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Produced by Hexham Middle School, June 2019

Further copies are available from the School Office or  
in PDF format downloadable from the HMS website –

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

## Aims, Ethos and Values

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"Outstanding eagerness to promote good learning"\*

This is a friendly, welcoming school, built on foundations of mutual respect and care for others. We work together to become all we can be.

We share a love of learning and believe in the highest academic standards for everyone. We value education in its broadest sense, knowing that the arts, sport and other opportunities help shape us as individuals and as citizens of the wider world.

We are committed to enabling all of our pupils to develop their knowledge and understanding, skills and mindset, so that they can take their next steps with confidence. Our aim is that every child will grow into a happy, fulfilled and successful adult.

\*From the Charter granted to the people of Hexham by Queen Elizabeth I, 1599.

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We were very pleased with our successful Ofsted inspection in April 2019. Some of the quotes below give you a flavour of what they found. Please see the school website for the full report.

*Teachers "promote positive behaviour, as reflected in the very good conduct and constructive attitudes that pupils display in lessons, assemblies and at social times."*

*The "Pastoral Team know their pupils extremely well [...] and are receptive to pupils' wellbeing."*

*"Pupils say that bullying is rare and that staff are effective in addressing any instances of bullying." Pupils say "they feel safe in school".*

*"Leaders pursue concerns over pupils' welfare in a prompt and determined manner."*

*"Leaders and teachers provide pupils with a wide variety of planned enrichment activities to build cultural capital and develop pupils' self-esteem."*

*"Pupils attend a range of clubs, from gardening to sport, and visit art galleries and places of historical interest."*

*"Heightened engagement with universities and employers is making pupils more aware of the connections between their learning and the wider world."*

*"Standards of attainment are consistently well above those seen nationally."*

# Parents' Guide 2019

## Key Information 2019–20

### Contact Us

#### General Enquiries

School Office, Hexham Middle School, Wanless Lane, Hexham, Northumberland, NE46 1BU

Telephone: 01434 602533

Email: [admin@hexhammiddle.org.uk](mailto:admin@hexhammiddle.org.uk)

Parent Correspondence Email: [parentcorrespondence@hexhammiddle.org.uk](mailto:parentcorrespondence@hexhammiddle.org.uk)

Executive Headteacher: Mr G Atkins

Deputy Headteachers: Mrs J Minto and Mrs A Frankish

Assistant Headteacher: Mr L Watters

#### Appointments with Senior Staff

Mrs J Scobie, Office Manager: 01434 602 533 (email: [admin@hexhammiddle.org.uk](mailto:admin@hexhammiddle.org.uk))

### Term Dates and Holidays

<b>Start of Autumn term</b>	Tuesday 3 September 2019
Last day of half-term	Thursday 24 October 2019
Return to school	Monday 4 November 2019
Last day of term	Friday 20 December 2019
<b>Start of Spring term</b>	Tuesday 7 January 2020
Last day of half-term	Thursday 13 February 2020
Return to school	Monday 24 February 2020
Last day of term	Friday 3 April 2020
<b>Start of Summer term</b>	Monday 20 April 2020
Last day of half-term	Friday 22 May 2020
Return to school	Monday 1 June 2020
Last day of term	Friday 17 July 2020

<b>Staff Training Days</b>
Monday 2 September 2019
Friday 25 October 2019
Friday 14 February 2020

<b>Public Holiday</b>
Friday 8 May 2020

*Dates correct at June 2019*

## School Life

### Timing of the School Day

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<b>Form Time</b>	<b>8.45am</b>
Period 1	9.00am
Period 2	10.00am
<b>Break</b>	<b>11.00am</b>
Period 3	11.15am
<b>Lunch/Assembly/Form Time</b>	<b>12.15pm</b>
Period 4	1.30pm
Period 5	2.30pm
<b>End of school day</b>	<b>3.30pm</b>

### Structure of the School

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The school is organised in four teams: Pastoral, Curriculum, Teaching and Learning, and Support Services.

#### Pastoral Team

**Led by Mrs A Frankish, Deputy Headteacher**

The Pastoral Team is responsible for the support and guidance of young people and their general wellbeing. Members of this team are here to work with pupils, and you as parents/carers, to ensure that we work together to try to remove barriers to learning, and ensure that your child feels happy and supported at school.

