



"Outstanding eagerness to promote good learning"

NEWSLETTER



@HexhamMiddle



Edition: Autumn 1 2019

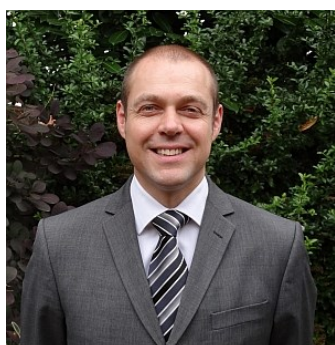
Attendance:

Year 5 - 97.8%

Year 6 - 96.7%

Year 7 - 96.9%

Year 8 - 95.4%



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 on the pages that follow, 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 as always for your continued support.

Graeme Atkins (Executive Headteacher)

Commemoration Craft Workshops in the Art Department.

Project for Remembrance Day

Key Stage 2 and 3 took part in a peaceful poppy painting session on Friday 18 October. Pupils collaborated in the making of a wreath to mark a day in Remembrance. 35 children worked with Miss Lawton, during Art Club, to recycle the egg cartons collected by kind members of staff at HMS. A total of 100 poppies were crafted and we are looking forward to seeing it on display in the Fellside Hall. Special thanks to all the contributing pupils across all year groups.

Miss Lawton

Year 5

Year 6

Year 7

Year 8



Jeans for Genes Day

Many thanks to Mrs Gregory for leading our pupils again this year in an assembly to promote Jeans for Genes day. Pupils had the chance to ditch part of their uniform for one day and wear a pair of jeans. Many thanks for the donations that we received to support research into genetic disorders; we raised £319.94.



Tynemouth Trip

On Tuesday 22 October the year six pupils attended a visit to Tynemouth to study the location where their novel *Kingdom By The Sea* is set. Pupils in all English groups are studying the novel this term and the visit provided the perfect opportunity to deepen their understanding of settings in the early chapters and helped them to visualise what life would have been like for Harry, bombed out and on the run during World War II.

During the visit pupils wrote poetry inspired by their surroundings, used their senses to create descriptive sentences using figurative language, mapped out the local area and also made sand sculptures. Without doubt, the favourite part of the day was (as always!) sandy sausage and chips on the beach! The year six team would like to thank parents for their support of the trip and the PTA for funding the transport to and from Tynemouth. We know it will inspire some fantastic written work back in school.

Mrs Roff

European Day of Languages

Year 5

Year 6

Year 7

Year 8



This year, Mr Armstrong invited pupils to make cakes celebrating different European cultures and languages. We received a tremendous amount of interest with over 30 entries from pupils in all year groups. Many of our pupils also came to buy a slice, raising money for Macmillan Cancer Research.

Year 6



Mandarin School

Year 7

Year 8

We are very pleased that Mandarin school has recommenced. Our thanks must go The Confucius Institute at Newcastle University for supporting us again following a very successful programme last year.

Lǎoshī (teacher pronounced L-ow-sheer) Bridget comes to school on Wednesday after school from 3.40 until 4.40.

Mr Armrstong

Operation Encompass

Year 6

As part of our commitment to ensure that our pupils feel safe and can make informed choices, we are delighted to be working with Operation Encompass. As part of our work with them, they came into school to work with a year 6 class, delivering a session on Friendship and Relationships. The lady delivering the session will be in school again towards the end of the autumn term to deliver the next session on Emotions and Empathy. Over the course of the year all our year 6 classes will receive the same sessions. As ever our pupils were extremely engaged in the session and had very good questions and opinions to share.

Bronze Arts Award

We are pleased to have received interest from Key Stage 3 pupils taking part in the Bronze Arts Award. Following an assembly by Sarah Kemp (Artistic Director for Théâtre Sans Frontières), we have a group of pupils who are interested in developing their passion and interest in the creative arts. In Autumn Term 2 pupils will start to undergo the process of developing a new skill and developing a portfolio of evidence. Miss Lawton is going to work alongside Sarah Kemp to guide our Bronze Arts Award pupils.

Cohesion in Schools: Bit Project

During the autumn term, year 7 pupils have been taking part in a trial, using some teaching and learning resources in PSHE. The trial is part of a study funded by the Department for Housing and Local Communities. Year 8 pupils will take part in this study during the summer term.

Mr Freeman-Myers and Mr Barry



M&M Theatre Production

Year 5

Year 6

We would like to thank M and M productions for revisiting us again this year. For a whole afternoon, Fellside Hall was transformed into a theatre, with a colourful set and amazing lighting. Key Stage 2 were treated to a very energetic performance of the Railway Children which they really enjoyed. Pupils in year 5 will be studying The Railway Children in English, in the summer term. At the end of the performance the actors also led a workshop in which our pupils learnt about how the production is put together, as well as hearing about the types of jobs that people can do in the theatre world, such as stage management and set design.

