

14 March 2025

Dear Parent/Carer

HMS WEEKLY UPDATE 24

It's been a truly enriching week across our school this week with so many varied and wonderful opportunities for our pupils to enjoy including: Ford Castle, cricket tournament, English Showcase, Lego League competition, Purim assembly, green careers events, Young Green Briton Challenge, KS3 Music Showcase Evening, chess tournament, Sports Leaders and much more! We ended what has been an excellent week to be proud of at HMS with a special Holi Festival lunch today – huge thanks to Mrs Satow and our catering team for their hard work and delicious food.

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 week in school.

House Totals		Top 4 'P Points' in each year							
		Year 5		Year 6		Year 7		Year 8	
Aln	49,008	1	Libby C	1	Molly C	1	Gwen C-W	1	Evie J
Coquet	49,382	2	Thea G	2	Lauren D	2	Rosie O	2	Evelyn T
Tweed	50,288	3	Lauren H	3	Samuel G	3	Betti A	3	Sarah N
Wansbeck	50,296	4	Philippa M	4	Su H-J	4	Etiene L	4	Amelia M

Ford Castle Residential

Our Year 5 group have had a wonderful time at Ford Castle this week. It's been a great adventure for them all and their first residential experience during their time at HMS. Mr Rutherford-Orrrock and the whole team have reported how proud they have been of all of our pupils for getting involved, taking on new challenges and behaving very well. A full report will follow next week. All available pictures of the trip are on our [website](#).



Hexham Middle School

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Executive Headteacher: **Graeme Atkins**

Head of School: **Liam Watters**

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
Back next week due to Ford Castle residential!	Isabella S Isobel B Ross N Jessica D Jonathon F	Ivor T Jude D Ben S Gwen C-W Finlay H	Sonny S Ben F Harry R Poppy K

KS3 English Showcase

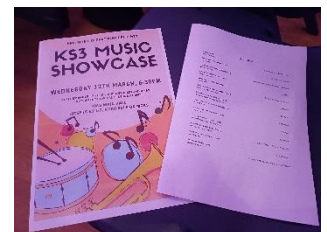
Our KS3 pupils were recently set a project to get creative and bring their learning to life in imaginative ways. This week, the English team have held their first showcase events for pupils and staff to celebrate the [outstanding projects](#) on display. The project centred around our Shakespearean studies and pupils had time in the HMS Library to research their projects before submitting final pieces last week. A standout piece came from Gwen C-W in Year 7 who has worked exceptionally hard to create an entire shadow puppet theatre to perform the 'Balcony Scene' from Romeo and Juliet. Please have a look at her outstanding work in [this short video](#) which she also produced! What a phenomenal effort, Gwen – we are very proud of you!



We are all very proud of the hard work, positive approach and creativity from each of the pupils – a HUGE well done to everyone! Enjoy having a look at some of the work which has been displayed this week. Prizes will follow for work with special recognition.

KS3 Music Showcase

I was in absolute awe of every single pupil who took part in our first KS3 Music Showcase on Wednesday night. It takes such confidence and bravery to get up on stage to perform in front of an audience. Last night was a phenomenal display of talent, dedication and passion and I am so proud of everyone for getting involved so brilliantly. I am sure those who attended will agree that it was an outstanding evening with a wide range of very [talented musicians and vocalists](#) taking to the stage.



Special thanks go to Ms Tindall who, alongside her team of music teachers, peripatetic staff and highly skilled support technicians, has done so much to further enhance our music provision across the school since joining us in September. Music is very much at the forefront of school life. We have lots of musical events coming up between now and the end of the year - lots to look forward to!

Year 6 Rising Stars Cards

We know that lots of our Year 6 pupils are working hard at home, engaging with revision materials and past papers in the run up to their SATs in May. Today, each Year 6 pupil has received a **Rising Stars Card**. Each time that they do some extra revision at home - this could be practice in one of the CGP books or engaging with a past paper - they can get a signature from someone at home in one of the boxes. Pupils will also receive a signature each time they attend Early Birds Club on Tuesdays and Thursdays before school. Once their Rising Stars Card is complete with signatures, pupils should take this to the Pupil Support Hub and show Mr Rutherford-Orrcock to receive a reward in recognition of their positive engagement and aspiration! We look forward to celebrating Year 6's successes in our upcoming Rising Stars assemblies.

Young Green Briton Challenge - Dragon's Den

This week, we held our Dragon's Den event where we welcomed parent volunteers to judge our 10 teams voted for by their peers in PSHE classes. Each team had the chance to pitch their solution to a local environmental problem. The judges scores are being counted and we will reveal the three teams that have been selected to attend the regional final in Hexham Abbey very soon. A huge thank you to our parent judges who gave up their time on Thursday morning. This is our second year of the Young Green Briton Challenge and we hope to continue this focus, building in the concept of sustainability and climate change into our wider enrichment opportunities.



Hexham Schools' Book Festival

We are delighted to announce that HMS will be taking part in the Hexham Schools' Book Festival 2025.

Year 6	Zohra Nabi on Tuesday 25th March. Lucky Year 6 will be visiting the Queen's Hall in Hexham to see Zohra Nabi present her new book 'Deep Dark'.
Year 5	The Brothers McLeod on Wednesday 26th March. The Brothers McLeod are launching their book 'Knight Sir Louis and the Cauldron of Chaos' at the Queen's Hall. Y5 will be in the audience!
A voluntary contribution of £2 per pupil has been made available on MCAS for these events.	

