

HT1 Autumn 2026

Message from the Principal: Mrs Corbett

Dear parents and carers,

As we conclude our first half term of this academic year, I would like to thank you for your ongoing support and partnership. This half term, our students have demonstrated 'light bulb' moments daily, our attendance figure is high, and the students are smart and ready for learning. We are fully aware of the hard work and support we have from you all at home for this to happen every day.

When we walk around the academy on a daily basis, we are filled with pride at how engaged and positive our students are. They have fully immersed themselves in their learning this half term, and we look forward to sharing their achievement with families through our first round of assessment scans, which will be sent home next half term.

We have filled our half termly bulletin with reflections and future plans. We hope you find it a valuable read. Wishing you all an enjoyable half term break.

Warmest wishes,

Mrs H Corbett

Student President welcome message:

Miss Jenkinson, Vice Principal

Hello everyone, we are Sam, Bella, Ben and Joanna, the four Student Presidents for this academic year.

Our main aims are to create an even more active community, by helping to arrange and lead half-termly sporting competitions, finding engaging activities to participate in, and strengthening the student voice via form representatives throughout the school.

Our main goal is to continue building a sense of togetherness and belonging within our diverse school community and make a positive difference both in the sixth form and the wider school.





Personal Development:

Mr Dakers, Assistant Principal

A particular highlight of Personal Development in Half Term 1 has been seeing our new Year 7 students engaging with sessions designed to assist their transition to secondary school. They have been looking at the challenges of moving to a new school, how to establish new friendships and identify their own personal strengths.

Over the second half term of the academic year, our students will continue to cover topics in their Personal Development lessons which are applicable to their lives both inside and outside of school.

Our Year 7 cohort will be learning about developing workplace skills and their future aspirations. Year 8 will look at challenging stereotypes both within and outside of school.

Year 9 are going to participate in lessons focused on goal setting and their potential GCSE options.

Year 10 lessons cover financial decision making.

Year 11 are working on their next steps, revision strategies and using feedback constructively.

Our Year 12 and 13 students will be considering their health, wellbeing and safety.

Lightbulb Winners:

Mr Kitson, Assistant Principal

Each week, students are selected for our 'Principal's Lightbulb Award' for demonstrating our core values. This half-term we are celebrating the winners below for being polite, fair and honest through random acts of kindness such as, crochet heart making with positive affirmations, or being supportive at our Year 6 Open Evening event.

We are really proud of all our students with the following shining brightly this half-term. Well done to Ruby, Jamie, Bethany, Josh, Robin and Jimmy!





Uniform:

Mr Hartley, Assistant Principal

As we move into the colder months, we would like to remind all families, that students should come to school with a suitable outdoor coat that can be worn comfortably over their blazer. This will help ensure they remain warm, dry, and prepared for the conditions throughout the day.

Please see our uniform policy for suitable winter/outdoor clothing <https://georgespencer.org.uk/our-uniform/>

Should the weather deteriorate significantly at any point, we will communicate any necessary updates promptly, with student safety always our priority.

Thank you for your continued support and have a fantastic break.

Sports Update:

Mr Clark, Curriculum Leader

We are delighted to announce that George Spencer Academy has been awarded Sports Leadership Centre of Excellence status recognising the outstanding leadership opportunities available to our students and the number completing sports leadership qualifications. This prestigious award places us among the top 2% of schools offering sports leadership qualifications in the UK.

Our Year 9 Netball team have also qualified for the Central Venue League finals, winning five of their seven matches. There has been further football success with the Year 9 and Year 8 girl's teams progressing to round 2 of the County Cup with impressive victories. The Year 9 boys also progressed to round 2 after a 3–0 County Cup victory against Elizabethan. Our Year 11 boys defeated Toot Hill 2–0 in the County Cup, while the Year 7 boys recorded an excellent 7–0 win in the South Nottinghamshire Cup.

Well done to all our students for their outstanding performances, teamwork and commitment to representing George Spencer Academy.



Community Events and Awareness Days:

Joanna Holland, Director of Community and Sustainability

We have had an exciting first half term of the year, with students donating over 600 items to Nottingham Hope Foodbank.

This half term, students in each year group have voted on a local charity to support throughout the year, fundraising through whole year group sponsored events, and bake sales at parent's evenings. Our student ambassadors have launched the first pre-loved uniform 'swap shop', promoting sustainability and supporting families within our school community and our eco ambassadors have been busy litter picking around the school site.

This month, students have reflected on recognising importance of Black History, and celebrated the Mid-Autumn Festival, embracing opportunities to learn about and appreciate different cultures.

Students have reflected on the importance of Black History Month and celebrated the Mid-Autumn Festival, embracing opportunities to learn about and appreciate different cultures.

Futures: (Careers Education Information Advice & Guidance – CEIAG):

Mr Burrows, Vice Principal

In line with recent national updates, we have updated our support information on the website (Curriculum – careers). We would encourage all families to explore the information and resources linked to our curriculum offer. Students can continue their independent career learning through their personalised UNIFROG platform. Work in personal development time is planned to support effective usage.



