Hello from the News Team!

"Welcome from the GSA Times News Team of 2025-2026! To start with, we have each written a few sentences to let you know who your writers will be in this edition. We hope this will help you know your News Team a little more. Happy reading!" - ***Senuka Fernando,*** *Year 8.*

Hi, my name is **Gracie** and I am in year 8. My favourite subject is English and I attend kickboxing, which I love as a hobby. I'm really enjoying being part of the news team because I like to read and write alot. I want everyone to know all the great things the school does and the students achievements. I am new to the news team and am enjoying it!

Hi, I'm **Leela**. I'm currently in year 9 and this is my second year being in the GSA News Team. My favourite subject is maths and in my free time I listen to music and often enjoy studying. One thing I like about being in the news team is that it's a nice small group where we can share ideas and make them public to help others within school and the community.

Hi, my name is **Bianca** I am in year 8 and my favourite subject is English. My favourite thing I do in my free time is swimming. I love being in the News Team because you can express all of your ideas and thoughts into independent writing and I have been in the News Team since the beginning of September.

My name is **Alex** and I am in year 10. My favourite school subject is art. My hobbies include both performance and competitive dancing, guitar, acting and writing. This is my fourth year working for the news team, and I enjoy working on this because it gives me a chance to write about things I am interested in that other people may want to read about.

My name is **Matt,** I am currently in year 10 and my favourite subject is physics. My hobbies include playing drums, listening to music, and reading graphic novels. I have been part of the news team since year 7 and I enjoy being a part of the news team because it allows me to practise writing and explore my interests.



Hello everyone! My name is **Harrison**, and I am in Year 10 and my favorite subject is Food Technology because I love putting into practice new skills and learning all about them! In my free time I like visiting theme parks and, most commonly, Alton Towers. This is my first year in the GSA News team, and I am enjoying it so far, so I cannot wait to contribute to more articles!

Hello, my name is **Senuka.** I am in Year 8 and my favourite subject is Science, with English as my second favourite. I like to read a lot at home. In the News Team, I like being able to tell other people what's going on at GSA and to inform them. I only joined the News Team last June to write for the July 2025 edition, so this is my second term on the team.

Hi, I'm **Tom!** I'm in Year 9 and my favourite subject is Computing. Outside school, I play badminton and I attend one of the local Scout groups weekly. I enjoy being in the news team as it helps improve my communication skills and I like making a positive contribution to the school community.

Hi I'm **Sienna**. I'm a year 7 and I like being in the news team because I get to write about real-life stories. My favourite subject in school is English or history and my hobbies outside of school are kick-boxing, playing games and reading.

Hi! My name is **Daisy** and I'm in Year 9. My favourite subject at school is either history or science, and I love baking and listening to music. I have been in the news team for a year and I love doing it because I enjoy writing about relevant news in our local area.

Hi, I am **Alfie** and I am in year eight. One of my hobbies is going biking and I joined the news team because I like making articles on stuff that is happening in the community.

JOIN US!

Do you have an idea for something you would like to report about at school? Are you a keen writer, photographer or interviewer? Come and join us!

Students in any year group are welcome to join us in the News Team.

To get involved come and find Miss Cook in EN4 or email **pcook@georgespencer.org.uk** and you will be added to the Google Classroom where you can find more information.

Starting at George Spencer

*We all know how terrifying it can be to go from being the eldest in school, to the youngest, and now, so do the new year sevens. Year 10, **Alex Carlile**, spoke to one of our own year sevens on his personal experience joining our school.*

Starting secondary school can be a scary time for many year sevens, and there are a lot of changes between primary and secondary. I have interviewed year seven student Daniel Carlile about his impressions and experience in making the transition between primary school and GSA.

What are the biggest differences between primary school and GSA?
"The biggest difference is that in primary no one was very serious with work, in secondary it's a lot more focused, and that's what I like about it. The amount of school and homework has more than doubled in the transition!"

Did you have any worries?
"Personally, I was quite prepared; I got all the stationery and I prepared for the big change. But, I clearly underestimated that it feels like you can never prepare for what's to come, and I feel like every year six should know that."

