complex subjects. Research shows higher retention rates.



IMPROVED SOCIAL INTERACTION

Encourages face-to-face communication, helping students build stronger social skills and healthier real-world relationships during break times.



REDUCED ONLINE PRESSURE

A day free from notification-driven stress and social media, creating a safe space for mental well-being and reducing the risk of cyberbullying.



VALUABLE LIFE SKILLS

Develops important time-management and self-regulation skills by teaching students to use technology responsibly, preparing them for future workplace environments.

Committed to excellence at North Gosforth Academy

Equipment

Please can we remind parents of the key equipment that you child should bring with them to school ready to learn each day:

- School Planner
- Black or blue pen (and a spare)
- Green pen
- Pencil
- Glue stick
- Pencil sharpener
- Ruler
- Eraser
- Scientific Calculator (Casio FX-83GT-CW)
- Coloured pencils

Fidget Toys in School

We have recently seen an increase in the number of students bringing a range of fidget toys into school. While we recognise that some students benefit from the use of fidgets to help with regulation and concentration, a number of these items have become disruptive in lessons. In some cases, fidgets have "popped" during lessons, causing distraction and creating potential health and safety concerns.

As a result, we have purchased a range of school-approved fidgets for students who have been identified as requiring them. Moving forward, no other fidget toys will be permitted in school. Fidget Passes will be issued by the SEND Department to students who have professional advice or recommendations from external agencies, such as CAMHS or CYPS, which identify a need for a fidget as part of their support provision.

Students issued with a Fidget Pass should carry it in their planner at all times. Staff may ask students to show their pass when using a fidget in lessons. If a student is unable to produce a valid pass, they will be asked to put the fidget away.

We appreciate the support of parents and carers in helping us maintain a positive and focused learning environment for all students while ensuring appropriate support is available for those who need it.

[Approved Fidget Toys](#)

[Approved Fidget Toys](#)

Inclusion

At North Gosforth Academy, we are committed to creating an inclusive environment where every student is valued, supported and able to achieve their full potential. As part of our ongoing commitment to supporting students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), we are delighted to announce the appointment of Mrs Taylor as our SEND Manager. Mrs Taylor will play a key role in supporting Miss Binns (SENDCo) to ensure that our students receive the support they need to thrive both academically and personally, and we are excited to welcome her to this important position.

Welcome Hub

Our Welcome Hub is open to students every morning from 8.00am to 9.00am, providing a welcoming, comfortable and relaxed start to the school day.

The Hub offers students a calm space where they can spend time with friends, play games, take part in arts and crafts activities, or simply relax on the sofas and beanbags before lessons begin. It is designed to promote positive wellbeing and help students feel settled and ready for learning.

For some students, we know attending school can be challenging. The Welcome Hub provides a soft start to the day, offering additional support for those who may be finding attendance difficult or who need a gentle transition into the school environment.

The Hub is staffed each morning by members of our Attendance and Wellbeing Team, who are available to provide support and guidance where needed. We also keep a supply of essential

items, including stationery, uniform and hygiene products, which students can access discreetly should they require them.

We are proud to offer this provision as part of our commitment to supporting the wellbeing, attendance and success of all students.

Counselling

We are delighted to welcome Mrs E Holmes to the NGA team as our school counsellor. Mrs Holmes will be based at NGA for two days each week, providing 1:1 counselling support for students who may benefit from specialised emotional wellbeing support.

In addition to individual counselling sessions, Mrs Holmes will also deliver small-group early intervention programmes, focusing on areas such as anxiety, self-image and self-confidence. These sessions are designed to help students develop positive coping strategies, build resilience and enhance their overall wellbeing.

Mrs Holmes will also be available in the Welcome Hub each morning, providing a supportive and approachable presence for students.

Students and parents/carers who feel that counselling support may be beneficial can discuss this with their Head of Year, who can then make the appropriate referral to Mrs Holmes. We are pleased to be able to offer this additional support and look forward to the positive impact Mrs Holmes will have on the wellbeing of our students.

Important School Dates 2026/27 Half Term 1

Monday 31 st August	Bank Holiday (school closed)
Tuesday 1 st September	Staff Training Day (school closed)
Wednesday 2 nd September	Academy open to Year 7 students only
Thursday 3 rd September	Academy open to all year groups
Thursday 17 th September	Y11 Information Evening 5.30-6.30pm
Tuesday 22 nd September	Student Photos (all year groups)
Wednesday 23 rd September	Y6 Opening Evening 5.30-7.30pm
Monday 28 th September	Staff Training Day (school closed)
Wednesday 14 th October	Flu Vaccinations (all year groups)
Friday 23 rd October	School breaks up for Half Term

Academy News

Year 11

This half term, we said goodbye to our wonderful Year 11 students.