Mrs Cave

First Lego League

Year 7

Year 7 have embarked on a bold challenge this term. They are taking part in the First Lego League competition. FIRST LEGO League teams get to:

- Research challenges facing today's scientists
- Design, build, test and program robots using LEGO® MINDSTORMS® technology
- Apply real-world mathematical and scientific concepts

Learn critical thinking, team-building, and presentation skills

We will be looking to take two winning teams from school to the regional final to be held at Sage headquarters in January.

Ms Carruthers

Over the past few weeks year 7 have been doing the First Lego League. Using robots we need to do many activities from lowering a crane to stacking massive buildings out of blocks. There is an app we use called Lego Mindstorms which we use to control the robot and make it move around a city map. The coding seems very hard in the beginning but once mastered is easy. If you would like to join the club and potentially get on the team see Ms Carruthers for an early lunch pass.

Owen and Benjamin

Digital Leaders Conference

Year 7

Year 8

On the 16 October the 15 digital leaders from year 7 and year 8 took part and helped in a digital leader conference hosted by HMS. About 40 pupils from 4 different first schools came to learn how to use Adobe Spark Video. This is an app which can be used to make a film with pictures and voiceovers.

To start with as a welcome we gave each person some juice and a biscuit. While everyone was munching away on their biscuit, Dominic, from Adobe, and Jen, the ICT consultant for Northumberland County Council introduced themselves. Dominic called himself a 'master meditator' and taught us the basics of meditation. After a minute of peaceful and quiet meditation, we talked about what and why we meditate. Then we opened up Adobe Spark Video to start to make a film about meditation. We learnt how to put in slides with text and images and how to do a voice over. At the end we got to show our work to each other. It was really good to help the younger pupils from the first schools and we learnt a lot.

Careers Theatre Education

Year 8

On Tuesday 22 October, year 8 pupils had the opportunity to learn more about the largest employer in the north east of England and Cumbria - the NHS. Gibber Theatre visited HMS to share key messages on the diversity of job roles and career pathways available in the NHS. An introduction to the different types of apprenticeship/traineeship was also outlined to pupils to help demystify the stereotypes that may exist around these training and education options.



The Art Studio on Year 4 Open Evening

On Thursday 19 September, visiting year 4 pupils from a wide range of first schools took part in making A Field Artwork, in the style of artist Antony Gormley. The installation aimed to welcome prospective students to their new school by making a fresh contribution to the learning environment.

Children and their families worked with Miss Lawton in the art room and all took part in making a small figure following simple instructions. Gormley has created this artwork in a number of different countries all around the world and has worked with numerous communities. Key to making this work is 'the collective' and working as a community to create something together. While all of the figures were made in the same way, each one is as unique as the maker!

Some pupils wanted to take their figures away, but many decided to leave their artwork in school. They will be on display to welcome the new children in September.

We used terracotta clay. Gormley has made links with agricultural work; he was interested in the idea of the 'multiple.' He states,

"It is a kind of harvesting – it's about tilling the earth with your hands but instead of making something grow it is the earth you are forming directly. The harvest comes from within the people, or the thing that is growing comes out of the people. Everyone has their own row and throughout the project they continue to do row after row on the same strip like the old medieval strip field and they build up a very strong relationship with that patch of earth."

Everybody was encouraged to find their own way of making, as long as they met the figure requirements, which were that the pieces should be hand-sized and easy to hold, the eyes deep and close, and the proportions of the head to the body roughly correct. Pupils and their families were simply asked to shape a head and body, flatten the base so it stood up, and then make it conscious by giving it eyes with the point of a sharpened pencil.

"That repeated action of taking a hand-sized ball of clay, squeezing it between your hands, standing it up and giving it consciousness becomes meditative, the repeated action becoming almost like breathing, or a heartbeat." Antony Gormley

Special thanks to Zoe Rios-Hill 8JET and Katy Raine 8IHO for their contribution to the event.





PJ Murray Visit

On the 30 September, Peter J Murray visited HMS to launch his new book *Poppy Warrior*. The story is about a computer game-obsessed boy and his twin sister who begin to experience spooky coincidences when they start at a new school. Eventually, they make links to their past and realise they must stand brave, facing the real life horror of World War 1 just like their ancestors did...

