

2 December 2022

Dear Parent/ Carer

### **HMS WEEKLY UPDATE**

#### **Festive Forest Evening**

Our first 'Festive Forest Evening' was a HUGE success. It was so lovely to see so many pupils and family members enjoying the evening and kickstarting the festive season. Last night really captured the community spirit of HMS - thank you all so much for your support. It was a great opportunity to showcase our new forest school area which the PTA have supported with their generous funding. The HMS PTA work so hard to plan new and exciting events for the children to enjoy and it was another wonderful example of their hard work and support of our school. I also want to send huge thanks to our staff team who all supported the evening brilliantly by leading craft activities, serving refreshments and keeping the s'mores going in Forest School. Thank you all so much - I felt very proud of HMS.



#### **HMS Orchestra welcome the festive season**

We were very proud to see the HMS Orchestra being asked back to the annual Christmas Light Switch on and to hear them playing so brilliantly last Friday. The group had rehearsed well and performed 13 carols on the night which filled the park with joy and cheer. Well done to everyone involved, and a special thank you to Mr Holdsworth for his dedication and encouragement. The town's Christmas light display looks as joyful as ever.



#### **Hexham Middle School**

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Executive Headteacher: **Graeme Atkins**

Head of School: **Liam Watters**

## Chess Tournament

On Tuesday this week, two teams of six players from Hexham Middle School and three from Queen Elizabeth High School competed in a regional qualifying round of the English Chess Federation's national schools competition, alongside teams from seven other schools. The event, which took place at St Mary's school in Longbenton, was a great experience for all of our representatives, each of whom acquitted themselves very well. The HMS teams were the youngest there, with all other teams of secondary age at the older end. The Key Stage 2 HMS team did particularly well in winning a round against a much older team, as did two of the high school teams who qualified for the next round, which is expected to take place early in the New Year. Very well done to all involved. P Points have been allocated with special recognition for the Skills Builder skill of 'Aiming High'.



## Year 7 Girls' Rugby

The Year 7 girls played some excellent rugby this week - they were amazing! They had two games in the tournament and won the first 9 tries to 5 (tries from Isla, Evie, Annabelle, Maisie and Ellie) and the second 12 tries to 5 (tries from Isla, Maisie, Ellie, Connie, Evie, Beth and Rose). Most of the girls were a little nervous on arrival - having not played a game before - but they were just fabulous and Ms Southern said they were an absolute pleasure to be with!

## Sugarcraft club

KS3 have been enjoying learning how to make sugar roses in sugarcraft club with Ms Kwella. They have been learning how to colour sugar paste and learning the difference between fondant icing and modelling paste. Last week, they also used royal icing to decorate biscuits.



## Food Technology

Year 5 have been making pasta salad over the last week. Ms Kwella has been impressed with all of the colourful salads which have been made! Pupils have been learning how to use the hob safely and practising their knife skills using the bridge hold and claw grip.

## Extra-curricular activities update

Mrs Cleland has announced a new netball club for Year 8 starting next Wednesday after school. Please [sign your child up here.](#)

We are undertaking our half termly review of extracurricular engagement. Your child will be completing a new initiative called the **Participation Pledge** during form time shortly. We would like your support in this process by reviewing with your child how they are engaging with extra-curricular

activities in school. We understand that some pupils may have a busy extracurricular life beyond school - the Participation Pledge gives pupils the opportunity to share these experiences and gain credit.

- Our target is that all pupils attend at least 18 different extra-curricular sessions over the academic year
- This would earn children a 'Bronze Award'
- When pupils attend a club, a member of staff will record attendance on Class Charts. Each recorded mark means a pupil gains an extra-curricular P Point that they can cash in for different events throughout the year.
- As a bonus, pupils achieving Bronze, Silver, Gold or Platinum extra-curricular awards will be able to attend a special celebration event at the end of the academic year.

If your child would like to express an interest in any after-school extracurricular activities, please refer to our [website](#). The online form can also be accessed [here](#). We are reviewing our extracurricular offer for the spring term and some clubs may change. We will communicate any changes before the end of this term via email and this 'Weekly Update'.

