

24th April 2026

HEADTEACHER UPDATE

Welcome back to the summer term – a term that always brings a renewed sense of energy and optimism. With longer days and improving weather, it has been encouraging to see students return with enthusiasm, making the most of time outdoors and settling quickly back into school life.

We returned from the Easter break following a demanding period, including our recent OFSTED inspection. The break that followed was both timely and restorative, and it has been encouraging to see staff and students return refreshed and ready to move forward.

Inspections are inevitably intense, and the opportunity to pause, reset and regain momentum has been valuable for everyone, particularly after what has been a relentless period of school improvement. As always, it was a privilege to showcase the journey the school has been on and to hear, first-hand, how proud our students are of the changes they see and experience every day.

The first half of this term will feel relatively calm, as we prepare for the start of the examination season. GCSE and A Level exams begin on 8 May, with our GCSE Drama students first up, and we wish them the very best as they begin this important period.

The second half of the summer term, however, promises to be extremely busy and exciting. Alongside Year 11 and Year 13 completing their examinations, we look forward to welcoming Year 5 pupils for our primary festivals, celebrating Sports Day, proms, supporting students through work experience, and completing our internal assessments.

Added to this are our international trips to Italy and France, which are always highlights of the school year and invaluable experiences for those involved. It is shaping up to be a full and rewarding end to the academic year.



We are incredibly proud of how we support our students during this period, and this year we have introduced several new initiatives, including subject masterclasses before exams, carefully aligned enrichment sessions, hot bacon or sausage sandwiches before morning exams, and cakes available for students sitting afternoon exams, helping to keep energy levels up throughout the day.

As we move into the examination season, we know this can be an anxious time for students and families alike.

For parents of students in Year 11 and Year 13, page 4 outlines important information about GCSE and A Level examinations, alongside the extensive support we have in place to help students feel confident, prepared and cared for.

We have started the summer term very positively with regard to attendance, recording our highest-attended week since the second week of September. This demonstrates a real sense of momentum as students returned to school ready to learn – whether they couldn't wait to be back, or families were keen to re-establish routines quickly, the outcome is the same: attendance is up, and that is excellent news.





It is vital that this strong attendance continues throughout the term as we prepare for internal assessments and the culmination of learning at the end of the academic year. The improvements seen this year are particularly encouraging. Spring term attendance was almost 2% higher than the same term in 2024/25, and persistent absence has reduced by 5.6%, which is a significant achievement.

Quite simply, better attendance means more students in school, benefiting from high-quality teaching and learning every day. I am especially pleased to highlight the progress made for our most vulnerable learners: persistent absence for students with SEND has improved by an impressive 12.3%. This reflects the school's continued commitment to inclusion and our ongoing work to develop a provision where all students feel supported, valued and able to thrive.

Thank you to families and students alike for your continued support in making attendance a shared priority.

At Northallerton School, improving all aspects of what we do is not just a statement of intent, it is an ongoing commitment driven by reflection, ambition and, most importantly, our students.

On our last results day in 2025, I met a student who was desperate to remain with us in the Sixth Form. They spoke passionately about how much they loved Northallerton School, felt known and supported here, and wanted nothing more than to continue their journey with familiar staff and friends. Unfortunately, their GCSE results did not quite meet the entry requirements for our Level 3 courses. Since then, I have seen that same student boarding a train every so often, travelling around 50 minutes to another college.

That moment stayed with me, and it directly prompted the next stage in the development of our Sixth Form. We want to ensure that students who feel they belong at Northallerton School, and who are motivated to succeed, are not limited by a single set of results.

As a result, we are excited to introduce a new Level 2 Programme of Study within our Sixth Form from September 2026. This one-year programme has been carefully developed by the Sixth Form team and Mrs Sunter to provide a supportive, inclusive pathway for students who are not yet ready for Level 3 but wish to continue their education with us.

Students will be fully integrated into Sixth Form life, complete a Level 2 qualification focused on employability



and personal development, access work experience, and resit GCSE English and/or Mathematics where needed.

Crucially, the programme offers clear progression routes into Level 3 study, ensuring ambition remains high and opportunities remain open.

This is another important step in our ongoing commitment to improving our provision and ensuring every student has a meaningful and successful next chapter.

Our recent Year 12 Parents' Evening provided a valuable opportunity to reflect on the progress students have made during their first year of Sixth Form and to gather feedback from families.

