

Dear Parent/Carer

HMS WEEKLY UPDATE 2

Update on life in school

It's been a great week at HMS – the first full week back for the children. We continue to be so proud of our Year 5 children and those who have joined other year groups – starting a new school is a huge step and they have all done so well to settle in so quickly. The atmosphere around school is joyful – positive and focused with pupils striving to show real pride in their learning. Well done everyone!

The HMS Way Awards

Each week, teachers nominate pupils for awards to celebrate those who have demonstrated our school values and to recognise the brilliant achievements of our pupils. The awards celebrate children who have shown great respect, who have engaged well in all aspects of school life and who have shown high aspiration during lessons and around school. Well done – we are very proud of you!



Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8
Ava B	Claudia D	Kirstie A	Robbie S
Amelia-Rose S	Tommy G	Lily H	Mia S
Arthur B	Ben R	Edi L	Emmie R
Emily C	Su H-J	Ella R	Sophie A
Jemima C	Philippa U	Gwen C-W	Ivy M

Meet the Tutor Evening

Bookings are now available via MCAS to meet your child's form teacher. This will be a good opportunity to get to know your child's class teacher, to discuss the start of term and to address any issues/concerns/questions if you have them. Appointments can be made with Mr Rutherford-Orrcock (KS2) and Mr Scott (KS3) where you would value a discussion with them. They may also invite some parents/carers for a catch-up. There is also a short '[Start of Term Survey](#)' which will help teachers to prepare for the meeting.

Welcome Evenings

The evenings will involve a presentation from school staff who will share key information about the year ahead including what your child will be learning in school, the opportunities they'll have and also how you can continue to support their learning at home.

Hexham Middle School

Whetstone Bridge Road, Hexham, Northumberland NE46 3JB

T: 01434 610300 E: admin@hexhammiddle.org.uk

www.hexhammiddleschool.co.uk

Executive Headteacher: **Graeme Atkins**

Head of School: **Liam Watters**

- Year 5 – Tuesday 17th September 6.00pm – [please book here.](#)
- Year 6 – Thursday 19th September 5.30pm – [please book here.](#)

We look forward to seeing lots of you there and we'll share the information for those who can't make it.

House Point Totals

Each week, we celebrate our P Point (positive point) total across the school. We include the 'Top 4' pupils in each year group, as well as the house totals for Aln, Coquet, Wansbeck and Tweed. Well done everyone for such a positive start to term.

House Totals		Top 4 'P Points' in each year							
		Year 5		Year 6		Year 7		Year 8	
Aln	2698	1	Jemima C	1	Dillon D	1	Joseph D	1	Alfie R-W
Coquet	2763	2	Jax M	2	Jessie T	2	Artie O	2	Esme B
Tweed	2848	3	Ella A	3	Finlay F	3	Xav H-L	3	Anna O
Wansbeck	2823	4	Niamh B	4	Lucy E	4	Sam L	4	Sarah N

Pupil Leadership Team

Recruitment is now underway for our new Pupil Leadership Team. Please encourage your child to get involved and take on new opportunities.

- **Head Pupils** – applications now open from Year 8 pupils. Interviews will be scheduled next week. Please encourage your Year 8 child to get involved – it's a great experience!
- **House Captains** – candidates are now preparing their hustings speech ahead of the whole school vote on Monday 23rd September – good luck everyone!
- **HMS Council** – form classes will be appointing their class representatives in the next few days.
- **Peer Mentors** – Mr Scott will soon be launching this year's Peer Mentor team – look out for more information in assemblies.
- **Sports Leaders** – the PE team will soon be launching this new team – a great chance to support sport across the school and in other schools.
- **Library Champions** – Ms Hayler will soon be looking for her new team of Library Champions in all year groups – a very exciting opportunity!

- **Digital Leaders** – Mr Stephens is now recruiting his new Digital Leaders for the year ahead. The team will support online learning, equipment management and pupil IT support across the school.

HMS PTA Updates

First meeting of the year: Tuesday 24th September 6.30pm at HMS - all welcome.