Trips and Visits:

Miss Jenkinson, Vice Principal

This half term, Year 13 have all attended the Leicester UK University & Apprenticeship event to explore universities and apprenticeships available to them as part of our careers program. This was held at the Leicester Tigers stadium, and they brought back lots of prospectuses and literature to help with exploring their next steps.

The first Excellence Day took place on Thursday 15th October, and included two trips. A cohort of Year 11 students visited local post-16 colleges to experience a variety of Btec and Level 2 courses, whilst Year 7 took part in exciting team building activities, including rock climbing at Walesby Forest centre in Newark.

Over the half term break, 14 students from years 10 and 11 are embarking on an exciting adventure, climbing mountains in Morocco. We wish them a safe journey and a magical experience.





The Creative Studios at George Spencer Academy: Miss Kell, Curriculum Leader for Creative Arts

Welcome back, it's already been a busy half term for Creative Arts and Creative Studios.

This half term we launched our annual school production which is BEAUTY AND THE BEAST. Staff and students were equally excited at our launch with over 100 students coming to find out how they can get involved. It's not just actors we are looking for though, there are lots of ways that students can be part of the show: backstage crew, production band, tech team or prop making. For more details speak to Miss Skitt, Mrs Brown or Miss Freeman.



Year 11 Pre-Public Examinations (PPE) 2nd – 20th Nov: Miss Jenkinson, Vice Principal

Throughout the first half term, staff have been preparing year 11 for their second round of PPEs. This week during form time, we have had a 'revision focus' theme which has included revisiting our 4 core revision strategies of flashcards, mind maps, self-quizzing and brain dumps.

Students have been supported in creating revision timetables to support building in manageable revision slots over the half term. For more information and support, please go to the following page on the school website. [Exam Support – George Spencer Academy](#)



Read, Watch, Visit:

Mr Kitson, Assistant Principal



READ



WATCH



VISIT

Read, Watch and Visit provides George Spencer students with a great opportunity to delve deeper into the curriculum being taught in lessons or to support revision. We highly recommend logging onto the student hub or using the curriculum booklet for your child's year to find Read, Watch and Visits.

Please use the QR code below to log any activities undertaken. We select students to celebrate in half-termly prizes during assemblies.



Extracurricular Offer:

Miss Jenkinson, Vice Principal

We have had a fantastic first half term uptake by students across all year groups signing up for weekly clubs. With over 60 clubs on offer there is something for everyone.

Some well-established and some new clubs this year include Manga, mindful colouring, gardening, badminton, football, live theatre, backstage tech, Warhammer, chess, Pride, debating and lots more.

For details of all clubs and when they run, please go to the school website or follow this link

 [Autumn term clubs.docx](#)





Reading Culture at GSA:

Mr Furber, Assistant Principal

The first half term has been full of fantastic engagement in both reading and the clubs, groups (schedule pictured) and events that have started up in the library. We have a creative writing and book group, an Adventurers Role Playing Game group and a Manga Club, members of which comprise a team that will be taking part in an upcoming national Manga Mania Quiz. Most pleasingly, new students in year 7 have enthusiastically engaged with nearly half of the year group borrowing books this half term and we will look to continue that engagement into HT2 with the unveiling of a significant number of new titles and manga collections, and popular books as a result of

 BOOK AND CREATIVE WRITING GROUP	WEEK 1 MONDAY, BREAK 2 WEEK 2 FRIDAY, BREAK 1
 ADVENTURERS RPG GROUP	EVERY WEDNESDAY 3.00-4.00PM
 MANGA CLUB	WEEK 1 FRIDAY, BREAK 1 WEEK 2 MONDAY, BREAK 2

SIGN UP AT THE LIBRARY OR USE THE ONLINE FORMS ON THE HUB
 If we have more people sign up than there are spaces available, we will keep a waiting list and offer a 'one in, one out' basis as spaces become available.

IN THE LIBRARY...

funding, released by the Department of Education in support of the National Year of Reading. But, as the nights draw in and autumn arrives, consider diving into one of the titles below over half term, many of them are dyslexia friendly to celebrate Dyslexia Awareness week, meaning they have dyslexia friendly fonts, layout and spacing and some are non-fiction in anticipation of Non-Fiction November:

Year 7: 'Me and My Brian' by Helen Rutter - Josh has always called his brain Brian, and Brian can sometimes be his best friend, helping Josh with tests and giving him brilliant moneymaking ideas. But he can also be Josh's worst enemy, keeping him awake at night worrying.

Year 8: 'Deadsoul Project' by Dan Smith - Kyle and Lauren Dempsey believe their soldier stepdad is dead, killed in action in Northern Ireland. But then he turns up at their flat in the Alpine Heights tower block, terrifyingly changed.

Year 9: 'Last Day of October' by Phil Hickes - Bored with trick-or-treating, three friends venture into the woods on Halloween night to hunt for the haunted McBride House in this spine-tingling horror.

Year 10: 'Pale' by Chris Wooding - An accident forces Jed into a difficult decision in this slick dystopian adventure.

Year 11: 'The Tiger on his Back' by Bernard Ashley - A strange tattoo triggers a surprising turn of events in this tense contemporary drama about art, love and the power of creativity.