Any simple questions can be sent via a note in your child's planner to their form teacher. If you have any general enquiries about your son or daughter's wellbeing and/or anything that may affect their learning, then you should contact the Key Stage Leader. They will be able to discuss more complex issues with you and advise you with regard to appropriate strategies to support your son/daughter.

#### Key Stage Leaders

Key Stage 2 (Years 5 and 6): Mrs F Cave

Key Stage 3 (Years 7 and 8): Mr K Barry

#### Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

Our Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Co-ordinator (SENDCo) is Mrs Frankish, and the Assistant SENDCo is Mrs Adams.

# Parents' Guide 2019

## Curriculum Team

**Led by Mr Watters, Assistant Headteacher**

The Curriculum Team is responsible for the effectiveness of the school's curriculum and for all academic events in school relating to achievement and progression including:

- reviewing and organising the curriculum and timetable
- monitoring and evaluating pupil performance
- assessment and target setting
- monitoring the academic performance of departments
- intervention to raise achievement
- curriculum enrichment activities

If you have a general enquiry about your child's progress in lessons it should be directed, in the first instance, to their subject teacher via a note in the planner or a telephone call/letter/email. More complex subject based issues can be dealt with by contacting the Curriculum Leader.

Curriculum Leaders are listed below:

Maths	Mr L Watters
English	Mrs N Roff
PE, Art, Music	Mr P Gaines
Geography, History, French, PSHE, RE	Mr Freeman-Myers
Science, Computing, Technology	Ms C Carruthers

## Teaching and Learning

**Led by Mrs J Minto, Deputy Headteacher**

This team aims to improve the quality of teaching and learning through a process of continuing professional development and monitoring of learning within the classroom.

## Support Services

**Led by Ms S Sparke, Chief Financial Officer, and Ms E Simpson, Trust Business Manager**

The Support Services team manages resources such as school catering, site and facilities management, administrative services and finance.

## Communication with Parents/Carers

The staff and trustees of our school wish to work co-operatively with parents/carers and other members of the community to ensure the school provides a high quality service and meets the needs of all pupils.

## Information from the school

The school provides information to parents/carers in the following ways:

### **The school website ([www.hexhammiddleschool.co.uk](http://www.hexhammiddleschool.co.uk))**

This provides up-to-date information which includes:

- News
- Publications
- School policies
- The school calendar

### **Facebook/Twitter**

Hexham Middle School has Facebook and Twitter pages which are updated regularly.

- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/HexhamMiddle/>
- Twitter: @HexhamMiddle <https://twitter.com/HexhamMiddle>

### **Schoolcomms/School Gateway**

We use a communication system called Schoolcomms to help us communicate more effectively with home. It allows you to receive letters and reminders from school by email or text, directly to your chosen e-mail and mobile account.

Schoolcomms has a lot of extra features and will allow you to make online payments for dinner money, school trips etc. (see page 12).

You do not need to register for Schoolcomms as it links directly with our school system (SIMS). Once we have students registered on SIMS, and we have your correct email and mobile number, you will automatically receive the messages we send out.

Schoolcomms has a free app that parents/carers can download called School Gateway. The app allows you to get messages in a quick and easy format to your mobile and helps the school save money as all texts sent to the app are free.

If you have any queries regarding access to Schoolcomms please contact:

Mrs J Scobie, Office Manager, on 01434 602533 or email: [admin@hexhammiddle.org.uk](mailto:admin@hexhammiddle.org.uk)

### **School newsletter**

This is produced regularly and is sent electronically to parents/carers, and is also available on our website. Our newsletter aims to inform parents/carers of the success of our pupils and forthcoming events.

### **Letters, publications and other documents**

From time to time we will write to you with further information, or invitations to parents' evenings or events.

## Marking and feedback

Providing good quality, regular feedback to pupils is essential in helping them to improve their work and reach their potential. We would encourage all parents/carers to look at their child's work regularly. There will also be 'Open Book' events over the year where parents/carers will have the opportunity to come into school and see their child's books and work. If you wish to ask any questions about marking or feedback in a particular subject then please contact the subject teacher in the first instance, followed by the Curriculum Leader if your issue has not been addressed.

