

**Head of School Newsletter  
Half Term 1 2026/27**

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we reach the end of another busy and successful half term, I would like to take the opportunity to celebrate some of the many achievements across our school community.

We are incredibly proud of our Year 11 GCSE outcomes from the summer, which were the strongest results in the academy's history and among the highest across the local authority. These excellent achievements are a testament to the dedication, resilience and hard work shown by our students, supported every step of the way by parents, carers and our committed staff team.

We have also been delighted by the positive start made by our current Year 11 cohort. Their commitment to success has been outstanding, with over 80% of students regularly attending our Monday and Thursday after-school revision sessions. Their determination and ambition are clear, and together we are preparing for their upcoming mock examinations in December.

This half term has also seen fantastic attendance at our Open Evenings and Open Mornings, where it was a pleasure to welcome so many prospective students and families looking to join the North Gosforth family. A gentle reminder to parents of prospective Year 7 students that the national application deadline is 30 October.

We look forward to welcoming onsite shortly after half term our current Year 7 and 11 parents for evening events. Details of these events are included below.

I hope you enjoy reading about the many other exciting events, achievements and opportunities that have taken place over the last eight weeks. Thank you, as always, for your continued support of our academy community.

Yours faithfully,



**Gareth Smith  
Head of School**

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## Mobile phone pouches

Following our communication regarding the introduction of phone pouches when we return after half term, thank you to all of the parents/carers who have paid so far, if you have not yet paid for your child's pouch, please ensure this is paid on the SchoolGateway App by Friday 30<sup>th</sup> October. To be clear this is a Department for Education mandate for schools to be phone free. Any student without the pouch will be required to hand in their phone at the start of the day and collect at the end of the day. We are modelling our systems on some of the most successful approaches that have been introduced nationally.



# BECOMING A PHONE-FREE ZONE: SECURING YOUR FUTURE.

FOLLOWING GOVERNMENT STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS FROM OCTOBER 2026



**DAILY POUCH USE**

Your phone is secured in this locking pouch every morning, ensuring a distraction-free learning environment.

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  <p><b>ENHANCED ACADEMIC FOCUS</b><br/>With phones out of sight, students can deeply engage with lessons and improve concentration on complex subjects. Research shows higher retention rates.</p> |  <p><b>IMPROVED SOCIAL INTERACTION</b><br/>Encourages face-to-face communication, helping students build stronger social skills and healthier real-world relationships during break times.</p>              |
|  <p><b>REDUCED ONLINE PRESSURE</b><br/>A day free from notification-driven stress and social media, creating a safe space for mental well-being and reducing the risk of cyberbullying.</p>        |  <p><b>VALUABLE LIFE SKILLS</b><br/>Develops important time-management and self-regulation skills by teaching students to use technology responsibly, preparing them for future workplace environments.</p> |

Committed to excellence at North Gosforth Academy

## Attendance Communication

We would like to inform you that all attendance-related communication will now be sent via **A-Star Attendance** by email.

This will include:

- Attendance concerns and updates
- Positive attendance messages and praise

- Holiday requests and related correspondence
- Invitations to attendance meetings

Please check your emails regularly to ensure you do not miss any important communication regarding your child's attendance.

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### **Important School Dates 2026/27 Half Term 2**

|                                                           |                                    |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Monday 2 <sup>nd</sup> November                           | First Day of Term                  |
| Thursday 5 <sup>th</sup> November                         | Year 7 Tutors Evening 4-6.30pm     |
| Wednesday 11 <sup>th</sup> November                       | Year 11 Revision Evening 5-6.30pm  |
| Wednesday 2 <sup>nd</sup> December                        | Staff Training Day (school closed) |
| Monday 7 <sup>th</sup> -Friday 18 <sup>th</sup> December  | Year 11 Mock Exams                 |
| Monday 14 <sup>th</sup> -Friday 18 <sup>th</sup> December | SEND Reviews                       |
| Friday 18 <sup>th</sup> December                          | Last Day of Term (1pm finish)      |

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### **Academy News**

#### **Villiers Park**

We're proud of our North Gosforth Academy students beginning their journey with the Villiers Park Future Leaders Programme.

Over the next three years, they will take part in one-to-one coaching, leadership projects, university visits, employer insight days and a range of experiences designed to help them build confidence, resilience and the skills needed to achieve their ambitions. The programme empowers young people to take control of their future, overcome barriers and make informed decisions about their next steps.

Through these opportunities, students will develop motivation, curiosity and self-belief, while learning how to create a positive impact within their school and wider community. The programme is designed to help young people realise their potential, broaden their horizons and make confident choices about education, careers and life beyond school.

We are excited to see what this talented group achieves as they begin their journey of leadership, opportunity and Creating Futures.



### European Languages Week

A huge congratulations to all the students who took part in our European Languages Week activities and helped make the week such a success! From a fun-filled Language Treasure Hunt around school, to developing their conversational language skills, students embraced the opportunity to explore different languages and cultures. They also put their knowledge to the test with activities designed to challenge their geographical understanding of Europe and beyond.

It was fantastic to see so many enthusiastic interactions and thoughtful conversations about the value and importance of learning languages. Congratulations to our prize winners!





### **Year 11 Visit to Newcastle College and Sixth Form**

Our Year 11 students recently enjoyed an informative visit to Newcastle College and Sixth Form, giving them a valuable insight into post-16 education and future career pathways.

During the trip, students toured the campus and explored a range of departments, learning about the courses and opportunities available across different subject areas. They were able to visit specialist facilities, including industry-standard workshops, classrooms, and learning spaces, helping them gain a real understanding of college life.

The visit provided students with the chance to ask questions, discover new areas of interest, and consider the many progression routes available after Year 11. It was an engaging and inspiring experience that encouraged students to start thinking about their next steps and future aspirations.