Hexham Schools' Festival Book Orders

If you would like to order a copy of either of these books at a discounted rate, please follow the links below to Hexham Book Festival's bookseller, Opt Indie Books. All books will be made ready for collection on the day. Please put your order in by **Tuesday 18th March** and let them know **the name of your pupil and their school in the notes in checkout**. Please note that this order is not organised by HMS and is therefore not on MCAS. You are making the order directly with Opt Indie Books.

Y6 Zohra Nabi

https://www.optindiebooks.co.uk/store/p347/Deep_Dark_%3A_Volume_1.html

Y5 Brothers McLeod

https://www.optindiebooks.co.uk/store/p349/Knight_Sir_Louis_and_the_Cauldron_of_Chaos.html

Sports update

Spring Games House Competition 2025

Mr Cameron and the PE team are delighted to announce this year's [Spring Games House Competition](#).

Pupils should come to school in their PE kit on their event days. Activities will be selected in advance and pupils will be competing for House Points. Who will be this year's champions?



Cricket Update



This week, our team enjoyed a 'test format' indoor cricket match against Corbridge Middle School, which ebbed and flowed as the game went on. The outcome of the match went all the way down to the final ball of the innings, where Corbridge just edged the victory! It was a fantastic game all round with positive attitudes from both sets of players. Well done all – you represented HMS brilliantly!

Club News

New Club Opportunity

We are delighted to be able to offer a new club starting from next Thursday (20.3.25). This will be themed around archaeology and ancient history. It is aimed at pupils from year 6 to 8 and will be limited to 15 pupils. The club will be after school from 3.15 to 4.15pm. There is a charge of £3 per session to cover tuition and specialist resources. The club will be led by Mr Boyle who has a degree background in archaeology.

The club sessions include:

1. What is archaeology? An introduction with Dig Boxes
2. Making sense of soil - stratigraphy and puzzles
3. Archaeological art - drawing site plans
4. "Coins, Coins, Coins..."

Places will be offered on a first-come, first-served basis and will be made live on MCAS from 12pm on Monday 17th March. The club will only be viable if we get 15 pupils sign up for this.

Attendance – top 3!

Attendance was very good this week with 95% of pupils being in school. However, our school target is 97%. 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.

1 st form class 98%	2 nd form class 97%	3 rd form class 96%
7-IBO, 7-PES, 6-MBE, 5-MDO, 5-ZSC	8-BLA, 6-JJO	7-SFO, 7-AMG, 6-RAL, 5-FHA

Online Safety

Wearable Tech

More and more children are being given technology that can be worn, e.g. smartwatches and whilst there can be benefits the risks aren't always apparent. This article from Internet Matters explores wearable technology for children and gives advice on:

- The different types of wearable tech, e.g. smart watches, glasses, VR headsets and fitness trackers.
- Whether wearable technology is safe and what some of the concerns are, e.g. privacy and data collection, impact on body image.
- How wearable tech can support wellbeing.

You can find the article [HERE](#). (by Alan McKenzie, online safety advisor)

Pupil Competitions

Lego League

Our Lego League team had a fantastic day at the 'Lego League Competition Day' in North Tyneside yesterday. The competition was a great experience to develop their skills and work with peers from other schools in the area. Mr Freeman-Myers and Mr Nicholson were very proud of all of the pupils who took part and who have worked so hard in the club sessions after-school.



News from the community

Hexham Air Cadet Spring Open Evening

The Hexham Air Cadet Spring Open Evenings are scheduled for:

Friday 21st March, from 1930-2100, at Hexham Air Cadets.

Wednesday 26th March, from 1930-2100, at Hexham Air Cadets.

Hexham Air Cadets are open to those who are in year 8 and are older than 12 years old.

<https://www.raf.mod.uk/aircadets/>. More information is attached.

Additional notices

School Transport Arrangements

We have been asked to make parents/carers of children and young people who currently access the school transport service aware that following a review that has been undertaken recently changes to your child's school transport arrangements may arise from w/c 28 April, immediately after the Easter Holidays. The Council's School Transport team will write to you before the Easter Holidays with the updated details which could include changes to your child's transport provider as well as their pick up or drop off times and locations. If you have any queries or concerns regarding this matter then please get in contact with the School Transport team directly by emailing schooltransport@northumberland.gov.uk.

Free School Meals

Free School Meals

You can find the eligibility criteria for free school meals here. If you think your child may be eligible, please make an application to the local authority who review your request. You can find out more [here](#).

Upcoming Dates

Date	Event	Who
Monday 17 March	Spring Games – Year 8	Year 8
Monday 17 March	High Borrans - Parents' Info Evening – 6pm – Fellside Hall	Year 8
Tuesday 18 March	Spring Games – Year 6	Year 6
Tuesday 18 March	'Where Languages can take you' webinar	Year 8
Thursday 20 March	Spring Games – Year 7	Year 7
Friday 21 March	Spring Games – Year 5	Year 5
Friday 21 March	Rugby 7s Competition (Dame Allan's School)	Year 7
Friday 21 March	Red Nose Day - Fundraising Day – donations can be made via MCAS	All year groups
Tuesday 25 March	Book Festival Event - Zohra Nabi - Queen's Hall	Year 6
Wednesday 26 March	Book Festival Event - Brothers McLeod - Queen's Hall	Year 5

Have a great weekend!

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).