## Contacting the school

We would encourage you to contact us with any issues, questions or concerns that cannot be addressed through the normal channels of communication noted above. As you will appreciate, in a school of almost 500 pupils, it is not possible for one person to deal with all enquiries so it is important for us to direct you to the most appropriate person. Please use the guide on the following page to help you.

Nature of Enquiry	Contact	
General questions about your child's work, progress or homework.	Subject teachers.	By note via your child or by contacting the office on 01434 602533, or via <a href="mailto:parentcorrespondence@hexhammiddle.org.uk">parentcorrespondence@hexhammiddle.org.uk</a>
A concern about your child's progress or experience in a particular subject.	Curriculum Leaders.	As above.
A concern about your child's general welfare.	Form teacher or, for more serious concerns, Key Stage Leader.	As above.
Other matters not listed above.	Main Office.	Contact the office on 01434 602533 and we will direct your enquiry to the appropriate person.

If you wish to make a complaint, you can find our complaints procedure on our website.

## Parents' Evenings and Reports

Parents/carers will receive an annual written report and termly attainment levels from each subject teacher. There will also be the opportunity to meet with subject teachers over the course of the year to discuss your child's progress.

## Attendance

Attendance is a vital part of academic success. Attendance should be as close to 100% as possible, as missing lessons can have a big impact on progress. Excellent attendance improves learning and success. If a pupil's attendance causes concern, you will be contacted and a meeting at school may be necessary. You should note that any further absences may not be authorised by the school, however this will depend on the circumstances. A doctor's note may be requested if there is persistent absence due to illness.

## Absence

If your son/daughter is too ill to attend school, please contact the school on 01434 602533 between 8.00am and 9.00am. When calling, please provide as much information as possible including: the pupil's full name and form group, the nature of the illness, and the name of the person calling. Please remember, the school is responsible for authorising the absence, not parents/carers, so there may be follow up calls from school staff.

# Parents' Guide 2019

We aim to contact all parents/carers of pupils on the first day of absence if no contact has been made.

Please try to make appointments for the dentist and doctor out of school hours.

## Leave of Absence During Term Time

Children of school-age who are registered at a school must, by law, attend that school regularly. Regular school attendance for a child is a legal requirement of all parents/carers.

There will be occasions when a child has to miss school, for example if she or he is unwell, and parents/carers are expected to exercise their judgement on whether their child is fit to attend school if there are signs and symptoms of illness. Any other absences should be kept to an absolute minimum. In particular, parents/carers do not have the right to take their children out of school during term time in order to go on holiday.

Government regulations state that a headteacher 'may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances'. The Hexham Partnership of Schools discourage parents/carers from arranging any events during term time and will, as a rule, state that leave of absence will not be granted unless there are exceptional circumstances that might justify it, e.g. forces personnel on leave from a foreign posting, or evidence provided by an employer that states leave cannot be accommodated during school holidays without significant consequence.

A parent/carer requesting leave of absence during term time should make the application in writing at least two weeks in advance. A Leave of Absence Request Form and the Hexham Partnership of Schools' Policy for Leave of Absence during Term Time are available from the school office or can be downloaded from our website.

## School Uniform

<b>All Pupils</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• School sweatshirt with the HMS school logo</li><li>• White polo shirt</li><li>• Plain black/grey formal school skirt, trousers or shorts (denim, leggings or legging type trousers, casual trousers are not acceptable)</li><li>• Plain, black low heeled polishable shoes or ankle boots. No trainers, sandals or canvas shoes.</li><li>• No branded shoes such as Vans, Adidas, Nike, Puma or Converse*</li></ul>
<b>General</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Jewellery – watches and stud earrings are acceptable. One stud earring per ear lobe is acceptable.</li><li>• Small, plain, black belts are acceptable.</li><li>• No make-up.</li><li>• No nail varnish.</li><li>• No extreme hairstyles (no shaved patterns/areas, no dyed hair).</li><li>• Uniform should be appropriate both with regard to the school's Uniform Policy and in the judgement of senior staff.</li></ul>

*\* for health and safety reasons pupils will be expected to change their footwear for PE lessons.*

The school uniform and PE requirements are available to purchase from Greggs Sports in Hexham.