### Author event for KS2: Cressida Cowell

Last Friday we were thrilled to welcome on a live on-screen link-up, Cressida Cowell, Children's Laureate and world-famous author of 'How To Train Your Dragon'. Hexham Middle School was one of many schools in the North East to take part in the event brought to us by the Northern Children's Book Festival and Northumberland Libraries. Inspiring us to read, and to write our own stories and illustrate them, Cressida gave us a masterclass in how to create imaginary worlds and characters. She stressed the importance of keeping a notebook to jot down thoughts and sketch out ideas.

- 'Brilliant! I loved the way she had ideas for her books.' George F, Y5
- 'It was very entertaining – and quite exciting!' Sam L, Y5
- 'After listening to her, I went away and drew some of my own sketches in my own way.' Khloe M, Y6

Cressida's new book, 'Which Way to Anywhere', will be available to borrow from HMS Library very soon. It might be a good idea for any Christmas wish lists too! Cressida Cowell on the live-link up – looking very animated! Did you know that Cressida illustrates all of her books herself?

### HMS PTA

Don't forget about our HMS Lottery, which is run by our PTA to raise funds for enrichment activities and equipment such as Forest School, author visits, playground equipment and new library books. Tickets are just £1 each and enrolment is easy. Just follow the link <https://forms.gle/a2gkWhkQJ9YwK6zw9> or email [hmsprizedraw@gmail.com](mailto:hmsprizedraw@gmail.com) for more information.



## House Point Totals



Below are this week's House Point totals as well as the **'Top 4' pupils in each year group this week**. P points are awarded for character value such as **resilience, respect, engagement and responsibility**. Well done to each and every one of them.

House Totals		Top 4 'P Points' in each year							
		Year 5		Year 6		Year 7		Year 8	
<b>AIn</b>	34,457	1	Nicholas F H	1	Brian T	1	Teddy A	1	Jamie A
<b>Coquet</b>	32,960	2	Finlay H	2	Charlie R	2	Ferdi U, Lily S	2	Olivia A
<b>Tweed</b>	32,433	3	Amelia P, Alfie L, Jude D	3	Marc B, Shontelle B, Charlotte D, Evie M D	3	Hope C, Daisy L	3	Katie A
<b>Wansbeck</b>	32,205	4	Lily H	4		4	Alex G	4	Charlotte A

### Attendance – top form classes!

1	2	3
5MDO	8IHO	8BLA / 6EKI / 5JNI

### Respect, Engage, Aspire: Pupil Awards

To capture our school's ethos more prominently, we are now focusing on three key words: **Respect, Engage, Aspire**. Each week, staff will make nominations in recognition of pupils showing these characteristics in and around school.

	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8
<b>Respect</b>	Kosan N	Tristan J	Tom S	Finlay W
<b>Engage</b>	Zach A	Holli M	Winnie L	Liam C
<b>Aspire</b>	Duncan G	Ben F	Hope C	Betsy B



## Reminders/ Key Dates

<b>All week</b>	Assessment week	Year 6
<b>Tuesday 6, Wednesday 7 &amp; Thursday 8 December</b>	STEM: Marine Engineering Workshops	Year 5
<b>Tuesday 6 December</b>	UK Parliament sessions	8IBO & 8PGA
<b>Thursday 8 and Tuesday 13 December</b>	Year 8 Parents' Evenings – bookings now available	Year 8
<b>Friday 9 December</b>	KS3 Flu Immunisations	KS3
<b>Monday 12 December</b>	Year 7 Christmas Trip	Year 7
<b>Monday 12 December</b>	Northumbria Police: Online Safety Workshop	Year 8
<b>Tuesday 13, Wednesday 14 and Friday 16 December</b>	PTA Christmas Pop-Up Shop (open at lunchtimes)	All years
<b>Wednesday 14 December</b>	HMS Christmas Lunch	All years
<b>Thursday 15 December</b>	HMS Carol Service, Hexham Abbey, 7pm	All welcome

Have a fantastic weekend everyone!

Mr Watters  
**Head of School**