Many of our long-serving members moved on from middle school life and left the HMS PTA at the end of last term. As a result, we are really keen to recruit new members and supporters to continue the amazing fundraising for school life.

We are now seeking:

Chairperson	We are looking for someone to become the new Chair. This is a vital role and needs to be filled to make sure the work of the PTA can continue. It's not as daunting as it sounds. You will be supported by a great team of members, supporters and school staff, who make the PTA a fun and rewarding place to be.
New members	If you'd like to join the committee, please get in touch with us. You can commit to as much or as little as you can do. We meet around half-termly to plan events and fundraising opportunities for the children. Your support is much-needed to keep this going.
New supporters	If you can't commit fully but would like to help out at events as and when you can, we would love to add you to our supporters group so that we can call upon your help at future events.

If you are interested in offering your support or any of the other roles, please contact us via admin@hexhammiddle.org.uk. We hugely value your support!

Attendance – top 3!

Attendance has been excellent this week with **97%** of pupils being in school. Our school target is 98%. It's so important that pupils and parents have a positive attitude towards school attendance – pupils should be in school every day, ready to learn and to make the most of their school opportunities. Thank you for your support.

1 st form class	2 nd form class	3 rd form class
100%	99%	98%
5-MDO	8-SRI, 7-IBO, 7-PES, 6-MBE, 5-FHA	7-AMG,6-YTA,5-ZSC, 5-JNI

Art Competition – Create the Card!

Miss Taylor is excited to share information about a new national competition based on Sonic! The winner's artwork will be published in cinemas across the UK and a trip to London. Deadline Monday 18th November. You can see more information here: [Create and design a poster to introduce the new movie Sonic the Hedgehog 3](#) . The entries will be judged on creativity, originality, and innovation so make sure designs channel Sonic the Hedgehog's energy and reflect the world of the Sonic the

Hedgehog Universe. Please come to Miss Taylor for more information on what to include on your design and bring to Miss Taylor once complete.

Author Visit



We are delighted to announce that Nadine Aisha Jassat will be visiting us in HMS on Monday 7th October to present her latest verse-novel, 'The Hidden Story of Estie Noor': a page-turning mystery about family, friendship and finding the words to speak the truth. Nadine is an award-winning author of 'The Stories Grandma Forgot (And How I Found Them)' and the poetry collection 'Let Me Tell You This'. She often works with schools and youth groups, and libraries around the world. She is a regular borrower in hers. Nadine lives in Edinburgh, and grew up in the North of England with a Yorkshire mum and a Zimbabwean dad.

Book orders: if you would like to order a book for your child in Y6 or Y7, please visit the cashless payment system on MCAS. The books will be priced at £5.59. Please note that orders/payments open on Friday 13th September and close on Monday 23rd September. No orders or payments can be taken after this date to allow the publishers time to deliver the books. Copies will also be available to borrow from HMS Library! Huge thanks to Waterstone's Bookshop in Hexham for making this visit possible.

Online Safety Updates

For Parents - Gaming Tips for Parents of Neurodivergent Children

Internet Matters have released another really useful guide, this time it's all about online gaming safety tips for parents and carers of neurodivergent children. It's a simple 5-page guide covering the research, example games, some of the challenges which parents face and the all-important benefits.

It's a great little guide which you can download [HERE](#).

MCAS Updates

SchoolComms and ParentPay

Last year, we used SchoolComms. This linked to an electronic payment system called ParentPay. Many of you will be familiar with ParentPay, which was used to pay for school dinners, trips, clubs and other items. With the successful launch of My Child at School (MCAS), we are now in the process of closing down SchoolComms and ParentPay. Account holders can still log on to the system, but over the coming months we will be closing down functionality. For example, dinner money balances are no longer being updated but balances at the end of last year are still visible (live data is now in MCAS).