## HMS PE Kit

### Compulsory Items

#### Indoor PE

- Black football-style shorts or black full length Lycra sports leggings
- Green HMS logo short-sleeved t-shirt
- For indoor PE, dance and gymnastics, the children will be in bare feet.

#### Outdoor PE

- Black football-style shorts or black full length Lycra sports leggings
- Green HMS logo short-sleeved t-shirt
- Green knee-length football socks
- Green HMS logo hooded top

#### Footwear for PE

- Astro Turf-style trainers with a good grip

### Additional items

The following items are needed from September until October and again from February until Easter for our invasion games units, extra-curricular school clubs and competitive inter-school fixtures:

1. **Football boots** – moulded football boots are recommended as they are more comfortable on the feet especially if you are not used to wearing them.
2. Age-appropriate **shin pads** for hockey and football.
3. A **mouth guard** is strongly advised for hockey and rugby units of learning and extra-curricular clubs.

### Optional Items for Outdoor PE: Cold Weather Backup

**Please be aware that from November to February all PE lessons will be indoors.**

We like to get out as much as possible at HMS and make best use of our excellent outdoor spaces. If the weather is cold we would like pupils to be prepared to go outside by bringing suitable sporting layers. We encourage all pupils to wear a long-sleeved base layer top to go under their t-shirt and plain black polyester close-fitting tracksuit bottoms. We would advise against cotton jogger-style bottoms as they become very heavy and cold when wet and don't allow pupils to perform their best.

## PE Tips

- PE bag should be large enough to accommodate all kit, boots and trainers
- Write the pupil's surname along the foot of PE socks in permanent pen
- Write names on the inside of hems as well as on labels
- For health and safety reasons pupils will be expected to change their footwear for PE lessons

## Further guidance

In order to assist parents/carers and pupils to comply with the school's uniform code, further clarification is given below.

### School sweatshirt

- Students must wear/bring a school sweatshirt to school every day.
- No other sweatshirts must be worn within school.
- No cardigans or jumpers must be worn.
- If an additional layer is needed it should be a coat, jacket or plain zipped sweatshirt. It must be removed upon arrival at school.

## School trousers/skirts/shorts

- Formal school trousers do not include black jeans, black canvas trousers of any type, or cotton chino trousers.
- The trousers should not have any rivets/studs in the pockets.
- Trousers should also be full length and not rolled up at the ankle. Leggings or leggings-style trousers of any type are not acceptable.
- Skirts and shorts should be of a respectable length. Very short, tight, tube style skirts are not appropriate. Knee-length skirts and shorts are appropriate.

## Hosiery

- Plain grey, white or black socks or tights.

## Hairstyles

- No extreme hairstyles (no shaved patterns or areas, no dyed hair)

## Mobile phones

Pupils are allowed to bring a mobile phone to school. However they must be switched off when arriving at school. They must not be used/checked during the school day. If parents/carers need to urgently contact their child during the school day please contact the school office (01434 602533). If a matter is urgent pupils can contact parents/carers at break or lunch from the school office. Mobile phones are brought at pupils' own risk and school does not accept any responsibility for the loss or damage of mobile phones.

**Please remember to put pupil names on belongings.**

## Equipment Required for School

It is expected that pupils should have the appropriate equipment to carry out their lessons at school/activities after school, this includes:

This includes:

- A bag, large enough to carry an A4 file and other books etc. The bag should be brought to school every day.

The bag should contain a:

- Reading book
- Pencil case
- Planner (provided at the start of the year by school)
- Black pen, blue pen, green pen and spares
- Pencil and spare
- 30cm ruler
- Rubber
- Glue stick
- Notebook/jotter
- Scientific calculator (KS3 only)
- A4 folder secured with elastic or a zip large enough for a reading book, A4 exercise book(s) and student planner to fit inside (this would normally be made from plastic or fabric)
- Water bottle with sports cap

A separate bag will be needed for their PE kit. Pupils may also bring a small purse-like bag which they can keep with them at all times to carry their mobile phone and purse/wallet.

All equipment should be clearly named.

This equipment is essential for pupils to learn effectively and it allows for a prompt start to lessons.

## Personal Belongings and Lost Property

Personal belongings are the responsibility of pupils. Pupils should not bring valuables or large amounts of money into school.

