

Our Ref: PRC/JYD

18 December 2025

Dear Parents/Carers,

I hope you are enjoying the festive season and are looking forward to spending some quality time with family and friends, as well as some well-deserved rest. We've had a fabulous term with lots of great things going on both inside and outside the classroom ranging from ranked 4th in the whole of the North-East in the Times Parent Power Guide which gives due recognition to our longstanding success to donating nearly 600kg of food to Newcastle West End Foodbank.

Naturally, at this time of year, there is lots to update you on which probably is indicative of how busy things are. I have set it out by year group which will hopefully speed things up for you and then finished with some more general things relevant to parents/carers of all year groups.

Year 9

The majority of students have had a great first term at the Academy. We know that it is a big step up from the middle schools, but I have been very impressed by the speed in which students have settled in. Next term will be exciting as we start the **Key Stage 4 (GCSE) Options** process and it's the first time students get to have a say on what subjects they might like to pursue. A date for your diaries is **20th January (6pm-8pm)** where we will be launching this process. Following this evening will be a parents evening which allows you to get some good advice from the teachers who have taught your child. The dates of the parents' evenings are on the website and depend on what form your child is in.

Year 10

As usual most students in Year 10 are a credit to the school. In a term and a half they will be entering their final year of the school and will be sitting GCSE mock exams this summer.

Form classes in Year 10 will be changing after Christmas so that half of the year group who haven't done Science will be doing this in registration. This uses registration time effectively and the Science Department value that extra time in the morning to cover what is a very content heavy specification. Punctuality to registration at 8:40am is therefore of vital importance.

Preit Chahal Principal

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Year 11

Mock exams

As you know students will be sitting their mock exams starting on 12th January 2026 with final exams only 70 teaching days away. Over the last few weeks students have been attending revision sessions in preparation for mocks and class teachers have also been preparing them in lessons. All students should have a revision timetable and be sticking to it as just doing the bare minimum of what school provide will not suffice. It is vital that students do the very best they can in the mock exams as this will serve as solid foundations leading into the final exams.

Finally, attached to this newsletter is some revision support which one of our lovely parents shared with us. We understand that for some students the home environment is not conducive to learning so this is a great opportunity to use the City Library and take advantage of some of the revision sessions on offer.

Prom criteria

To encourage students to work hard, have good attendance and take full advantage of revision sessions below is the criteria for attending the end of year prom. Students **must**:

- Participate in at least three additional revision classes of their choice prior to mock exams in January 2026.
- Have a total of at least ten revision stamps in their planner before study leave begins. These can be made up of Revision classes for both Mocks and Summer Exams.
- Attend 7 additional study mornings after May half term, if invited.

Beyond the academic commitments, we also require:

- Good behaviour in Year 11
- Achieving the silver award under the PRAISE Code (1000 stamps)
- Attendance of 95% or above
- Good punctuality
- Good behaviour while on study leave and throughout the exam period.

Sixth Form Open Evening-Thursday 8th January 2026

It's never too early to begin to think about progression beyond Year 11, so a date for your diary is our **Sixth Form Open Evening on Thursday 8th January 2026**. This will be followed by a progression appointment in February for every student in Year 11 with a member of our Sixth Form team, when specialist advice and support will be given regarding next steps. Our Sixth Form is always over-subscribed and has a superb reputation with over one hundred students joining from other schools with 40 courses on offer. It has the right balance between structures which maximise achievement but in a more relaxed setting than Main School making it a perfect bridge between Year 11 and Higher Education/employment. We hope to see Year 11 students and their parents there.

Tutor group changes

As you know one of our strategies to maximise achievement is utilising registration time in Year 11. This means our Year 11 tutors are either Maths or English teachers. After Christmas we will be swapping tutor groups i.e. those who were working on English with their tutor will now turn to Maths and vice-versa. Students will be told their new tutor and registration room before the end of term.

Year 12 & 13

Our Sixth Form is a huge part of the school with 740 students and is larger than some schools in their entirety. We are very proud of the comprehensive nature of what we offer and the diversity of our student population. It is a joy to see them grow into young adults and I know many staff are attracted to work at Gosforth Academy because of the substantial Sixth Form teaching.

The focus of Year 12 this term has really been to settle into their new courses. Now they really need to push on as straight after Easter comes the Year 12 mocks. If students do poorly in this they will be expected to resit in the summer and automatic progression to Year 13 is not guaranteed. This expectation is similar to end of year university exams so hard work, commitment and good independent study habits should ensure success.

