



Welcome to the latest edition of the Hexham Middle School newsletter, at the end of a busy, productive and enjoyable first half-term, which seems to have flown by. Very well done to our Year 5s who have settled in brilliantly, and of course to our other year groups for continuing to work hard and engage well with all that HMS has to offer. As you'll see below, a lot has been going on over the past eight weeks. As ever, I'm grateful to our staff who so readily go above and beyond to provide such wonderful opportunities for our pupils. And a special thank you to the parents in our PTA, who willingly give up so much of their own time to put on fun and enjoyable activities and raise much needed funds for the school. Have an enjoyable half term break with your sons and daughters and thank you for your continued support.



Congratulations to our winners of the Junior Platform X Project. They visited the Discovery Centre in Newcastle last term and won. We are currently planning their follow up trip to Central Station. We have also won a 3D printer for the school.



Harvest – West Northumberland Food Bank

This year for Harvest, our wider school community collected items for West Northumberland Foodbank. A significant amount of food stuffs and other items were blessed by Reverend David Goodall (Trinity Church) and graciously received by Sam Gilchrist. We trust that these will help support many families and friends with the Hexham and wider Tynedale Valley region. Many thanks to the generous donations of our wider school community.

Head Girl Foreword

Hi, my name is Halle and I'm Head Girl this year. I hope everyone has had a great first half term at HMS and that the year 5 pupils have settled in nicely. I would like to let you know that if you have any queries or concerns, you can bring them forward to me and I will sort it out. If you have any ideas for the Christmas term please let me know because I'd love to hear them. Have a brilliant holiday.

House Plus Totals

ALN —318 points

Coquet —389points

Wansbeck —315 points

Tweed—268 points

In this edition:

- Tynemouth Trip
- Pupil Democracy
- Wider enrichment
- Puzzles page
- Pastoral news
- Leading by example
- Sports Update

Looking ahead for diaries

- Hexham Christmas Lights switch on - **23 November**
- UK Parliament Week - **12-16 November**
- Open Book Night (4-6pm) / NSPCC E-safety session for parents (5pm) - **12 November**
- Year 6 Parents Evening - **19/21 November**
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Attendance

Year 5 - 96.9%

Year 6 - 96.8%

Year 7 - 95.4%

Year 8 - 96.7%

Teaching and Learning



Year 6 Tynemouth Trip

Thanks to the support of our school's PTA, year six enjoyed a sunny and warm day in Tynemouth this half term as part of their study of the novel Kingdom By The Sea in English lessons. As well as visiting locations from the novel, they wrote poetry in the sand, beach combed like the characters in the novel and described the settings using figurative language. In addition, pupils studied locations which were hit by air raids during the Second World War and linked this to recent learning in their



Shadow Puppetry Workshop—Queen's Hall

Some of our Year 5 pupils visited Queen's Hall to work alongside an artist to make their own shadow puppets and perform a little show. There was an opportunity to add sounds to their performance aswelll using a selection of instruments. Those attending, really enjoyed the practical nature of the workshop. They also said the artist was funny!

Pupil Democracy

In our first half term, some pupils have been elected onto either the School Parliament or Cabinet Council. At Hexham Middle School, each from group has two Cabinet Councillors that form a team of 32 members. Each year group has 4 members of School Parliament. Each year group also has a 'Chief Whip'. The system adopted is intended to mirror what happens in the current British political establishment of local and national politics. Cabinet Councillors are expected to field any suggestions or concerns that their constituent tutees have and these can be passed onto their year group MPs who debate proposals. MPs have voting rights and will move forward motions and

suggest these ideas to the Senior Leadership Team (SLT). During the year, MPs will have the chance to present their proposals to the SLT and then report back to the students.

Parliament will meet once every half term in Beaumont Library to discuss any matters arising. Recently, all elected representatives were presented with badges by County Councillor, Trevor



Explore lessons. One of the highlights of the day had to be enjoying sausage and chips on the green, although the seagulls tried their best to intervene! Many thanks to all who were involved in planning and facilitating such a memorable day.