Mobile phones are brought at pupils' own risk. Pupils are allowed to keep their mobile phone on their person.

**Please note that the school is not responsible for any personal belongings that are lost, stolen or damaged on the premises.**

Please make sure all uniform, PE kit, bags, and folders are named. It is easier to trace the owner of lost property if it is clearly labelled, however lost property can be collected from the school office.

## Pupil Planners

Pupils are given a planner at the start of each academic year. The planner is an important way of communicating between home and school. Pupils should use the planner to record homework, and parents/carers should read and sign it on a weekly basis. The planner will also be signed by the form teacher.

The planner contains a lot of very important information and it would be helpful if parents/carers took time to go through it with their son/daughter. Form teachers will also explain the sections of the planner to their form class.

## Making Payments

Our preference is for you to make online payment for school meals and a range of other resources and activities through the School Gateway website and/or online app (see below). We would encourage you to use online payments where possible as it provides additional security as well as saving the school significant administration time. You will also be able to view school meal balances and purchase details, which are updated on a daily basis.

### Online payments

You will need to activate your School Gateway account using your email address and mobile number that the school holds on record for you:

- Download the app: if you have a smartphone, please download School Gateway from your app store (Android and iPhone). The app shows the same information as the website plus it saves the school money when we send you a text message; **or**
- Visit the website: [www.schoolgateway.com](http://www.schoolgateway.com) and click on 'New User'. You will receive a text message with a PIN number. Use this PIN to log into School Gateway.

If you are having trouble logging in, it may be because the school doesn't have your current email and mobile phone number on record. Please contact the school and we will update your details on our system.

**Please note:** You will need to use the School Gateway website to complete the initial set up for payments using your bank account number and sort code. After this is set up, payments can be made on either the website or the app.

## Other payments

Alternative methods of payment for school meals are detailed below. All other cash and cheque payments should be made as follows:

- Payments for resources, educational visits or school uniform should be placed in one of the dedicated boxes in each building (Fellside, Orchard, and the canteen).
- All payments should be in a sealed envelope with the pupil's name, tutor group, and what the payment is for clearly marked.
- All cheque payments should be made payable to Hexham Middle School.

## School Meals

All of our school meals are freshly prepared on a daily basis, using good quality ingredients. It is our aim to ensure that all pupils can choose from a wide range of healthy, tasty and nutritious meals and products.

A school lunch comprises of two courses: a main meal and a dessert. The current daily cost for a school lunch is £2.50.

There is a very good choice to encourage children to eat a well-balanced diet throughout the day. Our menu is produced in line with the Government's food standards. For those children who bring a packed lunch to school we ask parents to refrain from including sweets, chocolate, crisps or fizzy drinks.

We offer a morning break service which includes a selection of individually priced food and drink. Pupils can also bring their own snack for break.

## Break and Lunchtime Service

### Mid-morning break (11.00am – 11.15am)

- A selection of cereals.
- A selection of savoury items including toast, toasted sandwiches, teacakes, breakfast muffins, crumpets and breakfast sandwiches.
- A variety of fresh fruit and yoghurts.
- A selection of drinks including water, juices and flavoured water.

### Lunchtime service (12.15pm – 1.25pm)

We offer a varied healthy two-course set meal currently costing £2.50 which includes a main course and dessert. A copy of the menu is available on the school website.

The menu includes:

- Daily specials including vegetarian options.
- Filled jacket potatoes.
- Selection of sandwiches with a variety of fillings.
- Salad bowls.
- Hot and cold desserts plus fruit pots, yogurts, and fresh fruit.

Additional items are available to purchase at lunchtime which are individually priced.

- Home baked items e.g. scones, flapjack.
- Selection of fruit juices, milk, milk shakes, smoothies, water and flavoured water.

## Special diets and allergies

If your child has a food allergy or special diet, please complete a Food Allergen/Special Diet Form. Copies of the form are available on our website or from the school office. If your child would normally have a packed lunch we would still like this form to be completed for our records.

Please note: it is recommended that parent/carers supply a medical/dietitian letter to support the special diet requirements as self-diagnosed or personal food preferences are not able to be accommodated. Information relating to your child's individual needs should be discussed with the school and the catering manager prior to your child starting school. The catering manager can be contacted on 01434 606633

## Payment system for school meals

The school operates a biometric cashless school meals system. The biometric system is based on fingertip recognition technology. Every student is issued with an account which allows them to buy food and drink at morning break and lunchtime using their fingertip or pin number.

