

HMS Weekly Update

22 October 2020

Dear Parent/ Carer

Update on life in school



It is hard to believe that we have reached the end of the first half term of the year! I have said it before, but I want to stress again just how proud we are of all the children. They have returned to school with enthusiasm and resilience and have adapted very well to the guidance and expectations. Despite the ever-changing local and national picture, we have been able to see the joy of learning and the happiness that being in school every day brings. Our staff have worked exceptionally hard to ensure that the year has started successfully and I couldn't be prouder of the team effort and community spirit. A huge thank you to each and everyone of you for your ongoing support of school life. This week, I have shared this pride with the children and asked them to make sure that they stay safe, enjoy the fresh air and the autumn colours and try to stay active over the half-term break.

This term's assemblies

Assemblies are an important part of our school curriculum and Mr Freeman-Myers has planned a thought-provoking and inspiring calendar of themes. Teachers have prepared and delivered a wide range of brilliant assemblies so far this year. Themes have included: pride in presentation; the values of democracy; staying safe online'; Black History Month; physical and mental well-being; sustainable diets and virtues in life. We will let you know more about next half term's themes so that you can discuss these topics at home.



Pastoral Reminders

Please remind all pupils that they should come to school prepared for the day with the correct **equipment**. Please encourage all children to spend some time over the half term making sure that they're organised and equipped for the half term ahead. The equipment list can be found in your child's planner.

Remembrance

We are looking for your support (and your egg boxes)! At HMS, we have embarked on an art challenge to try to make 515 poppies - one for each pupil and staff member in school. We would like to show all of our collective remembrance through the making of these poppies. To achieve our goal, we are going to need a



lot of egg boxes! If you have any spare, please send them in to Miss Lawton.

We will also be selling poppies in school after half term and will update you on how your child can buy them in the first update back.

New Build Update

Following last week's photographic updates, we have now uploaded a [video](#) to give an insight into our new school. The video is narrated by Mr Atkins and gives a real sense of what life will be like when we move onto our brand-new site. We are very excited to see the building work progressing so well. If you have any questions about the new schools, please don't hesitate to get in touch with us.

Lost Property



Our brilliant office team have posted photographs of lost property items on our website and on social media. Please get in touch if you recognise any of the items. We also have a number of unnamed hoodies and jumpers which your child can come to the office to look for if they have lost one. The office team have also recommended that pupils have a good look around school before the other children come in so that they can check all pegs and cloakrooms. Thank you.

Reminder: New structure of the school day

After the half term break, we will be operating with new daily timings. We are continually reviewing our operational plan and we feel that these changes will further improve the school day. There will be no change to arrival and departure times (**KS2 8.50 – 3.30/ KS3 8.40 – 3.25**).



The main difference for pupils is that the school day will now commence with an extended form time until 9.15. This will allow for pupils to have more consistent, structured time with their form tutors and a longer assembly session to allow for combined themed and pastoral assemblies. Pupils will no longer have an afternoon form time session.

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! **Well done to ALN who have enjoyed a non-uniform day today!**

House Totals		Year 5		Year 6		Year 7		Year 8	
Aln	8019	1	Archie D	1	John C-T	1	Alex H	1	Eve C
Coquet	7624	2	Thomas T	2	Isobel C	2	Beth R	2	Lucy D
Tweed	7492	3	Thomas E	3	Maisie M	3	Freddie C	3	Maria G
Wansbeck	7399	4	Abbie W	4	Jennifer W	4	Daisy C	4	Lucy W

Key Stage 2: 'Stars of the week'

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



Year 5		Year 6	
FHA	Poppy C	MDO	Charlotte A
JNI	Abigail B	CPR	Emma L
FHI	Livia M	RAL	Finlay W
EKI	Olivia M	JJO	Esme W

Arts Award Update

This week, Beatrice led the group in her project. The pupils made stencils and printed directly onto fabric using textile inks. Pupils experimented with blending two colours at the same time. Each of the girls printed a bag they could take home, based on music notation. The pupils ironed their bags inside out to fix the pigment to the cloth. Well done on your part D, Beatrice!



Musical Instrument Lessons



Mr Holdsworth would like to say thank you to all parents who have returned information about their child playing a musical instrument in school. This information has been passed to our instrument teachers who will be contacting parents directly. He expects all lessons to start after half term.

The one exception to this is piano lessons. Our piano teacher only has a couple of spaces and there are 13 pupils wanting to start lessons. We are looking into the possibility of adding an extra day to our piano teaching after half term. There are plenty of spaces for pupils to play orchestral instruments, if your child would like to consider having a trial lesson on a different instrument.

Hexham Middle School PTA: Lottery

Join the **HMS PTA Lottery** today for the chance to win a monthly cash prize of £25 or £15. Tickets are only £1 each. Formerly known as the 200 Club, the HMS PTA Lottery donates profits directly to the PTA which fundraises to enrich the school experience for all HMS students. The PTA has recently funded additional computer equipment, travel for school trips, theatre performances, author visits and supplies for art projects and games clubs.



If you have telephone or online banking you can join from the comfort of your home. Simply fill out the membership form (emailed today) with your contact details and the number of tickets you

would like and then set up your payment by standing order or bank transfer. You can contact the Lottery secretary, Kate Robson at hmsprizedraw@gmail.com with any queries.

We will soon be sending home further information about how you can support our amazing PTA from home. We will also update you on upcoming PTA events.

Vacancy

We are currently seeking an '[Intervention and Pastoral Support Assistant](#)' to join our team. Information about this exciting new role is available on our website and the deadline for applications is Monday 2 November. If you have any questions about the vacancy, please contact rstokes@gehs.net.



Class Charts



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!**

Coronavirus Update

We are very pleased that life in school has operated safely and that pupils have responded so well to the measures in place. We will notify you of any positive cases when then there is a need for us to contact trace in school. As always, we are following the national guidance and will keep you informed of any changes along the way.

Reminders/ Dates

Individual School Photographs – Friday 6 November (note: there will be no sibling photographs)

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. We have contacted all parents who have yet to make an application – please let us know if you need any further support.

Children in Need Day: Friday 13 November (more information to follow)

Year 6 Parents' Evenings: 16th and 18th November

Year 5 Parents' Evenings: 7th and 9th December

Thank you for reading the weekly updates – I hope you are finding them helpful and informative. If you have any feedback on the first half term, please do get in touch via the admin email address.

Wishing you all a safe, enjoyable half-term week – we will see the children back on Monday 2 November.

Yours faithfully

Mr Watters

Deputy Headteacher