Wider Curriculum Enrichment



Evacuation Day

As part of our history curriculum this term our year 6 pupils are studying 'A Child's War.' Pupils came to school on the day dressed in WW2 costume (as did many of the staff). Everyone looked great. Year 6 pupils were asked to pack an evacuation box. The time and effort that went into both of these was excellent.

Our pupils really enjoyed experiencing what it might have been like to be evacuated to the countryside and have gone on to produce some lovely pieces of writing as a result.

Year 5 Team Building Skills

Our year 5 pupils spent a very active afternoon taking part in a range of outdoor activities aimed at improving their team-building skills. Everyone had a great time and thankfully the rain held off!

A huge thanks to all of the people we have had into school so far this half term; it really has enriched our curriculum.



A Frog called Woânda

Year 5 and 6 pupils recently saw a premiere performance of a theatre production by Theatre Sans Frontiere. A Frog Called Woânda (une grenouille qui s'appelle Woânda) is based on a true story. Shadow puppetry, excellent acting and intimate music on stage made for an amusingly engaging experience. Pupils were also treated to an after school talk with the actors and Woânda. Year 5 saw the production in English, whereas year 6 put their linguistic skills to the test, watching the performance in French.

Other news in Key Stage 2

Already this term, we have welcomed a variety of visitors into our school. They have both informed and entertained us. Firstly, we had M and M theatre productions with their production of 'The Secret Garden.' This classic literary piece, by Frances Hodgson Burnett, was brought to life in a

fun and culturally appropriate way. Pupils were treated to an explanation of how the set was constructed, how lighting and sound technical support is achieved

Our second visitors for KS2 were the NSPCC who delivered their 'Stay Safe, Speak Out' assembly and workshops to all of our key stage two classes.

Just to say thank you

Pupils and staff at HMS have been invited to make their own poppies from reused and recycled materials as part of this year's Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal. In our first week back after the half term holiday, we will be holding a commemorative assembly inviting all the school community to come together and honour those that have served, been

injured or lost their lives for our country. Mr Carney has kindly offered to oversee the development of a display in Fellside Hall.

Lest we forget!



We have had an extremely busy start to the year with fixtures and a huge number of students have represented the school already. So far this year we have competed in hockey, football, netball and tag rugby.

Year 5 have made a tremendous start to their sporting careers at HMS. This success was showcased in a string of high quality netball performances against local schools and a football match where they opened their account for the season with a very impressive 12-2 win. Very exciting times ahead.

Year 6 have had an action packed few weeks with a number of fixtures in a short amount of time. Year 6 girls impressed in both hockey and netball but in a recent cup match the year 6 girls footballers stole the headlines with a huge 3.0 win. Similar to the girls the boys have had a lot of success in a number of sports but a dramatic 3.2 win in the cup was topped off with a contender from goal of the season with a 20 yard free kick straight in the top corner.

Year 7 hockey was outstanding in a recent fixture with HMS boys putting in an incredible display in their very first game. The girls have also shown remarkable improvements in netball this year and with a strong number of students attending training weekly it looks like an exciting year ahead.

Year 8 boys are currently unbeaten in the league and are yet to concede a league goal this season thanks to a combination of hard work and skill leading to the boys scoring 17 goals in just 3 matches. Incredible start. Year 8 girls also continued their impressive displays on the hockey pitch in recent fixtures and are about to embark on their national cup football fixtures. Sports leaders



Sports Update

also help to run clubs daily and help in all our events. A huge thank you to every single student for their efforts this year.



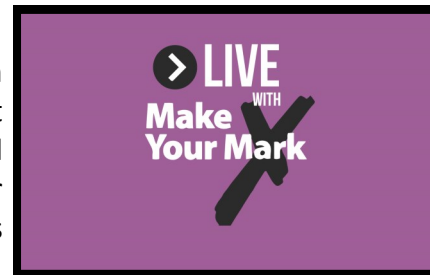
Sporting Clubs- Staff at HMS provide a range of extra-curricular sporting activities. Details can be found on our school website.