All pupils took part in the author presentation and many chose to attend a book signing in Beaumont Library the

following day. Pete sold over 180 books – this is testament to how much our pupils love reading and how engaged and motivated they were by his talk. We'd like to extend our thanks to parents for supporting the school's reading culture and also thanks to Pete and his wife Kath who continue to inspire our pupils to further develop their love of reading.

Our thanks also go to the school's PTA who kindly covered the cost of Pete's presentation, meaning all pupils were involved and enthused by his work.

Mrs Roff



Be Safe Workshop

Year 7

On the 19th and 20th September we were very fortunate to have a visit from David Burn who works for Be Safe. He delivered workshops on knife crime and safety awareness for year 7 and an anti bullying workshop for years 5 and 6. The workshops were fantastic and highly educational. The students all were actively involved and gained new knowledge as well as reinforcing existing knowledge. We would like to say a huge thank you to David and we look forward to his next visit in the new year.

Mr Barry

The Riot Act

Year 8

Year 7 were able to attend a performance by the Riot Act all about sustainable travel. In a highly engaging performance the students took a journey where they looked at the benefits of sustainable travel. The students were not only able to describe the benefits of this but were able to set themselves targets on how they may be able to become more eco-friendly in their own travel. A huge thank you to year 7 for being an outstanding audience and a huge thank you to the Riot Act for yet another great performance.

Mr Barry



Healthy Media Diet

In computing this term we have been learning about how to have a healthy media balance. We use digital media every day, from texting, streaming TV shows, and gaming all the way to using voice assistance or ordering our food online. For today's children, it's a lot more than just "screen time." So how can we help pupils balance their online and offline lives? It starts with recognising just how much media we use. Pupils have reflected on their common online and offline activities. They have also prioritised these activities on what is most important to them. With this information they were able to identify ways in which they can "unplug" to maintain a balance between online and offline activities.

The article below can help you continue this learning at home.

5 Simple Steps to a Healthy Family Media Diet

You balance their meals, so why not their media? Learn the secrets to a well-balanced media diet. By Caroline Knorr Common Sense Media

Many parents and carers struggle with exactly how much screen time is OK for their kids. Is a half-hour show OK but a full-length movie "bad"? How much gaming should you allow when your kid also uses his or her computer for homework? Does Wikipedia count as "reading"? And when does a passion for say, video games, become problematic? The truth is, there is no magic formula. And just as every family differs in what they eat, when they eat, and what they like, a healthy media diet is different for every family. The key is making sure that the things that are important to your family are fairly balanced over the long term.

A healthy media diet balances activities (games, social media, TV), time (15 minutes? Three hours?), and choices (YouTube, Minecraft, *Star Wars*) with offline activities (sports, face-to-face conversations, daydreaming). At some point, kids will be able to manage their own media diets. In the meantime, these tips can help set them up for success. (Learn more about the screen time habits of families with kids under 8 in Common Sense Media's most recent research.)

- **Find balance.** Instead of counting daily screen-time minutes, aim for a balance throughout the week. Get your kids to help plan a week that includes stuff they have to do and stuff they like to do, such as schoolwork, activities, chores, reading, family time, and TV or gaming. Decide on limits and behaviour using our Family Media Agreement.
- **Walk the walk.** Put your devices away while driving, at mealtimes (learn about our Device-Free Dinner initiative), and during important conversations. Kids will learn habits from you.
- **Talk about it.** Ask questions about kids' favourite games, shows, and characters. Discuss ideas and issues they read about or learn about through a TV show or a game. This is an opportunity for bonding, learning, and sharing your values.
- **Create tech-free zones.** Set rules that fit your family, such as "no devices during dinner," "no social media during homework," or "all screens off before bedtime."
- **Check ratings.** Choose age-appropriate, high-quality media and tech for your kids. Use our reviews to find good stuff.

Article from <https://www.commonsensemedia.org/blog/5-simple-steps-to-a-healthy-family-media-diet>

Head Students

Year 8

Language Leaders

Every year at Hexham Middle School year 8 students have the opportunity to apply to become head students. We were delighted to have had such a huge number of applications from brilliant candidates. After a very close and impressive interview process we were able to appoint our head students for the academic year 2019-2020.

Head Boy: **Robert Conley**

Head Girl: **Keira Chilton**

Deputy Head Students:

Amelie Stokes and Isabelle Caris

House Captaincy Team

Year 8

In a hotly contested House Hustings this year each house group saw a number of brilliant candidates step up to deliver a speech to show what they would like to deliver this year. The house captains are key students in school and are responsible for a number of key events on the school calendar.