What have been some of the best things so far?
"Nice teachers, new friends, and more variety of lessons and subjects. You also meet new people every day."

What are you looking forward to?
"Big school wide events like trips and non uniform or event days, and in school clubs, like board game club and dodgeball club."

Daniel, like many other year sevens, was worried at first, but has now settled into school well. Every year, another set of kids has to go through this change, and no matter how prepared they are, it will always be quite scary and a crazy experience. And to any year sevens, who are still anxious about school, from the experience of me and I'm sure many others, it will get less scary.



Get to know our: Student Presidents

*Who are our student presidents? What do they do? These were just some of the questions **Senuka** had when he sat down with two of our Year 12 student presidents.*

Our 4 Student Presidents, all in Year 13, are the leading members of the Student Leadership Team. They are elected by the whole school and support form reps. They listen to students' voices, contribute ideas and make our school a nicer environment to prosper in. Who are our Student Presidents though? What do they really do? I interviewed Luke and Stephanine and here was what they said...

Firstly, they told us about themselves. Luke has been at George Spencer since Year 7 and studies Music, Politics and Sociology. "I plan to take a degree in Music and I've played the flute for 9 years. I got a new flute and called it Pamina, named after an opera character."

Stephanine has also been at GSA since Year 7 and she studies History, Geography and Politics. "I've been in Air Cadets for 3 years and I want to do a degree apprenticeship or go to university. "

Next, they explained to us why they wanted to be Student Presidents:
"Since Year 7, I've taken part in the school community and I believe that now I can make actual changes that I wanted to see,"

"I know a lot of people don't really like school, but I love it. I like the unity of it and the teachers are very nice. I love to contribute to the school community. I became a Student President to give back to the school."

They then talked to us about the role of the Student President. "The whole point of us is to digest what has been brought to us by the form reps and to take it to the senior leadership team and present it to them... we also take on a lot of jobs such as presenting at Prizegiving, Open Days and helping around school."

We afterwards spoke about the changes they have made so far:
"We only started in October, so we haven't made many changes, but we have presented at Open Days, Year 6 Open Evening and Prize-Giving. We've also planned our objectives like taking specialties."

Closely followed by what their future plans were: "To bring wider awareness to the arts and bring back the school orchestra, bring together a board of students who are specialists in their subjects that anyone

could ask," "I want to make sure students enjoy that. To make sure they are aware of different revision strategies so that they can revise for their subjects and make their learning experience better."

Afterwards, I asked about some of the challenges they have had to face to become a Student President and the most difficult parts of the role. They told me that the main challenges were balancing all of their subjects with their responsibility, finding time to revise, complete homework and other commitments too.

Finally, I asked them if they think they will leave a lasting legacy at George Spencer Academy to which they replied, "We hope so, we came to this role because we are passionate about it."

To summarise, we are extremely lucky to have our Student Presidents in this school. They provide communication about the suggestions we make to improve our experiences and assist us in any way possible. The GSA Student Presidents are a shining example to us all, so thank you, Student Presidents, for making our school a better place to be.

Chess Club

Chess club is brand new this year and is proving to be very popular. Read on to find out what the club offers, what students enjoy about it, and how you can get involved. Report by ***Senuka Fernando****.*

Chess Club is an open-to-all extra-curricular club. It takes place on Tuesday after-school weekly in EN9 with Mr Inglis. Around 15 students come on a regular basis to Chess Club to improve their skills, challenge their friends and have fun. What are the experiences, though, of those who go there? What should you expect, should you wish to join? I went to Chess Club and spoke to Max, Thomas (both Year 7), Gabrielle and Adrian (both Year 8).

Everyone said they enjoyed Chess Club and here were some reasons why:
"It is practice for when I am playing," "It allows me to play with friends and have fun," "It is a really good skill," "I get to play with a large group."

This is what they believed was the best thing about Chess Club:
"Whatever you do, it is just practice: watching or playing," "It's a nice way to be able to learn," "It is competitive and you can play with others," "There is a big range of skill."