Before going on study leave, our Year 11's held their final year group football match of the academic year and had an absolute blast!



At their leavers' assembly we celebrated their time with us by looking back on their history here and giving out some hilarious and heartfelt awards!



The celebrations continued in style at the Gosforth Park Grand Hotel, where our Year 11 students marked the end of their exams and school journey with a memorable Prom night!

We are incredibly proud of everything they have achieved and wish them every success in the future.



British Council International School Award Intermediate Certificate

We are thrilled to announce that we have achieved the British Council International School Award Intermediate Certificate for all of the language activities, international projects and tasks we have completed over the course of the year.

The British Council have said that "This recognition is a testament to the dedication and excellence demonstrated by your school in pursuing international education". We are very proud of all of the hard work and dedication our students have shown in languages across the year and will be working towards the accreditation's level next.

Attendance World Cup Champions!

7LC were crowned Champions of our final Attendance World Cup week!

Not only did they hold onto first place, but they absolutely smashed the competition, finishing at the top of the leaderboard with an incredible 95 points!

To celebrate their achievement, 7LC enjoyed some well-deserved ice pops at break time and their success will also be rewarded with a takeaway pizza treat to round off their fantastic Attendance World Cup campaign!

A massive well done to every single student who turned up on time, every day, earning valuable points for their tutor group throughout the competition. Their commitment, effort and teamwork made this such a successful event.



DofE Bronze Award

A group of students from Year 10 recently completed their 2-day expedition along a section of the Hadrian's Wall long distance footpath. This was the final step for them to complete their Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Awards. Through the year, students had undertaken volunteering activities in the local community, participated in various sporting events and learnt valuable new skills.

The DofE Scheme is a respected national programme that is designed to help young people build resilience, confidence, and vital life skills that are highly valued by employers, colleges and universities.



Villiers Park Future Leaders Programme - trip to Bath University

At the beginning of the year, four students from North Gosforth Academy signed up to take part in the prestigious **Villiers Park Future Leaders Programme**.

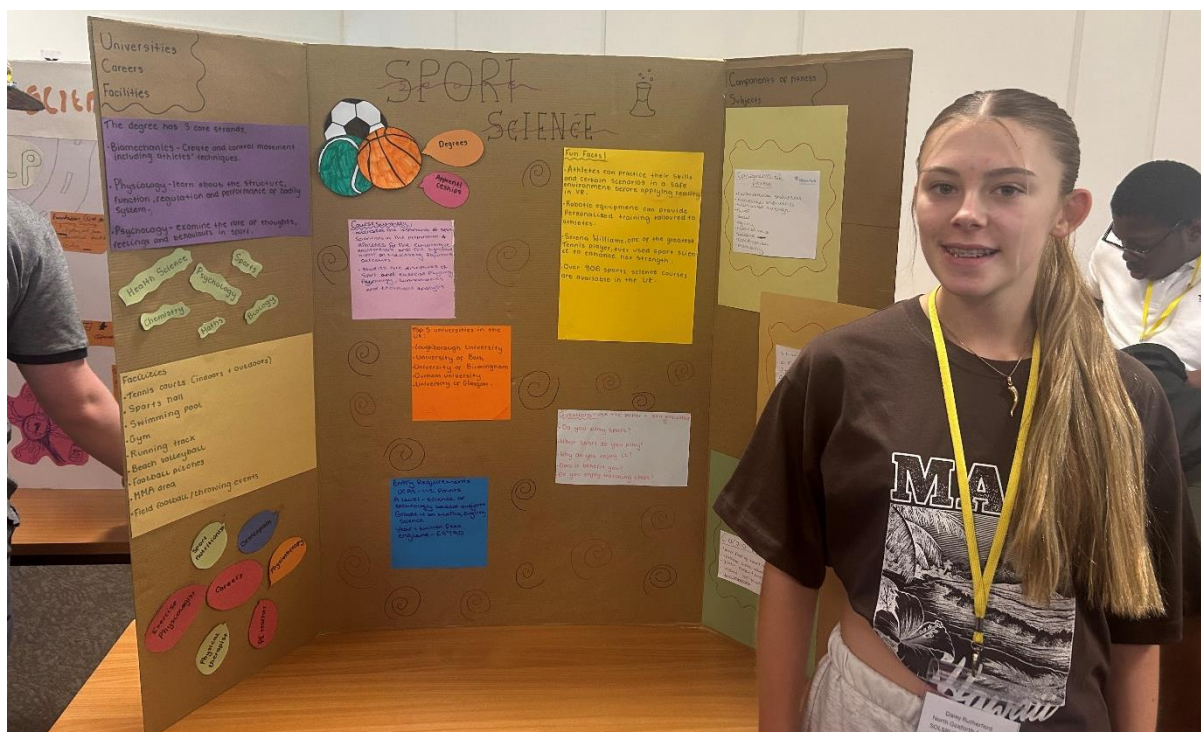
As part of the programme, the students spent three days at the **University of Bath**, experiencing university life first-hand. Staying in student accommodation, attending workshops and immersing themselves in campus life gave them a real insight into what it is like to live and study at university.

