



GEORGE  
PINDAR  
SCHOOL

# The Pindar Postbag

## December 2025 Edition

### Message from the Principal

I can hardly believe that the autumn term, and with it my time at George Pindar, has come to an end! As you will see below, the last half term has been full of exciting events and enrichment activities which have made us, as ever, extremely #ProudToBePindar! We hope all members of our school community enjoy the Christmas break and come back to school rested, refreshed and ready to go again for hard work in 2026! Mr Willis and the team are looking forward to seeing all our students on **Tuesday 6th January 2026 at 8.40am**. Students need to be in to win and attendance matters so please remind your child to start the new term with 100% attendance!

### Attendance pays off!

Evidence from the Department for Education and our own evidence from this year's exam results makes it absolutely clear - there is nothing which makes more of a difference to your child's potential GCSE outcomes than attendance. Put simply, students who are in lessons day in, day out, achieve far higher results than students whose attendance is lower. We want to encourage all our students to aim for 100% week in week out and try to avoid sporadic absences which have such an impact on learning. On the last day of every half term, the 100 Club prize draw takes place - students who achieve 100% attendance each week receive a ticket for the draw and three lucky

winners will receive a £100 voucher for gaming or shopping. Let's aim for 100% every week in the New Year - you have to be in to win!

### SPARX success in sight!

Every week we set maths and science homework using the SPARX online platforms. We know a great deal about the science of memory and SPARX allows students to reinforce their key learning by practising at home what they have learnt during lessons in school. We are beyond proud to have achieved second place in the Heartwood Learning Trust league tables and with continued hard work, first place is in sight! However, the real winners will be your children who are almost guaranteed to achieve higher grades with regular use of SPARX. Homework is set every Wednesday at 3pm and the deadline is always the following **Wednesday at 8am** - students need to complete all their questions and benefit from hugely useful videos to talk them through problems and content they might have forgotten to be able to complete their work. Students who complete their homework on time receive special 'Sparx stamps' which contribute to their rewards totals and which can be 'spent' on biscuits, tuck shop vouchers, queue jumper vouchers and more, whilst the maths and science departments are currently offering 'Sparx sweeteners' for 100% completion with lollies and mini animals on offer! Check in with your child to see what they have won and please encourage them to complete their homework every week - hard work pays off!



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## Celebrating the Class of 2025

November saw our former Year 11s return to school to celebrate their many achievements throughout their five years at GPS. It goes without saying that it was wonderful to see them again! It was also a good opportunity for them to see each other once more and they were truly excited as they greeted each other. Staff were delighted to hear how well they are doing in their next steps and how much they are enjoying them.

We celebrated outstanding performance, both academically and in terms of overcoming challenges. There really were some sensational individual performances this year with lots of Grade 9 GCSEs. Of course we celebrated our PINDAR Values too - Proud, Independent, Neighbourly, Determined, Aspirational and Respectful. The official GCSE certificates were also presented.

Our current Y11 students kicked off the evening talking about the last year at George Pindar School, giving the audience a whistle stop tour of highlights and events.

The Y10 GCSE Music students performed a couple of fantastic songs, really showing off the Music Department beautifully.

What a fabulous celebration for our leavers, made memorable for Mrs Welsh as everyone in the hall sang to her as it just so happened to be her birthday!

We wish all the leavers every success and happiness for the future.



## The terrific Tom A Smith wows with back to back performances

What a fantastic day we had in school when the amazingly talented singer songwriter Tom A Smith performed for our students. He performed for every single year group over the course of the day. Five performances in five hours - phew!

The students loved it with Year 7 girls in particular getting very excited!

Tom also brought an important message around mental health and showed that it is always possible to shoot for your dreams no matter what issues might stand in your way.

This is a day that we will remember for a very long time!





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## Grow a Mo, Support a bro!