We are glad to announce the winners are

Wansbeck- House Captain - Iyasu Francis, Vice House Captain - Isabel Gaines

Tweed- House Captain - Katie Raine, Vice House Captain - Daniel Hale

Coquet- House captain - Benedict Sanderson, Vice House Captain - Poppy Watson

Aln- House captain - Charlotte Heslop, Vice House Captain - Ben Scott

Careers Education Update

We are looking forward to developing different aspects of our careers programme this year. If you would like to get involved personally or work for a company that is willing to support the school, please contact Mr Freeman-Myers.

Congratulations to the following pupils who put themselves forward to support Mr Armstrong as Language Leaders:

- Betsy Stock
- Morgan Sewell
- Wilf Daykin
- Oliver Robson
- Carly Cochrane

Pastoral Leader Comments

Firstly we would like to say a big well done to all our pupils; they have made a very positive start to the new academic year.

We would ask that over the course of the week equipment and uniform is checked, to allow children to be organised and ready to go when they come back! If any clarification is needed on equipment for school, please check pages 3 – 7 in your child's pupil planner.

We would also like to ask for your support concerning mobile phones. Many of our pupils are walking around school carrying their mobile phone in their hand or up the sleeve of their jumper. Whilst we appreciate that phones are not to be left in pupil's bags, they must either be in a pocket or in a small bag which they can carry with them. They must be switched off whilst your child is at school.

Thank you for your help with this matter.

Mr Barry, Mrs Cave and Mrs Frankish

The Pastoral Leadership Team

Year 5

Year 6

European Christmas Tree Decoration Exchange

Only 10 schools in North East England have been selected to take part in this cultural project which will see pupils given the opportunity to design and create decorations and then exchange these with other schools.

As a school we will also have to produce an information pack celebrating Christmas in our country and region. As a school, we will be able to send 30 separate decorations.

During this project Key Stage 2 pupils will be able to research and explore aspects of their own culture and tradition and Christmas time.

When we receive decorations from other schools across Europe, pupils will be able to learn more about the different traditions in other European countries, their geography, language and history, and what it means to be a European citizen.

The rules for the decoration state:

- it must be symbolic of the region
- be made from any material (remembering that it does need to be posted)
- it must have the country name on it
- it can not be larger than A6 in size (15 x 10 cm)

All decorations and research material should be handed in Mr Armstrong by November 11 December.

Mr Armstrong



Year 7

Local Democracy Week

On Thursday 17 October, Hexham Middle School took part in Local Democracy Week organised by Northumberland County Council. Many thanks must go to Mike Bird and his team at Northumberland County Council for supporting our pupils to understand more about the role of politics in our lives and then have the opportunity to be active participants in the process of democracy.

During period 1, year 7 pupils worked in their form groups to explore the principles of democracy, the role of councillors and the purpose and process of elections.

During period 2, all year 7 pupils were an audience of a question panel, comprising a selection of councillors in Northumberland. We also had the chance to introduce Hexham Town Mayor to our school. Many thanks to Bob Hull, Trevor Cessford, Richard Dodd, Derek Kennedy, Nick Oliver, and Tom Gillanders for attending our drop down morning for year 7.

Mr Freeman-Myers

START Project—Is this a dagger?

Year 7

On Monday 21 October, year 7 pupils visited Queen's Hall to kick-start the second year of an arts-based partnership called START. Pupils saw the performance of 'Is this a dagger?' Based on William Shakespeare's tragedy of Macbeth, pupils were given the chance to experience how one actor could help to explore the storyline. For many pupils, this was the first time they experienced Shakespeare at a theatre. Pupils at Hexham Middle School study Shakespearian texts (Romeo and Juliet (in year 7) and Othello (in year 8). A small group of pupils also took part in a pre-show workshop working with Sarah Kemp and John Cobb from Théâtre Sans Frontières.

We are confident that this theatrical exposure will help many pupils to understand the language of Shakespeare.

Many thanks must go to the staff at Queen's Hall.



Assembly Themes for Half Term 2

Week 1: Week commencing - Monday 4 November

Careers Education (Apprenticeships) led by Mrs Tanner

Week 2: Week commencing - Monday 11 November

To bully or not to bully -that is the question. Led by Diana Award (Anti-Bullying Ambassadors) and Mr Barry

Week 3: Week commencing - Monday 18 November

What rights do I have as a child? Led by Mr Stephenson

Week 4: Week commencing - Monday 25 November

Healthy relationships. How can I flourish? Led by Mrs Cave (Thrive Coordinator/Head of Key Stage 2)

Week 5: Week commencing - Monday 2 December

A festival of light - Advent Service. Led by Dale Dawson (Hexham Community Church)

Week 6: Week commencing - Monday 9 December

A digitally-safe lifestyle. Led by Ms Carruthers

Week 7: Week commencing - Monday 17 December

Christmas Success Assemblies

Many thanks must go to our staff who help support the assembly programme we offer our pupils.