I am pleased to hear that our Year 13 students are receiving offers or interviews already, including some from very prestigious courses/ institutions. If you have still not submitted your UCAS then please do this now as time is tight and there are a number of checking phases required before it is finally sent.

Year 13 students will be preparing for mock exams which take place the two weeks before February half term. Following this there is a Y13 Parents Evening on Monday 30th March where final subject specific advice can be given to parents and students ahead of terminal exams. Again, I would ask all parents and carers to be aware that the mock exams should be approached as if they are the real exams as these results will be used if we have to move into a contingency situation.

Attendance

Gosforth Academy staff work with students and their families to ensure each student attends school regularly and punctually. Excellent attendance and punctuality prepare your child for the world of work and supports the development of friendships and relationships. Gosforth Academy wants your child to have the education and skills they need to live a happy and fulfilling life. Regular school attendance is essential for all our students to make good progress. Every student at Gosforth Academy, in line with the Government's expectations, is expected to maintain an attendance level of 97% and above. All stakeholders have the responsibility to ensure this is achieved. There is the expectation that all students will attend the academy when it is in session.

The table below shows how school attendance equates to days absent from school.

Attendance over One School Year

<i>98% attendance</i>	<i>less than 4 days absent from school</i>
<i>95% attendance</i>	<i>less than 10 days absent from school</i>
<i>90% attendance</i>	<i>4 weeks absent from school</i>
<i>85% attendance</i>	<i>5 ½ weeks absent from school</i>
<i>80% attendance</i>	<i>7 ½ weeks absent from school</i>

We hope that you appreciate how crucial good school attendance is to your child's progress and achievement. Good advice on whether to send your child in can be found here [Is my child too ill for school? - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](http://www.nhs.uk)

Parents, Teacher and Friends Association (PTFA)

This is a really exciting new initiative to become more involved in supporting the school by joining our PTFA. We believe this group can play a vital role in **enhancing community cohesion and enriching the educational experience for ALL students, in particular the most vulnerable.**

If you are interested in being part of this committee in either a Chair, Co-chair, Treasurer, Bid Writer, Secretary, Committee Member or General volunteer capacity as and when time allows we would like to invite you to a meeting where we will begin to start to set up the roles and

responsibilities. If you would like more informal information about this please contact Sarah Rae at sarah.rae@gosforthgroup.org.uk.

Meeting Details:

Date: Thursday 15th January

Time: 6pm

Location: Gosforth Academy

Please let us know if you will be attending by emailing gaptfa@gosforthgroup.org.uk by Thursday 18th December and we will send you further details in the first week back in January. Your support and ideas will be invaluable as we take this exciting first step together.

TEP (The Engagement Programme) Survey

I have written to all parents about this survey. The survey will take around 10 minutes to complete, and can be completed on your phone, tablet or computer. We want to hear all views - both positive things and areas for improvement. Your honest feedback helps us understand how to support all families better.

Start survey here: <https://questions.tep.uk/gosforth>

Deadline for feedback: Friday 19th December 2025

Christmas events

Contributing to the wider community is important to us and we instil this in our students. May I thank Mr Tate, Mrs Soulsby and Mrs Elliott for taking presents, food treats to local care homes supported by our choir. Mr Vickers has once again led on the food bank appeal which is done via tutors and I know many parents have contributed to that which is greatly appreciated. Our Performing Arts department put on a great Christmas production and Mrs Elliott in the Music Department took a group of carol singers to Marks and Spencer's, Hollywood Avenue, and the Grainger Market. Our famous Christmas assemblies will be enjoyed by all students before we break up, and this year's theme is *Angels*- the message we wish to get across in these assemblies is **seeing the extra-ordinary in ordinary people**. In advance of these assemblies may I thank the staff and students involved- the staff choir, musicians, singers and readings are all part of a 30+ year tradition at Gosforth Academy and these assemblies are always a wonderful way to finish the year.

Tomorrow the school is looking forward to raising some money by each student donating £1 for Christmas jumper/non-uniform day; Christmas lunch will also be served for those students who would like it. We will break up for Christmas at 12:25pm on Friday 19th December and return on Monday 5th January at the usual time of 8:40am.

On behalf of everyone at Gosforth Academy I hope you all a wonderful break and wishing you and the family all the best for 2026.

Yours sincerely,



Preit Chahal
Principal