We are incredibly pleased to report that 100% of parents who responded said they would recommend the Northallerton School Sixth Form to other parents.

The feedback highlights the strength of both our academic and pastoral support, with parents praising the high expectations set for students, the range of subjects available, and the care shown by staff. Many parents commented on how well supported their children feel during this important transition period.

One parent summed this up perfectly, describing:
"Amazing staff and amazing adaptations in place so that our daughter can do as well as possible."

Parents were also clear in recognising the dedication of Sixth Form staff and the positive impact this has on student confidence and progress:

"My son's A Level subjects have been very well supported throughout Year 12, teachers are doing their best and work incredibly hard."

We value the thoughtful and constructive feedback shared, including suggestions around communication and careers guidance, which will help inform our ongoing development. These conversations are a vital part of our commitment to continuous improvement.

We are proud of the trust families place in our Sixth Form and grateful for the open dialogue that helps us ensure every student is challenged, supported and prepared for their next steps.

Thank you for all your wonderful support,

Mr Broom

STAFFING UPDATE

The summer term is inevitably the time when we ensure our staffing is fully in place for the Autumn Term. As with any school, this includes managing natural staffing changes. We had some colleagues leave us last term, and we also have a small number who will be moving on at the end of this term.

You may have noticed that we have shared several vacancies on our social media channels recently. We would be very grateful if parents could support us by sharing these opportunities across their own networks.

Current vacancies include:

- Teacher of Art
- Teacher of History
- IT Technician
- Careers and Communications Lead
- Senior Attendance and Family Engagement Officer

Alongside recruitment, we are pleased to share some positive appointment news. We have recently appointed Catherine Hills as a Casual Teacher, strengthening our capacity to support students across the curriculum. We have also successfully appointed a new Head of Geography, whose appointment I will formally announce in due course.

As we look ahead, we also take time to recognise colleagues who are leaving us and to thank them for their outstanding contributions to the school community.

Firstly, Mr Appleton will be retiring at the end of May after an exceptional 26 years of service as our IT Technician. His dedication, expertise and quiet reliability have been invaluable to Northallerton School over more than two decades.



**Northallerton School
& Sixth Form College**
Striving for Excellence



From supporting the daily running of the school to navigating countless technological changes, Mr Appleton has played a crucial role in ensuring staff and students have the systems they need to succeed.

We thank him sincerely for his long service and commitment to our community, and we wish him every happiness in a well-earned retirement.

I would also like to pass on my very best wishes to Mrs Brosnan, who will be leaving us at the end of April. After nine years of service with Arete, Mrs Brosnan will be taking some time to enjoy quality time with her young family before beginning her new role as Head of Art and Photography at another school.

Since my arrival, Mrs Brosnan has led and shaped the school's Personal Development programme, and the impact of her work has been significant.

The difference in students' character, confidence and understanding of leadership has been evident in a remarkably short time. A particular highlight for me was the Student Leadership Conference, where Rishi Sunak joined us as the opening keynote speaker — an event that captured the ambition and aspiration Mrs Brosnan has worked so hard to embed.

We thank both Mr Appleton and Mrs Brosnan for everything they have given to Northallerton School and wish them every success in their next chapters.



EXAMINATIONS

GCSE and A Level Exams: Entering the Final Weeks



As we move into the final weeks before GCSE and A Level examinations, we would like to reassure students and families that a strong programme of support is firmly in place to help everyone prepare confidently and calmly.

Attendance is Essential

Attendance remains absolutely crucial during this period. With **no study leave**, students are expected to attend school full-time until May half term. Lessons will continue to focus on high-priority content, exam technique and targeted revision, ensuring that not a minute is wasted. Evidence shows that students who attend regularly make the greatest progress, and every lesson really does count. After half term students should continue to attend lessons for which they still have an exam.

Extra Support Before Exams

In addition to normal lessons, students will benefit from a comprehensive programme of enrichment sessions and masterclasses.

After-school enrichment sessions will focus on revision for upcoming exams, while masterclasses will take place before every exam, running for 30 minutes immediately prior to both morning and afternoon papers. These sessions are designed to boost confidence and reinforce key knowledge right when it matters most.