They would definitely recommend Chess Club to others as well, with positive answers from all members.

Afterwards, I interviewed Mr Inglis.
I asked Sir about the importance of having a Chess Club: "Chess is a game that teaches many skills and it is for everyone."







To summarise, Chess Club is a marvellous part of our school community. It brings life skills, including critical thinking, problem solving, patience, sportsmanship and concentration.

To join, come to EN9 on Tuesday after-school. Any other questions, email DInglis@georgespencer.org.uk or speak to him around school! Thank you to the four volunteers, Mr Inglis and Miss Prabhaharan for the photos!

GSA's Sporting Success!

The miserable autumn weather hasn't stopped our sports stars from success! ***Gracie, Bianca and Daisy*** *report on the achievements of our Netball and Tennis teams this half term.*

Year 9 Netball Team
By Daisy White

Over this term, the Year 9 Netball team, coached by Miss Fawcett, have played in multiple matches across Nottinghamshire and have met up weekly to train. The team is made up of both S half and P half, and we work together to succeed in the matches.

For example, the first match we played was at Fernwood Academy, where we made it to the finals of that tournament, and placed 5th out of 8 schools that participated in the finals. Also, we played at Emmanuel School at the start of this half term, where we scored eleven points overall. We also play matches amongst our team on Tuesdays after school, where we work on techniques, teamwork and correcting how we play.

If you would like to join netball, whether you are in years 7, 8 or 9, come to the sports hall on a Tuesday after school and you can play netball, have fun and make new friends.

Year 8 and 9 Boys Tennis Success
By Gracie Aigbokie and Bianca Banias

Our Y8 and 9 tennis superstars have been competing in the National Schools competition where they have had to play multiple rounds. They got through to the regional finals where they were runners up to Solihull School. All of the other schools were private schools so we did very well to get that far.

Max Goodridge and Ethan Shoko have played against many different schools such as; Trent College, Nottingham High, Worksop and Grantham. Winning effortlessly in singles and doubles. Their best individual matches were against Lichfield where Max won 6-0 and Ethan won 6-1 in the 14 years under category, coached by Mrs Minto.

The boys have consistently shown resilience whilst competing for the school and are a perfect example of our core values.



Our tennis stars : Kai Yung, Jibrael Niazi, Ethan Shoko, Max Goodridge.

Remembrance Day

***Leela Armstrong** reports on the importance of Remembrance Day and how we marked the occasion this year at GSA.*

What is Remembrance Day?

Remembrance Day is a special day to remember and honor members of the armed forces who have died while serving their country. It is also known as Armistice Day or Poppy Day, and people often wear a remembrance poppy on this day to show their respect. This day is important for everyone to reflect on the sacrifices made during times of war.

What do we do in school to spread awareness?

In George Spencer Academy, we believe it is very important to celebrate and remember the lives who fought and died for our country but also the people who made us the way we are today.

Every November 11th, during school we take 2 minutes of our day to sit silently and pay respect to the lives of the armed forces who fought for us.

Also, during form time, each form planted their own bulb to grow a flower just like the poppies that grew on the fields where the war happened and they were displayed as a small garden.

Some extra-curricular clubs spread awareness by doing activities. For example, the Art club this year made a wreath of watercolour and painted poppies to show respect within school.







Nepal Trip

***Matt Chaney** describes his incredible experience on our Nepal trip during October half term.*

Between the 14th and 30th of October 2025, a few year 10 and 11 students, including myself, embarked on an incredible trip to the country of Nepal, in southern Asia.

The trip began with a 2 hour coach ride, and then a 7 hour flight, followed by a 5 hour flight, with a layover in between. We spent the night at a hotel in Kathmandu, and then the next day flew out to Pokhara, where we would then ride a coach for a couple hours to get to the start point of the trek.

The trek lasted 5 days, 3 days up, 2 days down, with nights at tea-houses along the way, sort of small collections of hotels that grew more rustic with the ascent.

