

HMS WEEKLY UPDATE 8

End of half term update

We've reached the end of our first half term and what a great 8 weeks it's been. It has been fantastic to welcome our Year 5 pupils to middle school – we are all so proud of how they have adapted to their new school and new routines. Across the school, pupils have been engaged with their learning both in and out of the classroom. As always, I have been very proud of how our pupils engage with the wider life of the school including leadership roles, clubs, representing school at events and the many varied personal development opportunities on offer. The atmosphere around school has been vibrant

and positive and I know this will continue as we enter what is always a very busy half term – it won't be long until we hear the first carols around the corridors!

We ended the half term with our first discos of the year last night. Huge thanks to the HMS PTA and the many volunteers who supported the event – it was a great night – joy all round!

Mr Rutherford-Orrock (Head of KS2) has sadly not been in school recently. Miss Bell (Deputy Head of KS2) is covering his role as Acting Head of KS2 and Miss McLoughlin is covering his teaching. Miss Tindall (Curriculum Leader of Music) is currently away from school while she recovers from an operation. Mrs Rowell, Mr Seago, the peripatetic teachers and wider staff are supporting with extra-curricular clubs and festive event planning. We all wish Miss Tindall well with her recovery and look forward to her returning later this term.

Head of School Awards

Head of School Awards were awarded this morning with pupils being recognised for 'listening'. Pupils were invited to join Mr Watters for breakfast – bacon sandwiches, pastries, hot chocolate and juice – and were presented with a certificate and P5 award! Congratulations everyone – well done for showing our skills and values every day!



Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8
Iona E	Sophie W	Emilia F	Etta L
Jack P	Isla M	Micheal C	India R
Nola P	Elke H	Leo B	Tyler H
Matteo K	Oran H	Chloe K	Sofia O
Seth D-S	Kaylin F	Leela H	Thomas M
	Sophie C		

Hexham Middle School

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Executive Headteacher: **Graeme Atkins**

Head of School: **Liam Watters**

Parental Consents – update request

We have updated the wording of our parental consents and ask all parent/carers to review their child's consents on MCAS. The deadline for this is Friday 7 November. To do this please open the app, scroll down to 'Parental Consents' on the home page and select either give consent or decline consent. Thank you for your prompt attention.

Children scootering to school

We are delighted to see several HMS pupils scootering to school. In the main, this is done safely and sensibly. However, we have had recent reports of unsafe scootering on the pavements and roads around school. If your child does bring a scooter to school, please speak with them about doing so safely and sensibly, and taking particular care when crossing roads. Please also speak to them about the importance of wearing their helmet. Scooters and bikes should be pushed out of the black school gates and pupils should not use them in particularly busy areas of the site. Thank you for your support.

Gaia Visit

A group of KS3 and KS2 pupils had the exciting opportunity to spend the afternoon at Hexham Abbey as part of the Gaia exhibition over the past few days. KS2 pupils enjoyed a presentation from 'The Average Scientist' and asked some thought-provoking questions. KS3 joined the Durham University Day. Pupils then explored Gaia - first by sitting beneath the Earth and then by looking at the model from above. Pupils enjoyed looking for Hexham! Pupils were inspired by the exhibition and the atmosphere within the Abbey is very impressive. Well worth a visit over half-term! 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
No assembly due to INSET Day	Jenna T Jacob C Ollie K Jemima C Kyle S	Michael C Katlyn H James S Charlie M Doug B	Amelie G Alfie L Florence B George C Kirstie A

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 overall house totals for Aln, Coquet, Wansbeck and Tweed.

Congratulations to Coquet House who were this half term's P Point Champions!

House Totals		Top 4 'P Points' in each year							
		Year 5		Year 6		Year 7		Year 8	
Aln	18,841	1	Parker F	1	Spike N	1	Meghan J	1	Tyler H
Coquet	19,209	2	Oliver L	2	Heidi B	2	Emilia F	2	Etta L
Tweed	18,710	3	Nola P	3	Amelia-Rose S	3	Jessica T	3	Oskar P
Wansbeck	18,861	4	Zoe L	4	Gracie R	4	Jack B	4	Harry B

Attendance – top 3!