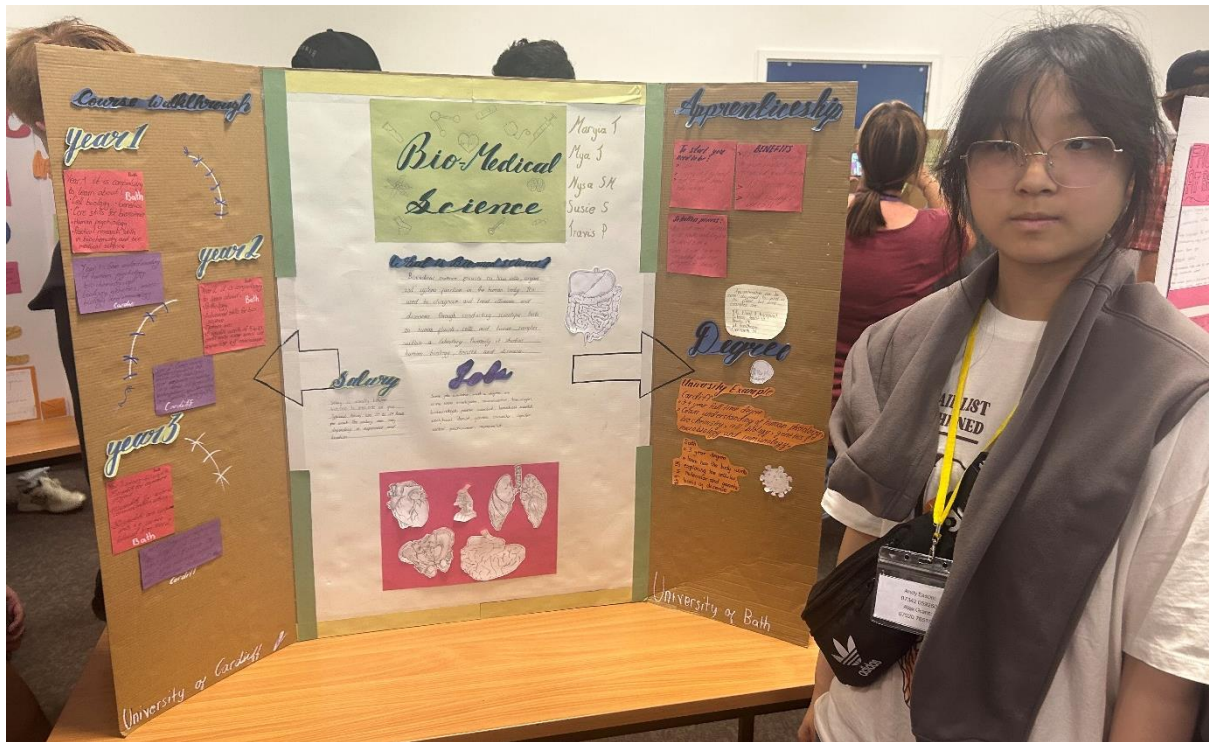
The event brought together 102 students from across the country, creating an inspiring environment where young people could learn, collaborate and develop their leadership potential. During the programme, students attended lectures on degree apprenticeships, listened to talks from employers, and explored a range of university courses before creating presentations on the subjects that interested them most.

We are particularly proud that two of our students received special recognition for their achievements. **Rodion M** was awarded *Most Likely to Become a Future Leader*, reflecting his outstanding contribution and leadership qualities throughout the programme. **Susi S** received an award for her exceptional survey project, which was judged to be of A Level standard; an incredible accomplishment for a 15-year-old student.

Alongside the academic activities, students enjoyed a tour of the beautiful city of Bath and spent time relaxing in the sunshine with ice cream. It was a fantastic opportunity to experience all that the city and university have to offer and to consider the exciting possibilities that higher education could bring in the future.