After the trek there was a rest day in the town of Pokhara, and then 2 days of white-water rafting on the Seti river. Then it was 3 days in Chitwan national park, including a jeep safari, and seeing rhinoceros and elephants. The trip concluded with another 12 total hours of flights and a long drive back to GSA.

The Nepal trip 2025 has to be one of the best and most memorable experiences of my life, and I'm sure all who went on the trip would agree, for example, Poppy Mills, a year 10 student, said that 'the trip was overall a massive eye-opener and let me experience unforgettable memories, my favourite part was riding the elephants', and Alistair Whyld, another year 10, who said he 'really enjoyed it, and my favourite part is when we reached Annapurna Base Camp.'





Excellence Day 1 : Years 8 to 13

The first Excellence Day of the year involved a range of different activities. ***Harrison Dunn*** *explains what each year group got up to in school and* ***Sienna Richards*** *reports on the Year 7 trip.*

Excellence Day 1 included a vibrant showcase of activities across all year-groups, including a range of team-building and future-focused activities.

Year 8
Students in Year 8 took to the skies during their themed day, exploring “engineering habits of mind”. The day sparked curiosity, innovation and laid the foundation for students' futures.

Year 9
Students in Year 9 embraced a new challenge where they made a new breakfast product for Tesco! The day allowed them to show teamwork, marketing, and presentation skills.

Year 10
Students in Year 10 took part in STEM-based challenges with the Army, and took a look at working within the army! They also began to “Step up to GCSE”, learning new revision techniques!

Year 11
Students in Year 11 had a Sixth Form Experience Day and got involved in external visits to Nottingham College for those considering alternative paths!

Sixth Form
Students in Year 12 and Year 13 volunteered across the sessions for their Astral Programme, demonstrating leadership and a community spirit.



Year 10 being introduced to GCSE Pod to support their revision.



Year 11 students exploring the Film and TV Courses at Nottingham College.



Year 9 presenting their final dragons den pitches to SLT, school Governors and Tesco!

Excellence Day 1 : Year 7 Trip to Walesby Forest

In her first article for the GSA Times, ***Sienna Richards*** *reports on the Year 7 trip to Walesby Forest.*

In October, the year sevens went on a trip to Walesby Forest. As it was our first Excellence Day we were very nervous but excited to experience the adventure ahead. We all had a great time laughing with the teachers and the staff at Walesby Forest who were nice, funny and kind.

The most popular activity was the cave maze because we had to use our trial and error skills as well as our resilience. We also enjoyed archery because we learnt new skills like how to hold the bow and arrow safely. The last important skill we learnt was the bread making portion of the day because it taught us how to be independent and responsible around a open fire .

I found the trip really exciting and fun as this was my first trip in a new school, I made a some new friends and it brought the year group closer together. My personal favourite activity was the nerf wars as it was fun going head to head with the staff and other pupils.

Overall, this Excellence Day taught us very important skills that can be useful as we get older.

"I enjoyed the Excellence Day as it was our first one . My favourite activity of the day was axe throwing as I liked going against my friends to see who could get the closest to the center."

"Walesby Forest was really fun, I just wish we had more time there to do all the activities. My personal favourite activity was the mobile wall as the worker made it harder the higher you went up I also enjoyed how you could race against your friends."







Prize Giving

*Year 9, **Tom Webb** attended this year's Prize Giving ceremony to collect his award. Below, he reports on the events of the evening.*

One of the main highlights of the GSA calendar is the annual Prize Giving ceremony. This was held on Thursday, 27th November. Many proud parents and carers joined the school's students to celebrate their achievements.

The evening began with a lively performance from the cast of this year's school production, Spamalot!

Mrs Corbett welcomed everyone to the event, and the Student Presidents introduced themselves, and were the hosts for the evening. This was closely followed by the Key Stage 3 awards which were presented by Mrs Corbett and Mr Furber. Each Director of Learning read the statement that the nominating teacher gave about each student. After each award was received, the student would then have an official photo taken.