We would like to thank the staff at Newcastle College and Sixth Form for their warm welcome and for providing such an insightful and enjoyable visit.

### **Year 11 Visit to the National Apprenticeship Show**

On 13th October, our Year 11 students attended the National Apprenticeship Show at the Vertu Motors Arena, where they had the opportunity to explore a wide range of apprenticeship pathways and career opportunities.

Throughout the event, students met with representatives from a variety of employers, training providers, and industry organisations. They learned about apprenticeship programmes across different sectors, discovered the skills and qualifications employers are looking for, and gained a better understanding of the many options available after leaving school.

As well as speaking directly with employers and collecting information about future opportunities, students also enjoyed taking part in a range of interactive activities. A particular highlight was visiting the Army stand, where students had the chance to test their skills through a series of fun challenges and games. They also had the chance to handle training equipment, try on tactical gear, and learn more about the careers and training opportunities available within the Armed Forces.

The visit gave students valuable opportunities to ask questions, speak directly with employers, and find out what apprenticeships can offer in terms of training, qualifications, and future career progression.





## Year 7 Orienteering Trip to Gibside

30 of our Year 7 students enjoyed an exciting morning exploring the historic grounds of Gibside, using their teamwork and geographical skills to navigate their way between checkpoints. The challenge proved a huge success, with students showing fantastic determination, collaboration and enthusiasm throughout.



## PRAISE

Students have been celebrated for their brilliant behaviour, attitude to learning and excellent attendance throughout this half term with a culmination of rewards for PRAISE points happening this week.

Yesterday we had our first Aspire Gold Rewards experience where a huge number of students qualified to be able to choose an in-school Reward experience by reaching 350 stamps over the half term. The Aspire Rewards have been a huge success with students able to choose one of the following rewards to take part in

- Escape Room
- Board Games
- Sports Afternoon
- Cinema
- Reading afternoon

All students will be given a fresh opportunity to collect stamps next half term and pick up their bronze and silver rewards on the way to a special Platinum Reward before Christmas!

Well done to all who have qualified!

Year 8 Silver reward winners, they spun the wheel in assembly and won a voucher, hot chocolates for them and a friend and a queue jump food pass!



Year 8 Bronze Award winners for Week 5 with 150+ PRAISE stamps



8BA won Week 5's Breakfast Basket for the best attendance in Year 8.



Year 7 Bronze award winners



8LC, who won a breakfast hamper for achieving the best attendance in Year 8 in week 4!



Year 7 Bronze Award winners



## PRAISE on the Door

Our 'Praise on the Door' awards highlight the many ways students are excelling both inside and outside the classroom.



## Northumbria Police Assemblies

Students took part in an important assembly delivered by Northumbria Police, focusing on the impact of hate crime and the importance of respect, inclusion and understanding within our communities.

The session helped students understand what hate crime is, how it can affect individuals and communities, and why it is vital to challenge discrimination, prejudice and harmful language. Students were encouraged to reflect on the power of their words and actions, both in school and online, and were reminded how to report concerns and seek support if needed.

A big thank you to Northumbria Police for taking the time to speak with our students and for helping to promote our shared values of kindness, respect and equality.



## Sporting Success!

We are incredibly proud to share that Kara has been selected for the Northumberland PDG Squad for the 2026-27 season!

This is a fantastic accomplishment and a testament to the dedication and commitment Kara has shown. Being chosen to represent Northumberland is an honour and reflects her talent, resilience and passion for rugby.

Everyone at school would like to congratulate Kara on this well-deserved success. We wish her the very best for the upcoming season and look forward to following her journey and celebrating her achievements along the way. Well done, Kara - we are all extremely proud of you!

|  <b>Northumberland Under 16s Girls</b><br><b>PDG Squad Season 2026-27</b>  |              |                        |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|------------------------|
| Isla Mitchell                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Tynedale     | QEHS, Hexham           |
| Annabelle Murray                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Tynedale     | QEHS, Hexham           |
| Abigail Nicholls                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Alnwick      | Duchess High           |
| Evie Nicholson                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Tynedale     | QEHS, Hexham           |
| Lily Nicholson                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Ashington    | Ashington Academy      |
| Lucy Patterson                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Tynedale     | QEHS, Hexham           |
| Harry Preston                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Alnwick      | KEVI, Morpeth          |
| Lily Pringle                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Berwick      | Eyemouth School        |
| Lola Raisbeck                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Ponteland    | Blyth Academy          |
| Elena Reed                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | WB Rockcliff | Whitley Bay High       |
| Scarlett Shipley                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Northern     | XP Gateshead           |
| Jasmine Slater                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Northern     | Longbenton High        |
| Fearne Smith                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Alnwick      | Duchess High           |
| Eve Swatton                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Alnwick      | Dame Allans            |
| Kara Tutudua                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Northern     | North Gosforth Academy |
| Alice Vasey                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Northern     | Gosforth Academy       |
| Verity Wilson                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Alnwick      | Duchess High           |
| Sadie Wood                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | WB Rockcliff | Burnside College       |
| Elinor Younger                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Northern     | St Marys RC High       |

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We are also incredibly proud to celebrate Daisy's fantastic sporting achievements!

Daisy has been appointed Northumberland County Captain for the U16s team, a well-deserved recognition of her talent, dedication and leadership both on and off the pitch. As if that wasn't enough, Daisy has also been selected to represent England and Northumberland County at the Gothia Youth World Cup once again next year!

This is an outstanding achievement and a testament to the hard work, commitment and passion Daisy brings to her sport. We can't wait to follow her journey and wish her every success as she prepares to compete on the international stage. Well done, Daisy!