### Online payments

- Money can be added to the account by online payments via the School Gateway smartphone app or the website (see page 12). School Gateway also enables you to view school meal balances and purchases, and top up school meals money at any time.
- Payments for school meals on School Gateway are set up as a direct debit. Direct debits are used so that School Gateway can instruct your bank to make payments, but this is only ever done when you make a request on either the School Gateway website or the app. Unlike many other direct debits that are in place, this is not a regular monthly payment – you are completely in control of how much is taken and when it is taken, and are able to cancel the arrangement at any time.
- To make a payment click on the Payment Box. Click Add School Meals. There is a minimum payment for school meals of £12.50, equivalent to a week's worth of school lunches, but there is no maximum payment.
- Once you have paid online and the payment has been processed you will receive an email confirming this.
- Payment will be received through School Gateway to your child's school meals account the day you make the payment. However, your bank account may not have the money taken out of it for a few days.

### Cheque and cash payments

- Cheques should be made payable to Hexham Middle School. Please write your child's name on the back of the cheque.
- Cheques or cash should be placed in an envelope and clearly marked with your child's name, form class, and amount.
- Envelopes for school meals are to be put in the cash collection boxes which are located in the Fellside building, Beaumont building, and the Canteen.

## Free school meals

If a pupil qualifies for free school meals, the monetary value of a two-course lunch is added to the account daily and they have total anonymity with the system. If pupils wish to purchase items at morning break or additional items at lunchtime above the free school meal allocation of £2.50, money can be added to their account via School Gateway, cheque or cash.

If you think you may be entitled to free school meals you can apply online (<http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/Education/Schools/Meals.aspx>) or by telephone (01670 623592).

## Account balance

It would be appreciated if pupils' accounts maintain a credit balance at all times. Pupils may ask at the till point for their balance, however we will endeavour to notify pupils if their balance is low or the account has insufficient funds. Contact will be made with parents/carers where insufficient funds are available or there is money owing on the pupil's account.

Pupils leaving school will only be issued a refund if the balance is over £5.00; please request a refund form from the school office.

## Daily spend limit

A daily spend limit can be applied to the account. If you would like to apply a limit, please let the Catering Manager know either by writing it on the cashless envelopes provided or by contacting the kitchen on 01434 606633.

## Data handling

Certain data will be held on the system to enable accurate operation. This will include the pupil's name, tutor group, photo, account balance and meal entitlement. This data is handled under the guidelines of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and only used by parties directly involved with the implementation of the system. If you have any concerns please contact the School Office on 01434 602533.

## School Parliament

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At the start of each year, each tutor group elects a Member of Parliament and a Councillor. The School Parliament meets whenever required and at least once per half term.

## Library Provision

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Library provision at Hexham Middle School is very important to us and we know that the school library is a key way for us to promote a lifelong love of reading. In their time at Hexham Middle School we try to ensure that children have a good choice when choosing books, a dedicated space and quiet time for reading, as well as encouragement and guidance from our librarians and English staff so that we continue to develop their literacy skills. Pupils are encouraged from the moment they enter Hexham Middle School about the importance of reading.

From the start of Year 5 and as pupils move through the school they are given the opportunity to visit the library situated in the Beaumont building. This session takes place once a week during their English lesson. During this time they are able to browse through a wide range of fiction and non-fiction, recommend and review books for others and more importantly are given the time to simply read.

In addition, provision is made for keen readers to become involved in Library Clubs. Enthusiastic readers are also encouraged to try out for the annual Lit Quiz. A selection of Year 7 and 8 pupils compete at a regional level against other schools, answering questions on children's literature. The successful team then goes on to compete at a national level. Hexham Middle School has a strong tradition of doing very well in this competition.

We also organise regular author visits throughout the year.