We are still using ParentPay to collect money for three trips that we launched in the summer term. These are:

Year 7 War Horse Theatre Trip November 2024

Year 7/8 Manchester Residential Trip November 2024

Year 7/8 Ski Trip February 2025

Please continue to make instalments or payments for these three trips via ParentPay. This is particularly important if you want to attend the Year 7 War Horse Theatre Trip in November 2024. If you have any queries about My Child at School please contact admin@hexhammiddle.org.uk.

HMS Extra-Curricular – Autumn Clubs starting Monday 16th Sept!

Our exciting extra-curricular clubs for the autumn term have launched this week. Bookings can now be made for after-school clubs via MCAS. The offer is vibrant once again and we are so thankful to our staff for their creativity and hard work. **KS2 Drama Club now added – bookings can be made via MCAS! Huge thanks to visiting teacher, Imogen.**

Harp lessons now available: We are now adding *harp* lessons to our range of instrumental lessons offered at HMS. If your child is interested in learning the harp or even trying it out, please contact the school on admin@hexhammiddle.org.uk. We also offer lessons in: singing; guitar; bass guitar; drum kit; trumpet; trombone; tuba; French horn; cornet; baritone horn; saxophone; clarinet; flute; violin; piano.

News from the community

'On Yer Bike' Tynedale Bike festival

We are keen to support the 'On Yer Bike' bike festival which takes place in Hexham on Sunday the 22nd September from 12.00-4.00pm – please see attached flyer. The event will provide an opportunity to cycle round Hexham where roads will be closed, to get your bike fixed, to try out a cargo bike or an adapted bike for mobility issues and to get some support, advice and help generally to ride in the best way possible for you. The event organisers are keen to hear from sixth form students to support the stewarding of the event – first aid qualifications or bike maintenance knowledge will be helpful but is not obligatory. Those interested in stewarding or seeking more details should contact David Dixon via daviddixon649@gmail.com.

School Admissions - Applications for Middle, Primary and Secondary Schools - Sept 2025

The NCC Citizen Portal has now opened and will close on 31st October 2024. All children in a First, Middle or Primary school that are due to transition to Middle, Secondary or High in September 2025 will need to make an application.

[Citizen Portal - Sign in \(northumberland.gov.uk\)](https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/Citizen-Portal)

<https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/Education/Schools/School-admissions-places-appeals-1.aspx>

Upcoming Dates

Date	Event	Who
Monday 16 September	Queen's Hall Drama Launch	Year 7
Monday 16 September	Discovery Museum Visit	Year 6
Tuesday 17 September	Welcome to Year 5 Evening	Year 5
Wednesday 18 September	Queen's Hall Drama Launch	Year 7 (group)
Wednesday 18 September	Manchester Trip Information Evening 6pm	Year 8 (group)
Thursday 19 September	Head Pupil Selection Day	All year
Thursday 19 September	Queen's Hall Drama Launch	Year 7 (group)
Thursday 19 September	Welcome to Year 6 Evening	Year 6
Monday 23 September	House Hustings – House Captain Elections	All year groups
Monday 23 September	Girls in STEM Workshop, Newcastle University	Year 7
Tuesday 24 September	Story of Earth, Newcastle University	Year 5
Wednesday 25 September	Meet the Tutor Evening 3.45-6.45pm	All year groups
Friday 27 September	Head of School Award Breakfast	Award Winners
Monday 7 October	Author Visit: Nadine Aisha Jassat	Year 6 and 7

Have a fantastic weekend everyone!

Mr Watters

Head of School

Pupil Support and Safeguarding

Designated Safeguarding Leader: Mr Stephenson
Deputy Safeguarding Leaders: Mr Scott and Mr Rutherford-Orrock
Heads of Key Stage: Mr Scott and Mr Rutherford-Orrock
SENDCo/Assistant SENDCo: Mr Morgan and Mrs Ballantyne
Academic Support Coordinator: Mrs Toor
Pupil Support Workers: Mrs Dodds and Mrs Richards

Please remember that we are here to support you and your child at any time. You can contact us via the main office (phone) or by email (admin@hexhammiddle.org.uk).