On Exam Days

- School opens at 7:30am on exam days
- Study club available before morning exams
- Free breakfast provided for students sitting morning exams (between 7.45-8.10am)
- Masterclasses delivered before each exam from 8.15am
- Free Traybake available for students sitting afternoon exams (after the masterclass)
- Staff support throughout the day to guide students and ensure they arrive at exams calm, prepared and on time

Important: No Study Leave

- There will be no study leave during the exam season
- When students do not have an exam, they will:
 - Remain in school
 - Attend lessons or supervised revision
 - Continue to receive guidance and encouragement from staff

Year 11 students should attend school in full school uniform throughout the exam period and on exam days.

Students are reminded correct equipment is required for every exam, and that punctuality is essential.

Parents are encouraged to continue supporting strong routines at home, including good sleep, structured revision and excellent attendance.

We are hugely proud of the commitment shown by our Year 11 and Sixth Form students so far. With continued focus, attendance and use of the support on offer, we are confident they are well placed for success in the weeks ahead.

Supporting Your Child Through Exam Season



As we approach the exam period, we would like to share a useful guide for parents and carers on supporting young people with exam stress.

Produced by the Wellbeing in Mind Team (MHST), the [Spring 2: Supporting Your Child with Exam Stress newsletter](#) offers practical advice on recognising stress, supporting revision at home and helping students before, during and after exams.

The full guide includes clear wellbeing tips, example revision timetables and links to trusted support services, and is available via the school website. Parents and carers are encouraged to read it and contact school with any concerns about their child's wellbeing.

SIXTH FORM UPDATE

Students Inspired to Save Lives with Anthony Nolan Trust

Last week, we were delighted to welcome volunteers from the Anthony Nolan Trust, who spoke to students about the life-saving impact of stem cell donation. The visit included an on-site recruitment event, giving students the opportunity to learn more and sign up to the stem cell register. We were incredibly proud of the positive, compassionate response from our students, whose enthusiasm and willingness to help others was truly inspiring.



Insightful Guest Talk for Year 11 and Sixth Form Students

This week, we were delighted to welcome Associate Professor Tom Barnes to school to speak with a group of our Year 11 and Sixth Form students.

Tom, who lives and works in Sydney, delivered an engaging and thought-provoking talk about his academic work and research interests, which include economic sociology, employment and labour, political economy, social movements, and social and political change.

Students gained valuable insight into how these areas of study connect to the world around them and were able to explore ideas that link closely to their own studies and future aspirations. It was a real privilege to host such an accomplished speaker, and we thoroughly enjoyed welcoming him into our Sixth Form community.



Year 12 Work Experience



Year 12 Work Experience will take place from **Monday 6th – Friday 10th July**. Students are expected to source their own placements, although support is available in school.

If any parents or carers are able to offer work experience opportunities, please get in touch.

SIXTH FORM UPDATE

Sixth Form Destinations

Larissa Flint

**Business Management with Marketing
Leeds Beckett University**



Q&A: University Life and Advice

What subjects did you study in Sixth Form?

At Sixth Form, I studied Geography, Law, Business and Core Maths.

What are you studying now and what modules are you taking?

In my first year at university, my modules have included Marketing and Digital Customer Experience (DCE), Global Business Environment, Entrepreneurial Strategy, Data Decisions and AI, Managing Organisations and People, and Accounting and Finance for Managers.

What has the assessment workload been like so far?

In my first semester, I had four assessments: a group presentation, two essays, and a "super assessment" that covered all three modules. The super assessment involved researching which country Jet2 should add to their travel destinations, debating the options as a group, and delivering a 20-minute presentation.

In my second semester, I've already completed a group presentation and a written exam. I also have another presentation, an essay and an additional written exam coming up soon.

Have you joined any societies or student groups?

Yes! I've joined LB Snow, the skiing society at Leeds Beckett, which is planning a ski trip in December for students interested in snow sports. I'm also part of the Business Strategy, Operations and Enterprise (BSOE) Students' Community.

Where are you living at university?

I'm currently living in The Plaza, which is directly opposite the Business School. It's a really nice accommodation, although if you want a big kitchen, I'd recommend looking elsewhere in Leeds. One downside is the weekly fire alarm test every Tuesday, which can be a bit disruptive if you're asleep in the afternoon!

What have you enjoyed most about university life so far?