## Pupil Well-being

### Transfer

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The transition from Year 4 to Year 5 is very important. Senior staff, the Head of Key Stage 2, our SENDCo and our Senior Learning Support Assistant meet with staff from our feeder first schools early in Year 4 to plan for a smooth process of transition. In June, Year 4 children attend an afternoon of rounders which allows them to meet staff and pupils. There is also a transfer day in July where pupils meet their form tutor and spend time with their form group. A bespoke transition programme is planned for any children who may require extra support.

The transition between Year 8 and Year 9 is also very important. The Year 9 team from Queen Elizabeth High School visit HMS to talk to pupils. Parents are invited to open days in Year 7 to find out about the transfer process, the curriculum, and the pastoral support systems.

Year 8 pupils attend three Taster Days where they experience aspects of school life and have some taster lessons to enable them to make some option choices for Year 9. Year 8 pupils are invited to a transfer day in July where they meet their form tutor and spend time with their new tutor group. Additional transfer sessions are organised for pupils who require extra support.

### Mid-year admissions

Once a successful application to Northumberland County Council has been made, you will receive a 'mid-year admission' pack from the school. You will be invited into school along with your son or daughter for an informal tour, which will also give you the opportunity to ask any questions.

### Travelling to/from School: School Buses

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All pupils travelling to school by bus organised by the Integrated Transport Section of Northumberland County Council will receive a bus pass which must be shown to the driver. Currently buses drop off and pick up from the front of the school. You will be informed by the Integrated Transport Unit of your child's pick up point for the beginning and the end of the school day.

### Anti-Bullying

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We have an Anti-Bullying Policy (available on our website) that provides effective procedures for dealing with problems. Please inform the Key Stage Leader if you have any concerns regarding bullying.

### Behaviour

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At Hexham Middle School we believe that discipline is best maintained through the positive approach of praise, encouragement and incentives. To this end we have adopted a policy of Positive Behaviour Management, which stresses the positive recognition of good behaviour balanced by a series of sanctions. Our aim is to create a secure and pleasant atmosphere in which pupils feel able give their best without disruption.

In order to recognise and reward positive behaviour, teachers will use general and individual praise regularly. Rewards will include comments in the Pupil Planner, the issue of a raffle ticket for a termly draw, and the issue of House Plus points.

The vast majority of pupils respond well to the Behaviour Policy. Where pupils fail to display an acceptable standard of behaviour, despite all encouragement to do so, staff will use a staged system of warnings. These can result in a detention being issued. Staff are encouraged to contact parents/carers early should there be any cause for concern. When sanctions are being taken, we feel it is important that the child understands fully that it is the behaviour that is unacceptable and not the child.

Persistent misbehaviour will be referred to the Key Stage Leader or a senior member of staff and contact will normally be made with home. It is important that pupils know never to leave the school premises without permission. We need your co-operation in ensuring your child understands the dangers of doing so.

## Safeguarding and Online Safety

Mrs Frankish, Deputy Headteacher, is the designated person for child protection. She leads training for all staff on a regular basis. All issues regarding child protection are referred to the designated person and she organises follow-up action where appropriate.

If you, as parents/carers, have any concerns you feel are a child protection issue then you can contact Mrs Frankish directly or, if you prefer, your son/daughter's Key Stage Leader and they will liaise with her. Mrs Cave is the deputy designated person for child protection.

### Online Safety

Hexham Middle School takes Online Safety very seriously. We have a detailed Online Safety Policy (available via the school website) that covers all aspects of electronic safety and it is reviewed at least annually.

We aim to educate everyone connected with our school community. In order to maximise the extent of this education, we:

- have annual training for all staff;
- deliver education to the pupils through the PSHE/assembly programme;
- have a dedicated section on the school website which includes the ability to report suspicious online behaviour direct to CEOPs (Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre).

All internet access is logged. Policy Central Enterprise (PCE) software monitors use of desktop PCs and school iPads by pupils and provides reports to senior staff on a weekly basis. All pupils, parents/carers and staff are required to sign the Acceptable Use Policy. This covers aspects such as internet use and equipment use within the school. If there are any significant concerns, pupils are seen and parents/carers contacted as appropriate.

Pupils have guidance notes on Online Safety in their planners which they are required to sign. This contains information on the Acceptable Use Policy, mobile phones and laptops. The school may also send home additional Online Safety advice to parents/carers throughout the year if an issue arises.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the school.