Wider Curriculum Enrichment

#Make your mark (KS3 National Youth Politics)

On the 9 November, the UK Youth Parliament will come together in the House of Commons to debate (as part of UK Parliament Week) the five most voted for issues by pupils across the United Kingdom to campaign on. KS3 Pupils at Hexham Middle School had their chance to vote on the 10 issues. Voting of this nature teaches our pupils the role that democracy plays in society.



Are we 'Free to Be'?

Anne Frank Trust has led a whole key stage series of workshops called 'Free to Be' over two days using stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination as vehicles for debate. Year 7 and 8 pupils got the chance to reflect on hate-related bullying issues that can be faced by others in today's society. The sessions

unpicked potential misconceptions and encouraged pupils to develop their critical thinking skills about their own views and those that they encounter everyday. There are further workshops planned in Autumn Half-Term 2 for 8 pupils to act as ambassadors and produce a video resource for all pupils to benefit from.

Year 7 - "Read The Riot Act."

Year 7 pupils enjoyed an energetic, fun and interactive production intended to inspire young people to choose safe and sustainable travel options and raise awareness of the range of benefits to young people who choose to be independent and sustainable travellers. From walking and cycling to school or travelling by bus and train, 'Why Queue' uses humour, music, multi-media and popular culture to help students understand all the different travel options available to them.

Jeans for Genes Day: Assemblies were led by Mrs Gregory to raise awareness of the work undertaken to support families of children born with life-altering genetic disorders. We raised the grand total of **£422.36**. Thank you to all those that helped contribute towards this, including those that helped to bake delicious cakes and tray bakes.

Job Vacancy: Newsletter Team Members (all year groups)

Hexham Middle School would like to invite any interested pupils from all year groups to join a Newsletter team. We are specifically looking for keen photographers, interviewers, IT specialists, artists, an Editor in Chief and Assistant Editors. This is a fantastic opportunity for pupils to

develop their team working skills and produce a half-termly newsletter. If you consider yourself a future journalist, have a love for the written word, or simply want to be part of committed team, we would like to hear from you.

To get involved write a letter outlining what you think a newsletter for Hexham Middle School

Children's Heart Unit Foundation (CHUF)

KS2 pupils raised **£410.60** for CHUF at the end of the last academic year. Well done to all involved and to those that helped by way of donation.

New Buds Quad Squad

Further to our recent email requesting donations to help resource a new environmental lunchtime club, we would like to say a huge thank you for the items received so far. We have got plenty of things to keep the New Buds busy with.



Puzzle Page

During the half term holiday, feel free to stretch and challenge yourself to the numeracy and literacy puzzles on this page. Any pupils that submit answers by **Friday 9th November by 12:30pm** can be entered into a prize draw (Early lunch pass for 1 week plus 3 friends).

- ◇ 1 puzzle solved = 1 House plus
- ◇ 2 puzzles solved = 2 House pluses
- ◇ 3 puzzles solved = 3 House pluses
- ◇ 3 puzzles and mindfulness task = 4 House pluses