Next, there was a piano solo of Ludovico Einaudi's 'Elegy for the Arctic' performed by a student in Year 11.

Following the interlude, the Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5 awards were handed out to the award-winning students. The Chair of Governors, Mr Ellis helped to present them.

Subsequently, a Year 9 student performed a vocal solo to 'Tightrope' from 'The Greatest Showman'.



One of our GSA Times journalists, Senuka Fernando, receiving his award.



Isla Daly, receiving her award.

After that, the whole-school awards, including the Platinum Excellence Award and the Duke of Edinburgh Silver Awards and Core Value Awards were presented to the students by the Principal.

At the end of the event, the Governors' Award for Academic Excellence and Principal's Award were presented.

A great evening was had by all!

GSA Debates

Is AI positive or negative towards society?



*Two members of our debate club, **Anisa and Daniella,** have weighed up the pros and cons of Artificial Intelligence and its impact in society.*

Introduction

Artificial Intelligence is becoming more widely accessible and frequently used in many areas of society. But is this helpful or harmful?

The Positives (by Anisa)

One reason that AI is positive towards society is that it makes things more accessible. This is shown in the statistic: "Robots excel in tasks requiring high efficiency and speed, such as assembly or data processing. In these areas, they can work without fatigue and with high consistency, often completing tasks in less time than humans. Software robots can increase a team's capacity for completed work by 35% to 50% and cut data processing times by 30% to 50%. In one study on order picking, human-robot teams demonstrated a 3.6% reduction in order picking time compared to human-manual teams." This demonstrates how technology can reduce human error and cut back on time, for something such as mass manufacturing or agricultural work, which can cut back the cost of employment and reduce the amount of time it would take a human. Not to mention improving a person's mental health, so they don't have to do the same laborious tasks, which cause injury to health, mentally and physically. For example, "At the time of that spate of suicides Foxconn had nearly 1 million workers in its plants. There were up to 14 suicides (it depends whose count you want to use) among that 1 million. The average rate of suicide in China is 22 per 100,000 people per year. That is, the suicide rate at Foxconn was under 5% of the general suicide rate of the Chinese population." They even had to install nets onto the sides of all building because of the number of attempted suicides in that same building, attempted by poor, desperate people sick of the same mundane task for a less than liveable wage, which could easily be avoided by such a big company that could have installed an AI system very easily and protected the wellbeing of all those employees working in less than humane conditions.

Another positive of AI is that it increases innovative inventions. This is shown in the quote: "Artificial intelligence (AI)-driven drug discovery has recently enabled the repurposing of existing compounds with novel therapeutic potential. Halicin, originally developed as an anti-diabetic molecule, has been identified through AI screening as a promising antibiotic candidate due to its broad-spectrum activity, including efficacy against multidrug-resistant pathogens." This

demonstrates how technology can discover important chemical compounds quickly, making it a big step for science, and tying in to AI increasing accessibility and efficiency. AI has even had a big step in cancer diagnosis with Google DeepMind developing an algorithm capable of surpassing human experts in detecting breast cancer from screening scans. Other tools for identifying prostate and lung cancer with high accuracy are also in use or development. This shows the heights AI is truly reaching with it leveraging vast amounts of data to improve the speed, accuracy, and efficiency of identifying diseases and health conditions, showing that it surpasses human capabilities indefinitely, and could have a role in saving many lives. It even has the opportunity to save the hospital and patient money with the patient not having to deal with the stress, trauma and financial burden of a cancer treatment, and the hospital needs less specialist equipment for that specific cancer as the rates of those cancers significantly decrease. This even reduces human error with AI diagnostic tools often having significantly lower error rates than human diagnostics in specific, high-volume tasks like image analysis, sometimes performing with over 20 percentage points less error, proving that there will be less false diagnoses, causing less stress and trauma to the patient, promoting a better mental wellbeing and avoiding potential lawsuits.

The Negatives (by Daniella)

On the contrary AI can have quite a negative impact on the development of society. To understand why we need to understand what AI is first. Artificial intelligence is the imitation of human intellect in computers that have been designed to have human-like-thoughts and learning processes.