Congratulations to all four students for representing North Gosforth Academy so brilliantly and making the most of this incredible opportunity. We are immensely proud of their achievements.





SPARX Challenge Winners

We had the pleasure of celebrating the incredible effort, dedication, and achievement shown by our students throughout the SPARX Maths 6-week homework challenge.

We would like to congratulate all students for their fantastic commitment and hard work which has been truly impressive!

A special congratulations goes to 7ME, 8NG, 9AM, and 10ME, who have each won the class prize gaining the highest average XP points.

We would also like to give a huge well done to our highest-performing students and most improved students, who have been recognised with individual prizes for their exceptional accomplishments.

Keep up the amazing work – we are incredibly proud of you all!



Performance at the Glasshouse

On 10th June, our choir took to the stage at The Glasshouse to perform as part of the **Angels of the North** concert.

This year, the students chose an ABBA theme and delivered fantastic performances of **Mamma Mia** and **Super Trouper**. Performing in front of a packed auditorium of more than 1,500 people, they rose to the occasion with confidence, energy and enthusiasm.

The atmosphere throughout the evening was electric, and both songs received a fantastic response from the audience. It was an unforgettable experience for everyone involved and a wonderful opportunity for our students to showcase their talent in such an iconic venue.

We are incredibly proud of our choir for their outstanding performance and the dedication they showed in preparing for the event. A huge well done to every student who took part and thank you to all the parents and families who came along to support us and make the evening even more special.





Keswick Trip

Despite drizzly weather, our Year 9 Geographers enjoyed a fantastic field trip to Keswick as part of their preparation for GCSE Geography. They took a circular boat cruise around Derwentwater, taking in stunning views of the surrounding fells, including the Cat Bells. The trip also gave students the opportunity to practise essential fieldwork skills, helping them get a head start on the techniques they'll use in their GCSE studies next year.

A great day was had by all, with plenty of learning alongside the beautiful Lake District scenery.





Sporting Success

We are delighted to celebrate the outstanding achievement of Haden in Year 9, who was selected to represent the **Northumberland Schools Athletics Association** at a prestigious national athletics competition held in Birmingham on 10th and 11th July.

Being chosen to compete at this level is a remarkable accomplishment and reflects Haden's exceptional talent, determination and dedication to his sport. With only a small number of young athletes across the country earning the opportunity to represent their county and compete on the national stage, this achievement is particularly significant.

Haden did fantastically and came 4th in his event! His success is the result of countless hours of hard work, perseverance and commitment, and we are incredibly proud of everything he has achieved. We would like to congratulate Haden on this fantastic milestone and wish him every success as he continues his sporting journey.



Yellow Week – A Brilliant End to the Year!

We rounded off another fantastic school year with an unforgettable **Yellow Week**, packed with exciting activities, memorable experiences and opportunities for students to learn, achieve and have fun together.

Throughout the week, students enjoyed a wide variety of enriching events both in and out of school. Highlights included residential visits to **Barcelona, London and Ford Castle**, where students developed independence, built friendships and created lasting memories.

Students in school also took part in an exciting programme of activities. **Inner Spark Workshops** focused on important themes such as mental health, social media awareness, resilience and developing a positive mindset. We were also delighted to welcome a guest speaker from the **RNLI**, who delivered valuable water safety advice to our Year 8 and 9 students ahead of the summer holidays.

There were plenty of opportunities to get active, with students participating in cheerleading, street dance and football sessions delivered in partnership with **Newcastle United Foundation**. As part of our rewards programme, 14 Year 9 students enjoyed a visit to Wallington Hall, while two groups of Year 7 and 8 students visited Waterstones, where each student received a new book to take home and enjoy.

Activities Day on Wednesday offered something for everyone. Students took part in a range of sporting activities, including golf, padel, cricket and football, while others enjoyed trips to Beamish Museum and Whitehouse Farm. Back in school, students embraced a lively Bake Off challenge, competitive board game tournaments, creative music, art and design technology workshops, as well as relaxing arts and crafts sessions.

The week concluded with two of our favourite annual events: **Sports Day** and the **Attendance Inflatables Reward**, providing a fantastic opportunity to celebrate effort, teamwork and achievement.

It has been a wonderful week filled with creativity, teamwork, personal development and fun. Yellow Week was the perfect way to celebrate our students' successes and bring the school year to a close on a high note. A huge thank you goes to all the staff, organisers and partners whose hard work and commitment made the week such a success. Well done to everyone involved!

With so many fantastic photos to share with you – please see the link to the photo gallery below!