Mr Traves was sporting a moustache throughout November in order to raise money for men's mental health as part of 'Movember.' He ran and biked an incredible 60k per week in his free time in the cold, dark hours before and after school to raise awareness for the 60 men we lose to suicide every hour in the UK. He also raised money for prostate and testicular cancer charities. Lots of the money he raised came from the prize draw he organised in school for prizes he had provided himself. The prize draw alone raised over £230, but his grand total, including all donations, was £1,339! Wow, what an absolute legend. Well

done, Mr Traves and we can't wait to see how bushy your moustache is next year!



## Sporting Success

It's been another busy half term for sporting fixtures! The third and final Cross Country event took place in Whitby where students displayed fantastic team spirit, cheering and clapping each other to the finish line. There were some outstanding individual performances which saw some of our students qualify for the next round representing the District. The Y7 indoor football team took part in the first tournament of the year with a stunning performance seeing them qualify for the final. And what a result in the District Final - they won! After defending brilliantly in the final game and holding on to a 0-0 draw, the boys were unbeaten in their three games which saw them finish top of the table. A huge well done to them!





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The Y7 basketball team were also in action in a tournament in mid November. While they didn't win, there were some fantastic performances and their behaviour was impeccable. The Y8 team also played in the basketball tournament with the B Team securing a third place finish. They showed fantastic determination, teamwork and true sportsmanship throughout every match and we are very proud of the way they represented us. Both the Y9 and Y7 football teams have progressed to the semi-finals of the District Cup, showing wonderful behaviour and team spirit throughout the matches. We can't wait to see how they do as they continue in the competition. Our students really do make us #ProudToBePindar!



## Shakespeare in Short

Our Y10 GCSE Drama students went to Scarborough TEC in November to see how it's done at college!

They watched the Y12 & 13 TEC students performing three abridged versions of Shakespeare plays - Romeo & Juliet, Hamlet and Macbeth.

The cast included some former Pindar students and it was wonderful to see how confident they have grown and how much they are enjoying their Post 16 studies.

We are very grateful to Head of Drama at TEC, Matt, for inviting us and for producing such a fabulous show.







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## Carols by Candlelight

Early on in Mrs Welsh's headship at George Pindar School, she had an idea that has become one of the best nights of the year! Inspired by Christmas concerts in cathedrals, Mrs Welsh wanted us to have our own Carols by Candlelight event. And so it began! Every year, our band and choir have practiced to perfection to bring us this magical Christmas concert. This year was no exception. The wonderful Mrs O'Neill did a truly amazing job of decorating the hall with festive window stickers, an abundance of candles, a stunning tree and the most beautiful lights and hanging garland. Our guests arrived and packed the hall to hear our students sing, play and read poetry. They really did make us proud, not only because of their talent, but because of the work ethic they showed beforehand in rehearsal and their determination and resilience. We really hope all our guests felt the Christmas magic in the air. ✨

This was Mrs Welsh's last ever Carols by Candlelight Concert as Principal and it was very

plain to see that she adored it. We hope she will visit us next year for her favourite event in the school calendar!



## 'Yule' love these seasonal sweets!

Our Key Stage Four Hospitality and Catering classes have an incredible range of experiences thanks to the dedication of their teacher Mrs Raisin with the support of our Technician Miss Emmerson. In weekly 'Skills Club' sessions on Tuesdays after school, the students have the opportunity to hone their skills and take on more challenging recipes to widen their knowledge and enhance their future grades.

This half term, there has been a Christmas theme and the students absolutely 'sleighed' when they made and decorated Yule logs! As well as making





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the cake and the filling, the students had to carefully ice and decorate their creations and 'snow' joke, they look fabulous. In fact, they wouldn't look out of place in a high end bakery. We 'ho ho hope' they tasted as good as they looked. Mrs Raisin is rightly proud of her little elves. Maybe they will recreate them at home for a wonderful centrepiece for the Christmas table,



## Cracking Christmas lunch!

There were two chances to grab a Christmas dinner at Pindar in the last week of term and they went down a treat! A recent change of kitchen supplier meant that absolutely everything was cooked from scratch this year. No more frozen roasties or turkey slices! The kitchen was quite a sight to behold in the morning with pans the size of barrels full of potatoes and huge turkeys ready

to go in the oven. The kitchen ladies had on their festive aprons and hats and the atmosphere was great. Of course the sprouts were amazing!! A big thank you to Jo, Sue and the team for all their hard work.



