



HMS Weekly Update

8 October 2020

Dear Parent/ Carer

Update on life in school

We are already six weeks into the new term! It has been fantastic to see our extra-curricular provision up and running this week with lots of pupils attending clubs at lunch time and after-school. After reviewing our in-school procedures, we feel that the school day is operating very well under the current restrictions. We now feel that Key Stage 3 (Years 7 and 8) can leave school at **3.25pm** – the new time will start from Monday 12 October. This still allows for a safe, staggered departure from the school site. Please can you remind KS3 pupils that they are asked to wear face coverings indoors between lessons (unless they are exempt) and that spares are available from tutors. Thank you for another great week everyone!

Key Stage 2		Key Stage 3	
Arrival	Departure	Arrival	Departure
8.50	3.30	8.40	3.25

#HelloYellow Day – tomorrow!



Friday 9 October is a non-uniform day to support Mental Health Awareness. We would like to encourage all pupils to find something yellow to wear. We also invite parents and carers to help support the campaign as part of our wider school community. Pupils may wear as little as a yellow hair band, ribbons or clips, a yellow scarf, t-shirt or even laces. £1 donations can be made via School Gateway. Thank you.

Hexham Middle School PTA

HMS PTA is a community of parents/carers working alongside the school holding fun events for the children in order to raise money to benefit the school. If you would like to get involved but can't make the AGM, please get in touch with the email address above. We are particularly looking for people to help with social media and creative ideas for socially-distanced fundraising.



HMS PTA Annual General Meeting will be held online on Tuesday 20th October at 7.30pm. All are welcome - if you wish to attend, please email hmsptachair@gmail.com and a link will be sent to you.

House Point Totals

Pupils continue to respond extremely well to our updated approach to rewarding positive behaviour. Below are this week's House Point totals as well as the **'Top 4' pupils in each year group this week**. Well done to each and every one of you – the totals are increasing rapidly!

House Totals		Year 5		Year 6		Year 7		Year 8	
Aln	5763	1	Aidan T	1	Ollie G	1	Beth R	1	Aidan K
Coquet	5702	2	Imogen M	2	Katie H	2	Daisy C	2	Adam W
Tweed	5490	3	Dulcie M	3	John C-T	3	Geoffrey B	3	Emma N
Wansbeck	5506	4	Christian T	4	Laura W	4	Callum H	4	Alfie M

Key Stage 2: 'Stars of the week'

This week's theme was **pupils with a great attitude in science lessons**. Well done to all of the pupils below.



Year 5		Year 6	
FHA	Philippa M	AMG	Daisy W
JNI	Robbie L	MDO	Amelia S
FHI	Ollie H	RAL	Henry C
EKI	Grace B	CCA	John M and Isobel C

A focus on... maths

At Hexham Middle, it is our goal to ensure that pupils are confident, resilient and fluent mathematicians. Our curriculum is built upon the core principles of developing fluent pupils who can articulate their thought processes and reason mathematically and approach problem solving with a systematic attitude. We build our curriculum on the principles of mastery teaching with high expectations at the heart of our teaching and learning.

Fluency and recall of number facts are key skills in maths. To support their development, pupils should be able to rapidly recall times tables and division facts. To help, all pupils have access to ['Times Tables Rockstars'](#) which they should try to use at home. It would also be useful for children to regularly practise calculating (both mentally and written) using the four operations (incl. fractions, decimals and percentages).



We aim to create a positive maths environment where pupils feel confident – confidence is key to success! We also promote resilience – another key trait for success in maths. When completing homework, try to ensure that pupils have a

calm, positive environment where discussion about maths is relaxed and collaborative. If pupils struggle, please get in touch with their maths teacher and further support can be provided. Thank you for your ongoing support!

Key Stage 2 – Curriculum Handbook

At this point of the year, we would usually invite parents/ carers to attend a 'Curriculum Information Evening'. This is a really useful session for us to outline our curriculum approaches, to discuss how learning can be supported at home and to give you the opportunity to understand how we teach and ask us any questions you have. Due to current restrictions, we have produced the 'KS2 Information Handbook' which we hope will provide useful information for the year ahead. Our 'KS3 Information Handbook' will follow soon. If you have any questions, please do get in touch with your child's teacher.

Technology

After half term, we are pleased to say that technology lessons will resume for all pupils. Due to ongoing restrictions which make practical work challenging to manage, the curriculum will be adapted accordingly. In DT, Year 5 will explore design and craft-based activities such as making their own phone cases; Year 7 will focus on drawing techniques and graphical enhancement whilst designing a desk storage system and Year 8 have the chance to prototype a light shade. In food tech, pupils in KS2 will learn more about food hygiene, health and safety, equipment and cross-contamination. KS3 will focus on nutrition, food production and cookery skills. All year groups will be shown demonstrations of food preparation and recipes will be shared on Google Classroom so that they can be attempted at home. Many pupils have already brought Miss Kwella some photographs of their creations!



Arts Award

We have had a great start to the Arts Award year with a recent visit from Arts Director, Sarah Kemp. Our pupils shared the work they have completed to date and discussed ideas for the 'sharing/teaching' part of their award. We have ideas ranging from dance lessons and performances through to quilling and printmaking. Emily T and Diana B shared their reviews of performances they have attended with their peers.

Our musicians are planning collaborations to teach one another their musical instruments. We are looking forward to hearing what Jake and Lucie create together with their guitars and drum kits! Well done everyone. We are looking forward to welcoming external assessors to see your learning.



Music

Pupils in all year groups can still sign up for musical instrument lessons with our peripatetic teachers. Please contact Mr Holdsworth for further information via the admin email address.

Year 8 Orchestra members: Orchestra rehearsals will start on Tuesday evening from 3.40 till 4.30pm for Year 8 only. This is to maintain the separation of year group bubbles. Mr Holdsworth will be arranging a rota to include musicians from year 7 either on a lunchtime, or on a fortnightly rota with the year 8s.

Class Charts

We have now been using our new **Class Charts** software for almost six weeks and the pupils have engaged really well with it. We have received lots of positive feedback from parents about the system and many are finding it helpful to be able to monitor their child's in-school behaviour more closely as well as being able to reward the positives at home.

Class Charts parent accounts are also available and can be accessed either by the website <https://www.classcharts.com/> or by downloading the free app.



Please remind the children that P points are 'spendable' in the [Classcharts Rewards Store](#). This can be accessed by both parents and pupils via the web page or app. **Available rewards include: queue jump passes (always a favourite!), stationery, USB memory sticks, movie afternoon and even an afternoon tea!**

Reminders/ Dates

Virtual Open Evening: our fantastic video resources are now live on our [website](#).

Rescheduled Flu Immunisations: Wednesday 21 October

House Non-Uniform Day (highest P points): winning house TBC – Thursday 22 October

School closes for pupils: Thursday 22 October (INSET Day Friday 23 October)

Individual School Photographs – Friday 6 November

School admissions: [Northumberland County Council's School Admissions Portal](#) opened on Saturday 12 September and will close on Saturday 31 October 2020. Parents/ carers must access the admissions form via the portal for applications for places in local middle, high and secondary schools. For Year 8 moving on to high school, please make sure you apply before the deadline as no pupil is guaranteed a place. For prospective pupils to HMS, please follow the above link and contact the school if you have any further questions.

Have a safe, happy weekend everyone – thank you for your continued support.

Yours faithfully

Mr Watters

Deputy Headteacher