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OUR LATEST ISSUE:

*Welcome - From the  
Chief Education Officer*



# Welcome

*by Paul Smith, Chief Education Officer*

I am writing to you today in my capacity as Chief Education Officer of Northern Schools Trust, to extend a heartfelt welcome to you and your child as you prepare to join our family of schools. Please be assured that everyone at Gateacre School and Northern Schools Trust is working diligently to prepare for your child's arrival, and we are genuinely excited to welcome you both into our thriving community.

Northern Schools Trust is a successful sponsor of schools across Liverpool, united by our core belief that every young person can achieve their full potential when provided with the right support and opportunities. Our unwavering desire is to equip all students with the very best start in life, empowering them for future success in whichever path they choose to follow. Guided by our belief that learning brings forth freedom – our dedicated team strives to deliver an outstanding education to each and every student, guaranteeing exceptional outcomes and inspiring high aspirations.

Your child's best interests are always our first and foremost priority. Our schools are distinguished by a unique combination of a rigorous, academic curriculum, a diverse enrichment programme, and a nurturing, supportive environment. We champion an ambitious, academic curriculum, founded on the power of a broad and balanced education. While prioritising traditional subjects like Ancient History, Science, and English, we seamlessly integrate engaging artistic and sporting options. Our evidence-based educational approach is meticulously designed with your child's learning and development at its heart, fostering both academic achievement and a lifelong love for learning that extends well beyond the classroom.

A distinctive feature of all Northern Schools Trust secondary schools is our comprehensive Classics provision. Often overlooked in the state sector yet essential in the independent sector, we've found that students genuinely relish their Classics lessons, embracing the unique opportunities it offers to explore classical civilisation and the ancient world. Far from being irrelevant or elitist, Latin is universally recognised as a rigorous academic option that significantly develops students' language and analytical skills, making it highly regarded by employers and universities. Crucially, the study of Latin is also profoundly enjoyable, intellectually exciting, academically challenging, and immensely rewarding.

Reflecting the best independent school practices, we firmly believe your child's education extends beyond the classroom. To this end, our dedicated Education Enrichment Team coordinates and organises a wide variety of high-quality trips, inspiring events, and engaging extracurricular activities. Throughout their time at Gateacre School, students will have abundant opportunities to participate in diverse careers and educational programmes, visit sites of local and national interest, embark on exhilarating residential trips, and engage in numerous cultural, artistic, and sporting clubs.

We foster a culture of high expectations, where students are treated with the highest respect and are, in turn, expected to treat others likewise. Our approach to behaviour is consistent, firm, yet fair: staff diligently praise and recognise effort and good behaviour, and work tirelessly to consolidate expectations when students do not meet them. Our robust pastoral system is thoughtfully designed to promote tolerance, kindness, and consideration, with the aim that every student leaving our school does so as a confident, articulate, respectful, and courteous member of society.

We understand that the transition from primary to secondary school marks a significant milestone for new students. Each year, we meticulously arrange a number of transition activities for Year 6 students, including dedicated Taster Days, to help them feel thoroughly settled and prepared for life at their new school. When your child arrives at Gateacre School, please be assured that our entire school team will do everything in their power to make them feel welcome and settled, with their well-being remaining our highest priority. More detailed information regarding our September induction plans will be communicated with you shortly.

As part of our commitment to understanding and supporting each student, we will be inviting your child to join us for a meeting with a member of our Leadership Team, and also to take their Cognitive Ability Test (CAT). Specific details for these two events have been sent to you separately. We want to reassure both you and your child that neither the meeting nor the CAT test are anything to be concerned about. Instead, they are thoughtfully designed to help us get to know our new students better, enabling us to provide truly individualised support and ensure your child begins their time at the academy in the most positive and successful way.

This letter is the first in a series of fortnightly newsletters we intend to share with you over the coming weeks, leading up to the summer holidays. Each subsequent letter will provide valuable insights into a different aspect of your child's transition into secondary school and daily life at Gateacre School. Upcoming topics will include: attendance, our curriculum, academic and behavioural expectations, education enrichment opportunities, a typical school day, and an introduction to our dedicated school team.

Should you have any questions specifically regarding the transition to Gateacre School, please do not hesitate to contact our dedicated transition team at the school at [admin@gateacre.org](mailto:admin@gateacre.org)

Alternatively, for any questions concerning Northern Schools Trust and our broader work, please do get in touch.

I greatly look forward to meeting you in person, and I wish you and your families all the very best over the upcoming months as your child prepares for this exciting new chapter.