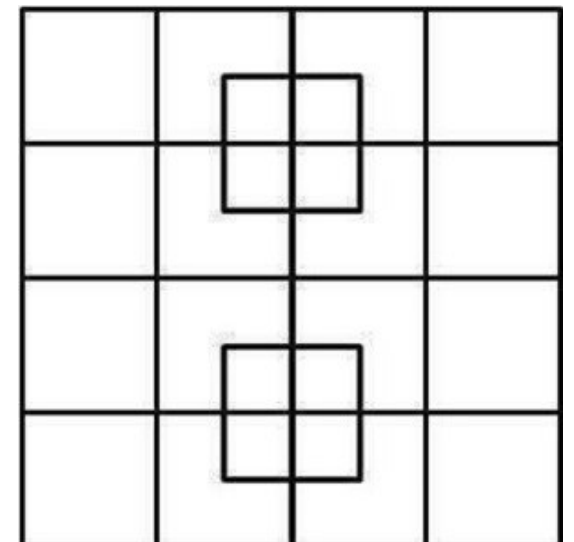
Challenge 1: Solve the following -

$$9 - 3 \div \frac{1}{3} + 1 = ?$$

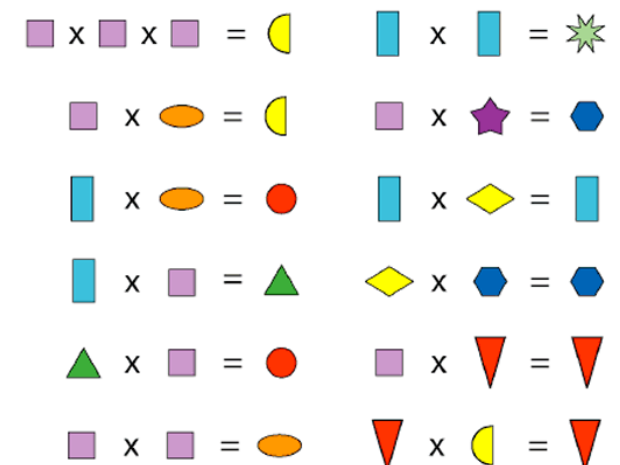
Día de Muertos (Day of the Dead) begins on 31 October. Where as Hallowe'en is a dark night of terror and mischief, Day of the Dead festivities unfold over two days in an explosion of colour and life-affirming joy. Sure, the theme is death, but the point is to demonstrate love and respect for deceased family members. In towns and cities throughout Mexico, revellers don funky makeup and costumes, hold parades and parties, sing and dance, and make offerings to lost loved ones. Why not complete the mindfulness art task below?



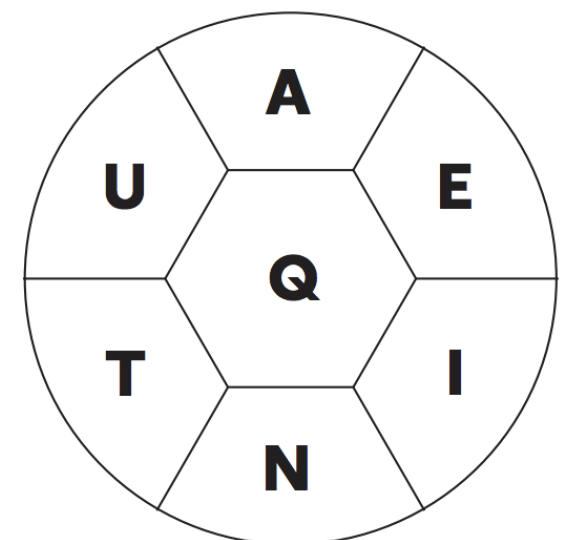
Challenge 2: How many squares can you see?



Challenge 3: What is the numerical value of each shape?



Challenge 4: Make as many words as you can out of the letters.



Head Boy Commentary

A lot has happened in this school year so far. There have been new teachers and year five students joining us. What with the Student Leaders application processes, the charity events, such as the Jeans for Genes day and the West Northumberland Food Bank donations, not to mention the open evenings and the PTA film night, this half term has been busier than you might think.

Recently, my year 8 class was told that each of us would have an assigned French pen-pal, acquired through Hexham's partnership with Noyon. I am looking forward to communication with my pen-pal via the post. Also, fire and rescue workers gave a talk to us in assembly about safety on Bonfire Night: a timely reminder.

Our end-of-year targets have been set, and the school photos have been taken—at least they didn't have the tickly duster to make people smile this time. There are many different clubs that have started, from sports to music clubs to Sugar Craft Club. Finally, everyone in the school—teachers and pupils—have been assigned the task of creating a homemade poppy to go on the Hexham Middle School cascade of poppies, inspired by the original display, created in 2014. This year will mark 100 years since the end of World War 1.