## Medical Information and Medication

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If your son/daughter has a medical condition or if they require to take medication during school hours (e.g. prescription tablets, asthma inhaler), please ensure that the school is informed so an appropriate medical plan can be put in place. It should be noted that due to health and safety implications we cannot give out paracetamol.

If it is necessary for pupils to take medication throughout the school year, parents/carers must complete the 'Administration of Medication to Pupils Agreement between Parents and School' form. This is available on the school's website and from the school office.

If your child has a medical condition and has an Individual Health Plan, please contact the school.

## Emergency Contact

It is vital that we have an up-to-date contact number for parents/carers and an emergency contact for those occasions when a parent/carer cannot be reached. The parents/carers of new Year 5 pupils will receive an emergency contact information form to complete. If any of your details change, please ensure you contact school to inform us of the change.

## Special Educational Needs

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HMS offers support to pupils, parents/carers and teaching staff to help all our pupils access the school curriculum. We have learning support assistants who work in lessons with teaching staff or individually with pupils to meet a range of educational needs from general to specific learning difficulties. As well as supporting and monitoring pupils who have been identified to us at time of transfer, we also assess pupils referred to us by teaching staff as well as parents/carers.

Our Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Co-ordinator (SENDCo) is Mrs Frankish, and the Assistant SENDCo is Mrs Adams.

## Accessibility

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The school is committed to equality of opportunity. We intend that every member of the school community feels a sense of belonging and is valued. We are fully committed to discharging our equalities duties for pupils, staff and visitors to the school site.

HMS produces a number of publications which are posted on our website. These publications are available in alternative formats on request. Our website has a high visibility version available.

There is access to the school for those with physical disability. Should anyone require assistance they should ask at reception. Alternative venues in school can be found for visitors if there is a problem with accessibility to certain floors of the building.

We continue to strive for a curriculum that is inclusive to all pupils. Our Equality Policy and Accessibility Plan are available on our website.

## Multi-Agency Working

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We aim to provide exceptional support for pupils and their families/carers. We work in partnership with other schools and agencies, including voluntary and community organisations, signposting to existing services where appropriate. We consult widely with all our stakeholders including pupils, families, our staff and the wider community to identify priorities and needs.

We have close working relationships with a wide variety of agencies including our Education Welfare Officer, Educational Psychologists, School Health Advisers, Children and Young People's Service (CYPS), the local police, Children's Services (social workers) and voluntary and community sector organisations e.g. Hexham Youth Initiative and Tynedale Hospice, to co-ordinate support for our pupils and their families/carers depending on their needs.

We firmly believe the school is part of the community and our pupil support work reflects the needs of the community. Regular multi-agency meetings take place with the Pastoral Team and Special Educational Needs and Disability Co-ordinators to ensure effective working across the organisations and professionals involved. Prevention and early intervention is a key focus of this work.

Parents/carers will be contacted when it is felt a multi-agency approach may be beneficial to their son/daughter. An early help assessment may be undertaken to ensure this work is fully co-ordinated and the young person supported appropriately. Parents/carers can contact their son/daughter's Key Stage Leader should they wish to discuss any issue where they feel additional support may be required.

## About Us

### The Hexham Partnership

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The Hexham Partnership is a strong one and consists of the following schools:

#### **First Schools (Years 0–4)**

The Sele First, Hexham First, Acomb First, Beaufront First, Broomhaugh Church of England First, Chollerton Church of England First, Corbridge Church of England First, Humshaugh Church of England First, Slaley First, St Mary's RC First School, Whitley Chapel Church of England First School, Whittonstall First.

#### **Middle Schools (Years 5–8)**

Hexham Middle School, Corbridge Middle School, St Joseph's RC Voluntary Aided Middle School.

#### **High School (Years 9–13)**

Queen Elizabeth High School

HMS and Queen Elizabeth High School are in a Multi-Academy Trust: Hadrian Learning Trust. Both schools are led by Mr Atkins, Executive Headteacher. There is one Trust Board for both schools.

### Policies

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Many of the school policies are available on the HMS website. Alternatively please contact the school direct: [admin@hexhammiddle.org.uk](mailto:admin@hexhammiddle.org.uk)

### The School Site

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Please note that smoking is not permitted anywhere on the school site.

We ask for all visitors to not use mobile phones on the school site.