Gosforth Junior High Academy
Autumn term Newsletter – October 2026

Dear Parent / Carer,

We have reached the end of a very long but incredibly successful half term at GJHA. As always, thanks for all you do every day to support your children, the school and the hard-working adults in it. I always say that if schools and parents work closely together and trust one another, then great things can happen! As you will know, we have worked hard to raise the profiles of our school values this half term and have been zooming in on the power of positivity. Mr Blakey announced the 'Positivity Champions' in assemblies during the final week where we celebrated students in the school who have been nominated by their teachers for being the shining lights of this particular focus. Well done to all those people but it is worth saying that in a school like ours this is a difficult choice for teachers; we have had such a purposeful, settled and focused half term and the school has been buzzing with positivity throughout!

There isn't a better example of what I describe above than our traditional Year 5 Macmillan Coffee Morning, organised by Miss Rennison, the Pastoral Head of Year 5. It is a fundraising event, of course, but it also serves as a great way of parents, children and staff to work together, meet and build those vital close relationships. It was a wonderful morning, with a dizzying array of cakes and treats for everyone to feast on! Incredibly, we raised £474.31 to support the Macmillan Cancer cause. Well done everyone!







To assist in helping year 5 settle in, we conducted our form tutor transition calls this half term too. This allows a crucial extra point of conduct so that any key information and pertinent news can be shared and discussed. I have to say, year 5 have settled in seamlessly to school life and have been full of energy, enthusiasm and a thirst for learning. Whenever I am having a tough day, I just walk down to their classrooms because they always fill me with joy; their attitude to school life is infectious.

This morning we held the Year 5 Praise Event. This was the last of the year groups to have their turn, as all year groups have had the opportunity to come at morning break to our famous 'Praise Table' and show off some fantastic work that they are proud of to the staff here. There is music, a lively atmosphere and even dancing sometimes! This term, it has been a spooky, Halloween-themed event, with ghostly bookmarks, skeleton notebooks and grisly pencils the prizes. The real prize is, of course, watching up to 180 children come calmly down to our reception area and celebrate together and with their teachers in such a joyful way.





Transition has already begun with year 4s at some of our feeder schools, with students being invited to GJHA for a special Science and P.E. experience. This was superb again this year, with Mr Bailey, our new head of science, and Mrs Proops, our Forest School Practitioner, leading a mini-beast hunt in our Forest School area. Some terrifying and fascinating minibeasts were found and studied but were also carefully put back into their natural habitats! Mrs Naughton and Mr Atkinson ran a badminton and pickleball showcase, with students having full access to our top-class P.E. facilities and enjoying the benefits of their expertise. This is the key to true transition, in my opinion. We want students from our feeder schools to see GJHA as 'their school' long before they actually begin here. I am convinced that this is the reason why Year 5 have settled in so well!



On the topic of 'Forest School', the work on the ecosystems and habitats around the flowerbeds, buses and pond have gathered apace. The work that the students have done in building woodpiles, creating water sources and shelters has meant two new students at GJHA in the form of a Green Frog and a Smooth Newt. This is *so* exciting, and 'The Wildlife Trust' are visiting over half term because the Smooth Newt is a rare and protected species. Not only do the students learn skills of resilience, collaboration and cooperation in the Forest but they are also learning about how nature works. The newt would not be here if it weren't for the work those students have done so they should be very proud! We are working hard to link our Forest area closely to our Science and Geography curriculums.

Our year 4 Open Evening also went really well and was so well attended- thank you to all that joined us for music, art, a treasure hunt, some fantastically zany and exciting library activities, a talk from senior staff, hydrogen cars, bunsen burners and so much more! This year we really tried to showcase the breadth and depth of our curriculum as well as our extra-curricular offer for before and after school.

For parents joining key stage 3, we had a year 7 information evening too, where Miss Carroll and Miss Dixon, Heads of Maths and English respectively, presented key information to parents about the 5-point assessment model and how the key stage 3 curriculum works and what it contains. This will supplement the work we are doing around improving the homework offer at the school which will be launched on the Monday after half term. This will help parents engage with and understand the curriculum content that their children are learning at school. This is in response to our Parent Partnership 2025/26. Any parents wanting to join should contact Tracey Wood at: Tracey.Wood@ga.newcastle.sch.uk.



Finally, we have taken delivery of our Peter Rabbit sculpture which students, parents and staff have so diligently and passionately raised money to receive. In the end, this totalled £518.97 '*Every dr-hop counts*' was painted to raise awareness of water waste and responsible water use and has been living for the last few months at Gosforth Central Shopping Centre. Now you can see him in his final destination- GJHA reception! We are proud to have been part of '*Tale of the Tyne*' this year.

Mrs Musgrove has worked hard to develop our special friendship with St Oswald's Hospice this half term. They have visited us for a brilliant assembly, and we are now going to organise a return visit.

We are running another fantastic Careers Fair on 10 February 2027, and we are looking for businesses, companies or employers to join in and give our students the best and broadest possible exposure. If anyone is interested in helping 'create an exciting future' for our young people, please get in touch with admin2@ga.newcastle.sch.uk.

As we sign off for a well-deserved holiday, we wish you all a restful half term break.

With warmest regards from GJHA

Mark Fryer
Head of School