Year 12: 'The Almighty Dollar' by David Dharshini - Behind the world lies economics. It's not always easy to grasp the complex forces that are shaping our lives. But by following a dollar on its journey around the globe, we can start to piece it all together.

Year 13: 'Becoming' by Michelle Obama - In her memoir, a work of deep reflection and mesmerizing storytelling, Michelle Obama invites readers into her world, chronicling the experiences that have shaped her.





Y7 Reflections:

Mr Parker, Director of Learning Y7

As we reach the end of the first half-term, it is astonishing to think just how much progress the year 7 cohort have already made. From those first nervous mornings, they now seem to be confident, they're getting involved in clubs, teams and are certainly striving to be the best they can be in lessons.

From breaking the record for donations to the food bank last week, to dominating the list of 'top borrowers' in the library, year 7 have amassed an astonishing 27,000 positive points already. They really are starting to thrive. I can't wait to see them take these successes to even higher levels next half-term, when we have even more teams and events to get involved in, plus their first assessment point to look forward to. Enjoy the break!

Y8 Reflections:

Miss Hembrow, Director of Learning Y8

Year 8 have made a fantastic start to this year, already achieving 16,098 positive points in their first half term. We have focused on the message of 'building your future' and the importance of building good habits in punctuality and organisation to set them up for success for the rest of the year. These have been the focus of our new form group league where form groups have been competing to gain points in attendance, positive points, punctuality and preparation for learning.

Congratulations to 8MRN who won the league this half term. We hope students have a restful half term break and come back ready to continue this positive start to the year.

Y9 Reflections:

Mr Ratcliffe, Director of Learning Y9

Year 9 have made a positive return to the academic year, picking up where they left off and settling back into routines brilliantly. Students are engaging well with their learning and making the most of extra-curricular opportunities.

We ended the half term with our rewards assembly, celebrating students' achievements, followed by our first Excellence Day of the year. Students delivered fantastic Dragons' Den-style pitches, showcasing their creativity, teamwork and confidence.

Thank you for your continued support and I wish all our year 9 students and their families a restful and enjoyable break. I look forward to welcoming everyone back for another successful half term.



Y10 Reflections:

Mr Richardson, Director of Learning Y10

Firstly, let me say a warm welcome back to our year 10 cohort. As we look ahead to their GCSE years, it is time to reflect on the three years previously completed and use what we have learnt to make that impact on those subjects.

Options have been picked and the students are where they want to be, to take them where they need to go. When I spoke to the students back in September, I introduced our tagline for the year of, “Stepping Up”. It is about moving up and moving forward, one step at a time. And as the year progresses so do the achievements.

Next half term will see the first assessment point and an ideal opportunity to gauge the progress of our students. We will also get an opportunity to celebrate student success at our annual prizegiving event in November.

Y11 Reflections:

Mr O’Toole, Director of Learning Y11

As we reach the end of our first half term, I would like to celebrate the fantastic start year 11 have made to this crucial year. Students have earned over 10,000 positive points and handed in more than 1,100 STRIVE cards, demonstrating their determination to succeed.

Our first Excellence Day focused on preparing students for their next steps after year 11, with Sixth Form taster sessions, college visits and workshops delivered by local colleges. This week, students have also participated in our ‘Year 11 Revision Focus Week’, developing practical revision techniques to support their preparation for the upcoming PPEs.

Looking ahead, after half term, we have our Year 11 Progress Evening, our annual prizegiving ceremony and there will be further support for students regarding their destinations after year 11. Have a great half term.



Y12 Reflections:

Miss Crouch, Director of Learning Y12

Year 12 students have now completed their first half term as Sixth Formers. They have engaged positively with all aspects of our study programme, including getting to know their Learning Managers with a focus on the VESPA programme in Bridge time and developing the attitudes, habits and skills they need to thrive as successful Sixth Form students.

Students have already taken on a range of leadership opportunities available to them, including becoming Form Reps and Ambassadors, as well as supporting teachers with running extracurricular clubs for younger students. Students who have chosen to complete the EPQ have begun this process, and all our students have partaken in their chosen Enrichment activities on Wednesday afternoons, with many taking the opportunity to volunteer in the local community.

Y13 Reflections:

Mrs Crawford, Director of Learning Y13

For many of our year 13 students, this first half term has been about taking important steps towards their future. Our visit to the UK University and Apprenticeship Fair in Leicester gave students valuable opportunities to speak directly with leading universities and employers. Oxbridge and Medicine applicants have successfully submitted their applications and are now preparing for the next stage, including admissions assessments. Across the cohort, personal statements are being refined and references written to showcase each student's individual strengths and achievements.

Next half term sees the first round of PPEs, and students are already preparing diligently. The Resource Centre remains open after school every day, providing a dedicated space for revision and independent study. We encourage students to maintain consistent preparation while balancing hard work with rest and wellbeing.



OUR CORE VALUES



We strive to be the best we can be.

We show resilience.

We are supportive.

We respect individuality.

We are polite, fair and honest.

We have a love of learning.

ETHOS OF EXCELLENCE