## Christmas Fair 2025

We opened the doors to our families during the last week of term for our fantastic Christmas Fair! There were crafts aplenty on sale with some wonderful Christmas themed items made by students and staff. Refreshments were on offer in the form of hot dogs, hot chocolate, sweet cones and handmade cookies. There were games to play and prizes galore on the tombola. The evening was very well attended and there was a lovely atmosphere thanks to a great turnout and Christmas music in the air!





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## A Legend Leaves Pindar

What a six years it's been under the leadership of Mrs Welsh! I think it's safe to say that she has made a huge impression on us. The school has seen some big changes and improvements during her time at GPS. She has really brought the community together, bringing in families for events such as Carols by Candlelight and making time for staff, students and parents. She has made everyone feel welcome and valued. Mrs Welsh has been extremely popular amongst the staff and students and we are going to miss her warm and funny personality. What a lovely presence she has been in the school. She will leave a Lesley shaped hole at the heart of Pindar. When you're in your new role, Mrs Welsh, in the words of your hero Gary Barlow, 'Never forget where you've come here from' and always be #ProudToBePindar! We

wish you all the luck and happiness in the world. You will be so missed.



## Never lose sight of the envelope

Our Year 11 students have only 16 school weeks left in school before they begin their GCSE written examinations and it could not be more important for students to never lose sight of the envelope and make every effort to achieve! We were pleased to host our first Steps to Success event in October where students and families were introduced to revision techniques. We hope our students will put these strategies to good use as we approach their GCSEs.



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## How to Get in Touch

Telephone: 01723 582194

Email: [hello@gps.hlt.academy](mailto:hello@gps.hlt.academy)

Email: [news@gps.hlt.academy](mailto:news@gps.hlt.academy)

EduLink: Use the App or go online

Communication between home and school is of vital importance to ensure that all students can strive for success. Parents and carers are requested to book meetings in advance to avoid disappointment when colleagues are teaching or otherwise engaged.

## Attendance Matters

Evidence shows clearly that students who maintain higher attendance achieve higher grades so we want to encourage every child to attend as much as possible and rewards are given for 100% attendance on a weekly or annual basis. If for any reason your child is too ill for school, or if you have booked a holiday, it is incredibly important to update us in the morning. You can do this by ringing 01723 582194, using the EduLink App or emailing [hello@gps.hlt.academy](mailto:hello@gps.hlt.academy) or [news@gps.hlt.academy](mailto:news@gps.hlt.academy). Please let us know the reason for your child's absence. If you have any queries about attendance, or need any support for your child, you can contact our attendance team via the school office. Thank you for your support.

## Reporting a Concern

If you have a concern about a student or anyone else in our school community please report it. Miss

Pickles is the Designated Safeguarding Lead. She leads safeguarding in school with a team of colleagues who can support your child. You can contact colleagues by calling the main school telephone number on 01723 582194 or via email to [safeguarding@gps.hlt.academy](mailto:safeguarding@gps.hlt.academy)

## If you need help

At George Pindar School, we are continually working to support students in feeling safe and well at school and to enable them to flourish both in and out of school. Students are encouraged to seek support from their form tutor or teachers in school and will be directed to pastoral and safeguarding colleagues when appropriate. Students who prefer to report a safeguarding concern by text can send a message to the school's safeguarding mobile number on 07895132530 or email [safeguarding@gps.hlt.academy](mailto:safeguarding@gps.hlt.academy). The safeguarding mobile is available from 7am to 7pm Monday to Friday during term time. Students who need support beyond the school day, on a weekend or over the holidays should look at the range of information on our website: [If You Need Help](#)

## Helpful Links

You can read all about the latest George Pindar news on our social media channels and website: <https://www.facebook.com/georgepindarschool>  
<https://www.instagram.com/georgepindarschool>  
<https://gps.hlt.academy/>