I hope that everyone has had a great year so far, and is looking forward to the rest of the year. I wish everybody a happy Half Term holiday.

Felix Hayler-Hughes

Pastoral Leaders' Column

The Great Outdoors

Please can we ask all parents and carers to make sure children bring into school on 12 November to a coat with a hood every day. We are going to try to allow pupils to stay out to play at breaks and lunches as much as possible this year as this is good for them to get fresh air and not to be stuck indoors. We want pupils to be able to stay as dry looking forward to possible even if there is a little rain.

NSPCC E-safety Workshop

We have secured NSPCC coming into school on 12 November to provide e-safety training for parents and carers of our pupils. It can be for some a difficult task trying to keep abreast of new technologies and the ever-changing habits of young people using them. We are confident that attendance at this training will help empower others

Aztec Day



Year 5 have been enjoying their themed Explore day learning more about Aztec culture, history and life from a child's perspective.

We will update you in the Autumn 2 edition with a review of their day and how they have progressed in acquiring greater depth knowledge and understanding of the Aztecs.



Leading by example looks like ...

Congratulations to any KS3 pupils who have been selected to take on a leadership role.

Head Prefects:

Cara Halliburton
Elizabeth Little

Deputy Prefects:

Fin Turner
Alexander Heard

Other Prefects:

Eva Thirlaway
Emma Dransfield
Luciana Armstrong
Ebony Lough
Niamh McCauley
Ellie Lambert
Annabel Wakeman
Hannah Clark

Digital Leaders

Luciana Armstrong
Luke Galloway
Daniel Hale
Ben Hindmarch
Zach Maurice
Grace McIlvenny
Sam McVay
Stella Morris
Rose Nicholson
Benedict Sanderson

Head Pupils

Felix Hayler Hughes
Will Hulbert
Scarlett Scott
Halle Seymour

House Captaincy Team

Aln:

Martha Andersen (Captain)
Matthew De Vallans-Toor
(Vice Captain)

Coquet:

Lewis Davison (Captain)
Grace Robson (Vice Captain)

Wansbeck:

Hugo McNichol (Captain)
Alice Di Lullo (Vice Captain)

Tweed:

James Forster (Captain)
Sam McVay (Vice Captain)

Language Ambassadors

Louis Byrom
William Hulbert
Ebony Lough
Oliver Lowe
Jasmine Wilkinson

Mandarin Lessons at HMS

After half term, an after-school Mandarin club will be starting. We are very excited for the group of pupils that have expressed an interest and signed up for the 12 week programme. In conjunction with the Confucius Institute at

Newcastle University, pupils will get the opportunity to learn Mandarin from a native speaker. We are hoping to be able to run a second phase of lessons following this initial pilot.



School Parliament

Members of Parliament

Year 5: Charlie Maw (Chief Whip), Lily-Ann Brown, George Laidler, and Arthur Di Lullo

Year 6: Alex Martin (Chief Whip), Grace Robertson, Ania Stobbart and Katie Burt

Year 7: Benedict Sanderson (Chief Whip), Stella Morris, Faye Ronnie and Jack Beech

Year 8: Edan Osborne (Chief Whip), Sophie Jones, Robert Scott and Erin Smith

Cabinet Councillors

Year 5: Lexi Gaskin, Alex McDonough, James Toward, Lucas Jopling, Martha Coan, Sasha Farley, James Robson, Edie Long.

Year 6: Joe Elstob, Libby Johnson - Short, Josh Newton, Melissa Brown, Hannah Ferguson, Lucas Newbery, Logan Cannon, Jack Weatherley

Year 7: Tom Dyer, Robert Conley, Oliver Robson, Wilf Daykin, Isabel Gaines, Martha Cannon, Evie Dando

Year 8: Luciana Armstrong, Callum Russell, Fred McGlynn, Callum Steel, Thomas Hindle, Callum Short, Stefan Balan