

Dear Parent/Carer

**HMS WEEKLY UPDATE 17**

The weeks are already flying by and the great start to term has continued this week. Our focus has been on 'World Religion Week' with pupils engaging in workshops with visiting speakers representing a range of religions and faiths. In addition, lots of pupils from KS2 represented HMS at the Primary Cross Country event; our Sports Leaders had a training course; Year 7 had an important PSHE workshop focused on knife crime and staying safe; our STEM to Stars Club visited Kielder Observatory; our Year 8 boys' team competed in a cup match in Newcastle and we had the first year group event for our Young Green Briton Challenge – all in a week! Thank you to the many parents/carers who were able to join us at Year 5 Parents' Evening – the next session is on Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> January and bookings can still be made via MCAS.

It's always helpful to remind ourselves of some important school expectations – please also try to discuss these at home with your child – thank you for your support:

- Pupils should be on their yard for an **8.40am start**. The gate will be closed at 8.45am.
- Mobile phones should be **switched off** once pupils are through the school gate and should remain switched off all day.
- Pupils should come to school in the correct uniform and with the [equipment they need](#). We have noticed that an increasing number of pupils are without basic school equipment. We always support our pupils to remain organised but we would ask that you check your child's pencil case is well-stocked each week.
- Chewing gum is not allowed in school at any time.

**The HMS Way Awards**

Each week, teachers nominate pupils for awards to celebrate those who have demonstrated our school values and to recognise the brilliant achievements of our pupils. The awards celebrate children who have shown great respect, who have engaged well in all aspects of school life and who have shown high aspiration during lessons and around school. Well done – we are very proud of you!



Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8
Imogen P	Alfie B	Freddie H	Harry B
Rory M	Zain B	Lily R-B	Sam B
Esme H	Archie S	Rory A	Khloe M
Ella Wa	Eva G	Jayden C	Billy B
Niamh B	Doug B	Eben S	Holli M

**Hexham Middle School**

Whetstone Bridge Road, Hexham, Northumberland NE46 3JB

T: 01434 610300 E: [admin@hexhammiddle.org.uk](mailto:admin@hexhammiddle.org.uk)

[www.hexhammiddleschool.co.uk](http://www.hexhammiddleschool.co.uk)

Executive Headteacher: **Graeme Atkins**

Head of School: **Liam Watters**

## STEM to STARS

A group of Year 5 pupils were very excited to visit the Kielder Observatory as part of our STEM to STARS project this week. We are all very grateful to James and Adam for planning such an amazing opportunity. Thankfully, the snowy conditions in Kielder cleared enough to allow the visit to go ahead!



Pupils had the chance to see one of the telescopes in action and to visit the Sir Patrick Moore Observatory. Pupils explored the size of the Universe, astronomical terminology and the use of Stellarium. Big questions were asked and pupils had the chance to quiz the astronomers during their visit. Space Engineer's Club continues this term, and we know that our pupils are feeling very inspired!

## House Point Totals

Each week, we celebrate our P Point (positive point) total across the school. We include the 'Top 4' pupils in each year group, as well as the house totals for Aln, Coquet, Wansbeck and Tweed. Well done everyone for such a positive start to term.

House Totals		Top 4 'P Points' in each year							
		Year 5		Year 6		Year 7		Year 8	
<b>Aln</b>	36,248	1	Heidi B	1	Edward H	1	Ben S	1	Jyacinth B
<b>Coquet</b>	36,115	2	Alice E	2	Sadie B	2	Oskar P	2	Sarah N
<b>Tweed</b>	36,403	3	Sophie K	3	Meghan J	3	Anna F	3	Harry B
<b>Wansbeck</b>	37,044	4	Riley S	4	Maxi C	4	Harry G	4	Sophie A

## Safeguarding Update

1. Please ensure you wait outside the main black gates when collecting pupils from school. For safety reasons, do not enter the school site unless specifically instructed by school staff.
2. If you encounter a pupil who seems lost or unsure of where to go, please bring them back to the school immediately. You can seek support from the main Hydro Office.
3. If you are collecting your child from the car park at the end of the day, please remain stationary in your vehicle until the yellow barriers are moved. Do not attempt to move your vehicle while pupils are still moving in this area.
4. Please be extra vigilant when driving around the school site. Take particular care when turning onto the school site from Whetstone Bridge Road.
5. When collecting from school, please don't block cars in on the ramp approach into the car park – this has been an issue for some parked cars this week.

Thank you for helping us maintain a safe environment for all pupils and families.



