

Dear Parent/Carer

HMS WEEKLY UPDATE 18

It's been another great week at HMS with pupils representing school at the Cross Country Championship; our new Peer Mentor team being trained by Be You in how to provide support across our school; our new 'Breaktime Buddies' launching with an exciting new plan for KS2 play next week and the Queen's Hall folk music project getting started. It's been great to see clubs so busy – orchestra sounded lovely last night and STEM to Stars Club was fantastic! Thank you to the many Year 5 parents/carers who have joined us at Parents' Evenings – it's always lovely to see you in school.

This week, our trustees visited school and enjoyed spending the day in classrooms and speaking to the children. Last week, we welcomed colleagues from NCC and other local schools to review our SEND provision. We were delighted to hear such positive feedback about our inclusive school culture. As always, so much to be proud of at HMS! Please keep sending us your great news from outside of school so that we can celebrate pupils' achievements.

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
Freddie S	Isla Y	Lily A	Kyle R
Spike N	Tom G	Elise-May P	Noah W
Dylan F	Luke T	Ben N	William I
Darcey H	Nick T	Rose L	Annabelle R
Margot D	George T	Ryan S	

Peer mentors



Stacey from Be You came to deliver peer mentor training to some of our Year 8 pupils this week. After a momentous effort and dedication to the peer mentorship program, the 18 peer mentors received a Be You Certificate. They have also been recommended for an AQA accredited qualification which they will receive in a few weeks' time. A massive congratulations to all involved and they are looking forward to contributing to our commitment to supporting the wellbeing of all pupils.

Hexham Middle School

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Executive Headteacher: **Graeme Atkins**

Head of School: **Liam Watters**

Cross Country Success



14 HMS runners travelled to compete in the Northumberland School Cross Country Championship held at Temple Park South Shields. The weather this year was ideal - good soft footing - rather than the frozen ruts of last year. The full event report is [here](#) on our website. We are very proud of all of the pupils who took part.



House Point Totals

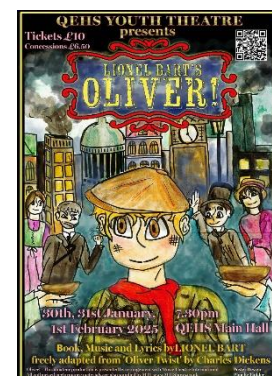
Each week, we celebrate our P Point (positive point) total across the school. We include the 'Top 4' pupils in each year group, as well as the house totals for Aln, Coquet, Wansbeck and Tweed. Well done everyone for such a positive start to term.

House Totals		Top 4 'P Points' in each year							
		Year 5		Year 6		Year 7		Year 8	
Aln	38,352	1	Arthur B	1	Alexander U	1	Duncan G	1	Anna O
Coquet	38,266	2	Archie H	2	Thea H	2	Oliver S	2	Esme B
Tweed	38,208	3	Sophie C	3	Joseph R	3	Anna F	3	Alex G
Wansbeck	39,289	4	Stuart H	4	Owen B	4	James H	4	Hayden D

QEHS Youth Theatre

QEHS Youth Theatre presents Lionel Bart's **Oliver!** You don't want to miss it!

- Dates: Thursday 30th January, Friday 31st January & Saturday 1st February
- Time: Doors will open at 7.00 pm and refreshments will be served by the QEHS PTFA. The show starts at 7.30pm
- Prices: £10 for an adult ticket and £6.50 for under 18s.
- See our [website](#) for more information and tickets.



KS2 Play Updates

Mr Rutherford-Orrock and Miss Bell have launched new plans for lunchtime with KS2 - the new approach will start from Monday. We have invested in new outdoor play equipment which is very exciting. The MUGA and yards will be zoned off into different areas which will help pupils to make positive choices around their social time. This will include space for drawing/reading, tech decks, larger yard games such as Connect 4, skipping and hula hoops as well as board games. New Year 7

'Breaktime Buddies' will be on the yards to support pupils at lunchtime. We'll also have 'Feel Good Fridays' with music, dance and special activities! We hope KS2 enjoy the new play time plans and make good use of the new equipment available for them.