There's so much to enjoy: meeting lots of new people, the social side of university life, having more opportunities to go shopping, attending events like Balls and Varsity, and having more coursework than written exams. I've also loved having trips away available, including an upcoming Business School trip to Vietnam, and enjoying the extra freedom compared to living at home.

What advice would you give to students choosing a university?

My main advice is to trust yourself. You know what's right for you better than anyone else. If a university feels right, go for it—and if it turns out it's not for you, it's okay to change direction. It's far better to do something you enjoy than stay unhappy.

It can be tempting to move as far from home as possible, and that works for some people, but staying in Leeds has been really convenient for me. Visiting universities is also really important, as it helps you picture yourself there and get a feel for the city.

Year 13 Leavers Celebration



We warmly invite all Year 13 parents to our Leavers' Celebration on **Tuesday 5th May, from 14:30 to 16:00.**

The event will include an awards presentation followed by light refreshments.

We look forward to celebrating this special milestone with you.



CURRICULUM NEWS

ART - Leven Art Society – Mackenzie Thorpe Competition

We are extremely proud of our students who took part in the Leven Art Society Mackenzie Thorpe Competition.

Six student winners, Bethany G, Faith A-W, Paige A-W, Abigail A, Imogen O'C and Ellie B, were invited to exhibit their work at the Leven Art Society Exhibition held at Stokesley Town Hall.



Students also had the opportunity to attend the preview evening on Friday 10th April, experiencing a professional gallery environment and viewing work by a diverse range of artists and meet world renown artist Mackenzie Thorpe.

A special congratulations goes to Paige A-W, who was selected as the overall winner and awarded a monetary prize, trophy, and a book by Mackenzie Thorpe.

The exhibition provided a fantastic opportunity for students to engage with different artistic styles and gain insight into the professional art world. Meeting and speaking with Mackenzie Thorpe was a memorable highlight; he was highly impressed with the standard of work produced and has expressed his enthusiasm for working with the school again in the future.

We are delighted to confirm that the competition will be running again next year, and we cannot wait to see what our students create next.

Mrs K Wilson
Head of Art



ART AND GEOGRAPHY

Design a Card for Sir David Attenborough's 100th Birthday!

Students are invited to take part in an exciting Geography and Art competition to celebrate Sir David Attenborough's 100th birthday. Design a unique birthday card inspired by nature, Planet Earth, wildlife, conservation or Sir David Attenborough himself. Entries can be hand-drawn, photographed or digitally designed and must be no larger than A4.

All participants will receive Praise Points, with Amazon vouchers awarded for 1st, 2nd and 3rd place. Every card will be sent to Sir David!

Deadline: **Thursday 30th April.**

For more information, see Miss Tough or Mrs Wilson.



NSSF's Geography & Art

BIRTHDAY CARD



COMPETITION

100

Design a birthday card for Sir David Attenborough's 100th Birthday.

- No bigger than A4
- Themes: Nature, Planet Earth, Wildlife, Sir David Attenborough, Conservation
- Designs can be drawn, photographed or designed
- All entries will receive Praise Points

Prizes of Amazon vouchers for 1st, 2nd & 3rd place and all cards will be sent to him!

DEADLINE: Thursday 30th April

See Miss Tough or Mrs Wilson for further information

CURRICULUM NEWS

LIBRARY

Why Read & Write? An Inspiring Day with the author Henry Vyner-Brooks

What an incredible day we had on Tuesday 21st, when acclaimed fiction author Henry Vyner-Brooks visited our school.

Henry is the author of several captivating titles, including *The Heretic*. Renowned for his historically inspired storytelling, he is also the creative force behind *The Will Houston Mystery Series*—a body of work shaped by extensive travel and a deep passion for history.

He began the day with a powerful and deeply moving assembly for our Sixth Form, sharing his remarkable life journey and the path that led him to become an author. His message was both clear and inspiring: young people should never allow barriers or obstacles to define them. Instead, they should pursue happiness, seek knowledge, and read—because knowledge is power.

Henry then delivered engaging workshops titled “Why Read & Write in the Age of AI” to KS3 and KS4 students. These sessions brought learning to life through a mystery box and lively competitions that left students buzzing with enthusiasm. Winners were rewarded with books—prizes truly worth having.