### World Religion Week

This week, we have focused on a wide range of religions, faiths and beliefs to celebrate 'World Religion Day'. Special thanks to Miss Buxton-Collins for organising an inspiring programme of visitors and workshops to bring our PERS learning to life. Pupils have engaged well, shown curiosity and interest and have broadened their understanding of religion. An extra special thanks to our wonderful visitors this week:

- Enis from the Islamic Diversity Centre
- Jaswinder from the North East Sikh Service
- Emma and Neil from Hexham Community Church
- Kirtida from the Hindu Mandir



### Young Green Briton Challenge

Following our huge success last year, our Year 7 pupils are now starting their Young Green Briton Challenge. Mr Freeman-Myers launched the next steps with the whole cohort today. The session focused on the circular economy, fast fashion and allowed pupils to think about important issues and potential solutions ahead of the next stage of the challenge. Aiming High on display all round!



### Clubs News

#### KS3 Photography Club

The KS3 photography club will no longer run afterschool; this club will now take place on a Friday lunchtime week 2 of the timetable. Pupils will need to sign up on MCAS as there are only 10 places available for the club because of equipment.

### Attendance – top 3!

Attendance has been very good this week with 95% of pupils being in school. However, our school target is 97%. It's so important that pupils and parents have a positive attitude towards school attendance – pupils should be in school every day, ready to learn and to make the most of their school opportunities.

1 <sup>st</sup> form class	2 <sup>nd</sup> form class	3 <sup>rd</sup> form class
99%	97%	96%
5-MDO	7-IBO, 7-PHA, 7-PES, 6-MBE, 6-FHI, 5-ZSC, 5-EKI, 5-FHA	7-AMG, 6-RAL, 6-JJO

## Online safety update

### Important Message to Parents: Clarification on TikTok Accounts

It has come to our attention that there may be TikTok accounts claiming to represent Hexham Middle School. We would like to reiterate that **Hexham Middle School does not have an official TikTok account**. Any accounts linked to the school on this platform are not authorised or managed by us. We strongly encourage you to regularly check your child's social media activity to ensure they are only following and engaging with content that is **age-appropriate** and safe. For further guidance on supporting your child online, including tools to help monitor their digital activity, please visit the NSPCC's online safety hub at: [👉 NSPCC Online Safety](#). Thank you for your cooperation in helping us maintain a safe and secure online environment for our students.

### How to Deal with Online Scams

ParentZone have put together a very simple but really useful webpage guide for parents which would be worth sharing. You can find the guide [HERE](#).

## News from the Community

- **Be You newsletter (mental health team):** The latest Be You newsletter on the theme of being **remarkable** is on our website: [here](#).
- **Hexham Family Hub - free online workshop - Understanding children's behaviour:** Hexham Family Hub are hosting a virtual workshop on Tuesday 11 February from 5-6pm. See [here](#) for more information.

## Free School Meals

### Free School Meals

You can find the eligibility criteria for free school meals here. If you think your child may be eligible, please make an application to the local authority who review your request.

<https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/Education/Schools/Meals.aspx?nccredirect=1>

## Lost property

Please see the latest items in lost property at HMS. Pupils can collect from the HMS office. If not collected by Friday 24 January, these items will be recycled and removed from lost property.



## Upcoming Dates

Date	Event	Who
Tuesday 21 January	Queen's Hall Folk Music Project	Group
Thursday 23 January	Year 5 Parents' Evening 2 – in person	Year 5
Tuesday 28 January	Year 6 SATs Information Evening	Year 6
Tuesday 28 January	Year 5 First Aid Training	Year 5
Wednesday 29 January	Year 6 First Aid Training	Year 6
Thursday 30 January	Young Green Briton Challenge	Year 7
Friday 31 January	Year 7 and 8 First Aid Training	Year 7 and 8
Friday 31 January	Head of School Award Breakfast	Winners
Thursday 6 February	Year 8 Parents' Evening 1 – in person (book via MCAS)	Year 8
Wednesday 12 February	Year 8 Parents' Evening 2 – in person (book via MCAS)	Year 8

Have a great weekend!

Mr Watters

Head of School

### **Pupil Support and Safeguarding**

**Designated Safeguarding Leader:** Mr Stephenson  
**Deputy Safeguarding Leaders:** Mr Scott and Mr Rutherford-Orrcock  
**Heads of Key Stage:** Mr Scott and Mr Rutherford-Orrcock  
**SENDCo/Assistant SENDCo:** Mr Morgan and Mrs Ballantyne  
**Academic Support Coordinator:** Mrs Toor  
**Pupil Support Workers:** Mrs Dodds and Mrs Richards

Please remember that we are here to support you and your child at any time. You can contact us via the main office (phone) or by email ([admin@hexhammiddle.org.uk](mailto:admin@hexhammiddle.org.uk)).