Request for old football boots

Our supply of boots here in the PE department is running low, and we rely on donations to keep our boot bank running. Therefore, we are appealing to anybody who has any old (studded) football or rugby boots that they no longer want so that they can be recycled and used by those wishing to use the [boot bank](#). We are particularly in need of sizes 6-9. Thank you in advance.



Trips News

Residential Update

As part of our commitment to 'Great Experiences', we offer a wide range of residential experiences. I have attached an overview of the current offer, including some planned trips for next year, so that parents/carers and pupils can see what's coming up. We offer a wide range of support for families as we want all trips to be fully inclusive. This includes our Pupil Support Fund (applications can be made online), flexible payment plans and adjusted payment schedules for pupils in receipt of free school meals.

Cancelling a place on a trip – important guidance for parents/carers

If a pupil decides they no longer wish to participate on a trip, any cancellations will only be effective once received in writing from the parent/carer. School must be informed of any cancellations as soon as possible. In the event that a pupil is no longer able to attend a trip after a deposit or further monies have been paid, then any possible refund will only be considered once the trip has been completed. Deposits collected for trips are done so according to the contract the school has with tour operators or external suppliers and are therefore non-refundable in most cases.

In the event that a replacement cannot be found for a pupil's place on the trip, then parents/carers may be liable for any costs already committed to by the school with tour operators or external suppliers. The amount of refund, if any, is dependent on how late the pupil is withdrawn from the activity, whether a replacement pupil can be found and what costs have already been met by the school which cannot be reclaimed. Any non-recoverable costs resulting from the withdrawal will be deducted from any refund available. Any refund would be subject to the costs of processing transactions.

Online Safety Update

Tips to Promote Positive Body Image

Concerns around social media influence in particular and the negative effects of this influence on body image for girls and boys have been around for years. In the age of generative AI this can only increase. Social feeds are awash with photorealistic images and they're all the same: so-called perfect body, composition, beauty. There's nothing in the way of different body shapes, diversity in people of colour etc. Simply speaking, AI can be very biased.

Internet Matters have some great, practical advice for parents about self-image, body image and identity which you can find [HERE](#).

Attendance – top 3!

Attendance has been very good this week with **96%** 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 st form class 98%	2 nd form class 97%	3 rd form class 96%
5-MDO	7-IBO, 7-PHA, 7-PES, 6-MBE, 5-ZSC, 5-EKI, 5-FHA	7-AMG, 6-RAL, 6-JJO, 6-FHI

Club News

Band Camp

This term's Band Camp project is underway with two different groups working on ensemble skills to put together a rock or pop song. A reminder that our extra-curricular music provision has started for this term and pupils are encouraged to get involved and try something new. We are so lucky to have such an excellent music offer in our schools. Thank you to Miss Tindall and her team!

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>

Upcoming Dates

Date	Event	Who
Tuesday 28 January	Year 6 SATs Information Evening (sign-up here)	Year 6
Tuesday 28 January	Year 5 First Aid Training	Year 5

Tuesday 28 January	Queen's Hall Folk Music Project 2	Group – all years
Wednesday 29 January	Year 6 First Aid Training	Year 6
Wednesday 29 January	Lunar New Year Menu	All year groups
Thursday 30 January	Young Green Briton Challenge	Year 7
Thursday 30 January	Year 8 First Aid Training	Year 8
Friday 31 January	Year 7 First Aid Training	Year 7
Friday 31 January	Head of School Award Breakfast – Aiming High!	Winners
Saturday 1 February – Saturday 8 February	KS3 Ski trip	Year 7 and 8 (group)
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
Monday 17 February	REA Day – enrichment	Years 5 and 7
Wednesday 19 February	REA Day – enrichment	Years 6 and 8
Thursday 20 February	HMS PTA Spring Discos (sign-up here)	All year groups
Monday 3 March	Year 5 visit to Great North Museum	Year 5

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-Orrock
Heads of Key Stage: Mr Scott and Mr Rutherford-Orrock
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).