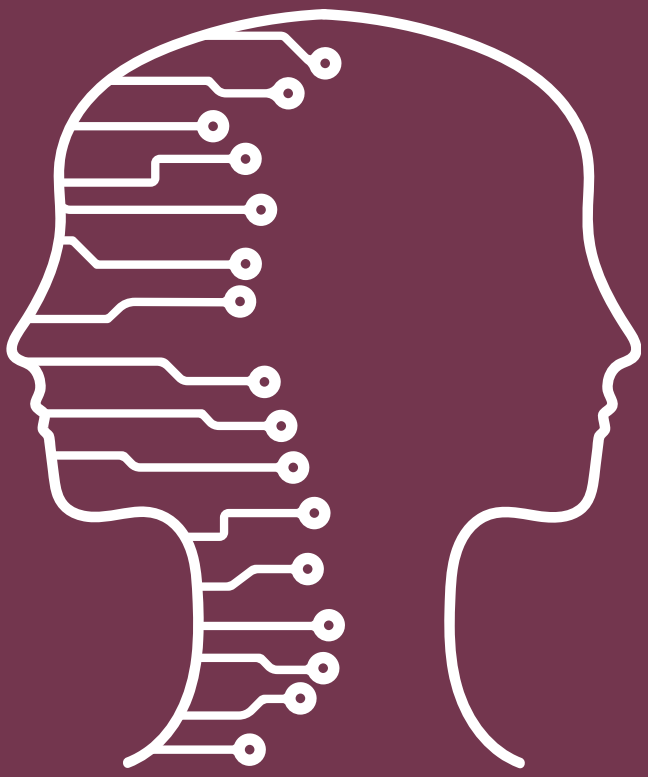
The key word in this definition is “like” which shows AI does not have the capability to always act or process stuff like a human would and those human imperfections, the tiny things we do which separate each individual is what makes some interactions so meaningful and well, human. The widespread use of AI in jobs which were traditionally handled by humans increases the risk of the loss of the empathetic elements we see in our day to day lives. Take the NHS for example, all of us have used the NHS before, but what if we were consulted by a robot or a questionnaire based on our symptoms or queries about anything instead of a human? At first it would seem cool but what about the social interaction humans thrive on or the quality of care you're getting? Think, would AI understand you and your emotions as well as a human would? This is further evident in the survey The Health Foundation did which showed 1 in 6 members of the public and 1 in 10 NHS staff believed AI would worsen care quality. In addition to this 53% of the public feel AI would make them feel more socially distant from health care staff. This goes to show how important social interaction is to everyone and how being consulted by a person would be more reassuring than by an AI. As a sociologist Sherry Turkle once said “Basic human contact - the meeting of eyes, the exchanging of words - is to the

psyche what oxygen is to the brain."

Finally the unregulated use of AI means more people are becoming dependent on the use of it. For example, HEPI did a survey in 2025 and it suggests 92 % of students use some sort of AI in assignments. This could indicate good use of AI like helping planning out an essay or breaking down complex topics .However it is then shown 64% of students use ChatGPT to generate text. This could suggest students are using AI to complete assignments for them for university. By using artificial intelligence a lot in school this shows students are becoming more lazy. According to the World Economic Forum's Future of Jobs Report 2025, one of the most in-demand skills include analytic thinking and seeing as students are becoming more reliant on artificial intelligence these skills are more in need now than ever. This also puts strain on the newer generations as getting jobs would likely be harder if these skills aren't developed whilst in school due to over use of AI.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the use of AI should be regulated to some extent for personal use but in general it has proven to contribute widely to the development of society so should not be stopped completely. We both agree that AI has both positive and negative factors such as even though it limits creativity, it improves accessibility, so we think that AI has played a role in developing society but we shouldn't become overly reliant on it.



This edition was brought to you by:

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Get in Touch!

Thank you for reading this term's edition of the GSA Times. Please pass on your feedback to the students using this QR code - including what you enjoyed reading and what you would like to see featured in the future!