Sports Update

Year 5

In an action packed first half term for year 5 it has been great to see the success they have achieved on a sporting pitch as well as in PE. The focus in PE has been on invasion games and the pupils have showcased a huge array of skills every lessons. For Team Hexham we have seen a huge level of success with students competing in tag rugby, netball, football and skiing. Samuel Foot displayed incredible ski technique in the North East National Qualifiers. The girls football team has made a great start to the year with top scorer Maddie Gray firing the team to a number of good results. A fantastic start to the year was completed with a sensational result at the tag rugby qualifiers sending HMS to the next round. Very exciting times ahead for this year group.

Year 6

Last year the year 6 students performed brilliantly throughout the year and this has continued into this year. The year 6 boys football team were very impressive in the 7-side cup, losing out on a place in the final on goal difference. However, they remain undefeated in the league. Captain Alex McDonaugh leading the side to a string of fantastic performances. The year 6 girls football team has also shone with a number of great performances ranging from Molly Bisp's goalkeeping heroics to the tough tackling and tenacity of her teammates. Beth Robinson led the year 6 netball team to a couple of great performances whilst Seamus Russell and his teammates displayed their skill on the tag rugby pitch. That tag rugby success continued with Sasha Farley and her teammates gaining qualification in their tag rugby qualifiers after some outstanding performances. Finally a huge well done to Oscar Foot who has been selected to train with England Skiing after his recent performances in the North East qualifiers: outstanding!

Year 7

The year 7s have had a whirlwind start to the year with a huge number of fixtures from the start. The year 7 boys team with the help of a James Simpson hat trick fired the boys into the third round of the national cup! The girls team performed well too with a semi final appearance at the 7-a-side qualifiers.

The year 7 netballers put in a strong showing and with over 50 students turning up weekly there are exciting times ahead! Year 7 have shone in contact rugby this year the girls are starting to show great progress and Elissa and Isabelle are going to be strong players this year. The year 7 boys are currently undefeated across both codes and with top try-scorer Charlie Clilverd scoring at a brilliant rate they currently sit top of the North East sky try standings. As well as performing incredibly on the football and rugby pitches Jack Weatherley won a recent cross country event with Maria Gaines and Ania Stobbart finishing very high in the girls' race . We would also like to say a huge well done to Harriet Scholar who has also been invited to the English Ski training session after leading team HMS to a fantastic showing at the North East National Qualifiers.



Year 8

The Year 8 boys have started the year well on the football pitch. Picking up a good win over Highfield, the boys played in a classic against Ovingham in the National Cup. The year 8 girls have also shown great developments this year and also made an appearance in the semi final of the 7-a-side cup scoring some brilliant goals along the way. Both rugby teams have picked up where they left off last year with some incredible performances. The girls have won every game this year with Erikka, Katie S, Katie R, Olivia and Isabel grabbing hatricks along the way! The boys remain undefeated in rugby league and currently sit second on the standings after Josh Wallace led the boys to some incredible victories at Kingston Park. Zach Maurice has also continued his strong record at running events for school with a brilliant 4th place finish in a recent running event.

Next half term all year groups will have rugby fixtures, cross country events, football matches and many, many more. Thank you to everyone who has attended clubs and represented school so far this year! If you haven't already started please come along. and try some of the sports on offer.

Looking ahead:

4 November 2019 - School re-opens.

7 November 2019 - Kids' Lit Quiz, Year 5 UK Parliament Day, Year 6 Heights and Weights

12 - 15 November 2019 - Bikeability

14 November 2019 - Year 8 Josh Green Road Safety Performance

15 November 2019 - Children in Need

18 November 2019 - Year 8 Careers Interviews with Sarah Sunderland, Year 6 Parents' Evening (A-L surnames)

20 November 2019 - Year 6 Parents' Evening (M -Z surnames)

29 November 2019 - Christmas Tree Lights Switch On

2 December 2019 - Year 5 Parents' Evening (A- L surnames)

4 December 2019 - Year 5 Parents' Evening (M-Z surnames), KS3 Dan Smith Author Visit

13 December 2019 - Christmas Jumper Day, Year 6 Trip to Hexham Community Church

16 December 2019 - Hexham Abbey Carol Service, Key Stage 2 Nasal Flu vaccinations

18 December 2019 - Key Stage 2 Pantomime Visit

20 December 2019 - Closed for Christmas

Keep up-to-date with our calendar online.

*Happy
Hallowe'en*

