



23 April 2021

HMS Weekly Update

Dear Parent/ Carer

Update on life in school

I am delighted to have been appointed as Head of School at HMS from September. HMS is a very special place – the pupils, the staff and the vibrant atmosphere all make this a fantastic environment to work and learn. I feel privileged to be able to lead us into the next phase of the school’s life as we move to our brand new buildings. I am also very excited that I was able to visit the school for the first time last week and I know that everyone is going to love it! We’ll keep everyone updated as the work continues.

Earlier this week, Mr Atkins shared an exciting [update](#) on our new school buildings and new logos (below). There was also an update on uniform and details of how to order new items for September 2021.



Queen Elizabeth
High School
spes durat avorum



Hexham
Middle School
spes durat avorum

House Point Totals

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 them.

House Totals		Year 5		Year 6		Year 7		Year 8	
Aln	26,058	1	Lilly S	1	Olivia A	1	Olive T	1	Chelsea P
Coquet	23,458	2	Harvey C-F	2	Josh C	2	Damon W	2	Lucy W
Tweed	23,465	3	Thomas E	3	Katie G	3	Arthur D L	3	Melissa B
Wansbeck	23,507	4	Gabriel B	4	Iris A	4	Ben C	4	Matilda W


Forest School update

In forest school, year 5 have been building wormaries, identifying mini beasts and playing games amongst the trees. Miss Kingett and Mrs Hall have also been identifying a range of the flora and

fauna in our forest school area for their level 3 forest school leader award. We have also been making pizza wraps on the fire and building hedgehog houses.



Handwriting, presentation and standards (*a message from Mrs Roff*)



Following the pupils' return to school, and mine from maternity leave, I've thoroughly enjoyed recent opportunities to visit pupils in lessons and see the fantastic work they're completing in their English books. Pupil feedback on their English lessons is always overwhelmingly positive and it was lovely to hear the pride with which they speak about their work. Mr Watters and I gave out a number of awards for exemplary work, high standards of handwriting and presentation. That being said, it's time to remind pupils of the expectations in order to ensure consistency in all books and in all lessons:

- Pupils should write in black pen or pencil, underlining learning objectives and dates with a ruler.
- They must draw diagrams, tables and other illustrations in pencil (*unless expressing themselves in another form in art!*)
- All should carry a reading book and should use their monthly* library session to exchange reading materials.

*Library sessions are currently every four weeks, rather than every week, due to the need to quarantine books upon their return and for the need to keep to year group bubbles. We are hopeful with the relaxation of Covid guidelines in the coming months that when we move to the new site in September, library sessions will return to normal once again and pupils will enjoy these as part of their weekly English lessons. We can't wait to show you the new library facilities and know the pupils will thoroughly enjoy exploring the space once it's open!

Social media

Life for young people is very much online, particularly in recent months given the switch to more online learning. We are aware that many of our pupils are active on social media and use it to connect with friends outside of school. Mrs Curry just wanted to send a reminder to all parents that many social media sites have a suggested age rating of 13+. Whilst we appreciate that there is an element of parental discretion involved, we would encourage parents/carers to be actively checking their child's social media profiles and usage. Please ensure that all **privacy settings are set correctly** and that you are aware of all accounts to which they have access.

Our pupils are given regular reminders about appropriate online behaviour in school but please continue to reinforce this at home. Pupils should behave in the same way online as they would in school: inappropriate language and conduct can and will be sanctioned. The vast majority of our students make excellent and creative use of social media, and we hope that this will continue.



UK Maths Challenge: Year 8

On Wednesday morning, sixty year 8 pupils participated in the UKMT Junior Maths Challenge. The Junior Mathematical Challenge is a 60-minute, multiple-choice competition aimed at students across the UK. It encourages mathematical reasoning, precision of thought and fluency in using basic mathematical techniques to solve interesting problems. We are extremely proud of all of the pupils who took part and look forward to receiving the results!

Online Safety

As a result of increased time online over the past year, there has been an unfortunate rise in the number of incidents of children both accessing and generating inappropriate and sometimes sexual content. In response to this concerning trend, the Internet Watch Foundation (IWF), backed by the Home Office and Microsoft, have launched a national campaign. Full details of the campaign can be found on the IWF website: <https://www.iwf.org.uk/selfgenerated-prevention-campaign> - it is running from Wednesday 21 April for six weeks. It aims to help raise awareness of this type of criminality among parents and carers of young teens, empower and educate girls aged 11 to 13+ to spot the techniques used by sexual predators and give them the knowledge to **Block, Report, Tell** someone they trust.

Whilst we do not have direct concerns about our students at HMS, Mrs Curry wanted all parents/carers to be made aware of this initiative. As ever, should you have any concerns about your child's online activity or behaviour, please do not hesitate to contact Mrs Curry for support/advice. Further, excellent resources about online safety for young people can be found at these links: [thinkuknow](#) and [NSPCC](#).

Reminders/ Dates



Home testing (KS3): a reminder that we are asking KS3 children (with consent) to take twice weekly lateral flow tests at home. Results should be reported to school at this [link](#) and to the [Government](#).

Sanitary products: Just a brief reminder to all parents and pupils that we have an abundant supply of sanitary products available, free of charge, in school. Pupils can collect at any time from the main office or from Mrs Adams' office in Beaumont building.

HPV Immunisations for Year 8: Monday 10 May

Year Group Photos (all): Thursday 24 May

Have a fantastic weekend everyone!

Yours faithfully

Mr Watters

Deputy Headteacher