Perhaps the most moving part of the day was Henry’s meet-and-greet session in the library, where he spoke openly about overcoming dyslexia. He also shared how he began writing after being diagnosed with cancer, driven by a determination to leave a legacy for his children and remain part of their lives, whatever the future may hold. In addition, Henry generously donated a collection of his books to our school library—a lasting gift for the entire community.

The values he shared are ones we will not forget: family comes first, obstacles are not excuses, and the pursuit of knowledge through reading can change your life.

Thank you Henry for being with us!



SPORT / PE NEWS



Outstanding Effort at the County Football Trials

A big well done to Josh, Harry, Lennon, Ethan and Kyle, who all represented our school brilliantly at the County Football Trials on Saturday 18th April at Thirsk School.

It was an incredibly high standard of football, with the best talent from across North Yorkshire on display, and all of the boys did themselves proud throughout the trial.

A special mention must go to Josh and Harry, who have both been selected for the North Yorkshire Squad. They will now go on to represent North Yorkshire in a number of fixtures against other counties from across the North in the coming months.

A fantastic achievement boys – well done.

Mr Myers



Well Done to Our Fantastic Sports Leaders!

A huge well done to our amazing Sports Leaders who helped run the Primary Schools Netball Festival on Tuesday 14 and Wednesday 15 April.

Our leaders were outstanding throughout the event and received special praise for the way they encouraged, supported, and motivated the primary school students.

Their enthusiasm, positivity, and leadership played a huge part in making the festival such a success – and a truly enjoyable experience for everyone involved.

Thank you for representing our school so positively. A great job all round!

Mr Myers



SEND AND INCLUSION



Parents' Drop-In – NYC Educational Psychology Service

Parents and carers of children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are warmly invited to a relaxed drop-in coffee morning with the NYC Educational Psychology (EP) Service.

This informal session offers a chance to:

- Talk about your child's learning, wellbeing or additional needs
- Ask questions and share concerns
- Meet and chat with an Educational Psychologist in a supportive environment

Wednesday 29th April 2026

9.30am – 11.00am

The Phoenix Centre

No appointment needed – just drop in for a coffee and a chat.

We look forward to welcoming you

Independent Living – Everyday Food and Drink

This term, students have been focusing on the Everyday Food and Drink module as part of their Independent Living qualification. Learners have planned and prepared a range of items, including pizzas, sandwiches and hot drinks.



Everyone worked independently to follow instructions, practise safe food preparation skills and build confidence in the kitchen. The results were delicious, and students were rightly proud of what they achieved.

Celebrating Student Success and Curriculum Growth

We are delighted to share that all students completing the NOCN Entry Level Certificate in Preparing for Further Learning or Employment (Entry 3) – Hair and Beauty have now successfully passed. This is a fantastic achievement, and we wish all students every success and the very best of luck as they move forward into their upcoming GCSE examinations.

Students in the Phoenix Centre are also making excellent progress with the Independent Living qualification and are on track to complete this by the end of term. Alongside this, we continue to develop and strengthen our curriculum, expanding our provision through a growing range of NOCN courses to ensure we meet the needs of all learners and support positive next steps.



Coffee Morning



Parents and Carers of students accessing the Phoenix Centre.

We would like to warmly invite you to a Coffee Morning in the Phoenix Centre on **Friday 22nd May, from 9:00–9:45am.**

This will be a friendly and informal opportunity to meet members of the team, connect with other parents and carers, and find out more about the support available within the Phoenix Centre.

We hope you will be able to join us.

KEY INFORMATION

DATES FOR THE DIARY



- **Monday 4th May 2026** - Bank Holiday (school closed)
- **Friday 22nd May 2026** - students break up for May Half Term (3.15pm)
- **Monday 1st June 2026** - Students back to school
- **From 8th May to 17th June 2026** - GCSE and A Level Exam period (all students should have received their individual exam timetable)
- **W/c 8th June - 12th June 2026** - Year 10 Work Experience
- **Friday 30th June 2026** - Year 11 into Year 12 Bridging Day
- **25th - 30th June 2026** - French Trip
- **3rd - 7th July 2026** - Italy Trip
- **Wednesday 15th July 2026** - Y5 Festival @ Northallerton School
- **Friday 17th July 2026** - Sports Day



 01609 773340

 office@northallerton-alt.uk

 www.northallertonschool.org.uk

 www.facebook.com/NSandSFC

 www.instagram.com/NSandSFC