Attendance this week was **96%** - this is fantastic! We really value that our 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. We encourage pupils to be resilient to ensure that they don't miss out on great learning each day. Please continue to support us by encouraging your child into school every day. What a great start to the year – THANK YOU all!

1 st form class – 98.5%	2 nd form class - 98%	3 rd form class – 97.5%
5-JNI, 5-EKI	5-YTA, 6-FHA	7-PGA, 8-ETA

Maths Update

This Week's TT Rockstars!

This week, we celebrated our pupils' achievements in the Times Tables Rock Stars (TTRS) challenge, recognising those with the highest number of correct answers. A huge congratulations to all our winners—and well done to everyone who took part and gave it their best effort!

Daniel F, Matei T, Hugo E, Jacob B, Evie N, Erin B, Lochie D, Finn M, Millie C, Ted P, Phaedra-Sun H-F, Finn R, Lewis B

We're excited to continue our weekly competitions after the half-term break. Any extra practice on TTRS over the holiday would be fantastic and will help pupils stay confident with their times tables.

Sports News

Year 6 Football Update

Our Year 6 girls' team played in the first round of the County Cup last week. Their opponents were Sacred Heart Primary in Newcastle. HMS put in a very strong performance to get an 'away win.' HMS scored a number of great team goals. It was brilliant to see the girls playing with a smile! We look forward to seeing who we draw in the next round. We are very proud of the team!



Tynedale Sports Awards

The West Northumberland Sports Awards to be held at 6pm on Sunday 30th November 2025 at Hexham Mart, are open for nominations (closes 3rd November). If you know someone who deserves to be recognised for being a great participant or volunteer or if you are a club or team, then this is your chance to shine. Nominating is easy at [Annual Awards - Sport Tynedale](#). There is so much great voluntary sport in our area which we want to showcase so please help us get the diverse range of sports we have in the area recognised. GET YOUR NOMINATIONS IN BEFORE 3RD NOVEMBER.

Pupil Success

Maddoc H (Y6) attended a Development Event for judo at the Tyne 12 to 16 year old class on Sunday 19th October. He was successful in attaining a Bronze medal in his class. Maddoc attends the Haydon Bridge and Hexham judo class that meet on Monday at 6 until 7 at the Wentworth and on Thursday between 6 and 7 in Haydon Bridge.



Online Safety Update

For Parents - Instagram AI Content PG13

Instagram have come out with their latest 'we prioritise teen safety' feature. This time they have introduced a new way for parents to manage their teens' access to one-on-one chats with AI characters. Teen accounts are now to be guided by PG13 movie ratings, which means that users should only see content that's similar to what they would see in a PG13 movie by default. AI characters (chatbots) are a significant concern. They were introduced into many apps around 3 years ago and there continues to be reports of multiple failures of so-called safety guardrails with children being exposed to chats, advice and guidance which is entirely age-inappropriate.

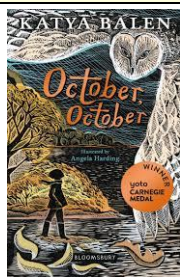
The new features:

Allow parents to turn off their child's access to one-on-one chats with AI characters entirely.

- Allow parents to block specific AI characters.
- Parents will get insights into the topics their children are chatting about with AI characters.

You can find a more in-depth explanation [HERE](#) for the AI chatbots and [HERE](#) for the teen/PG13 accounts.

News from the Community



Half Term is Green Libraries Week with Northumberland Libraries

This year, the school break falls in Green Libraries Week so there are a number of eco-friendly activities for families to enjoy. Hexham Library is also hosting a Big Draw Festival 2025 event for 8-13 year olds during half term, centred on Katya Balen's *October, October* in partnership with The Maltings. *October, October* is HMS's Book Talk choice for Year 5 this term. Details of all the events and how to book places can be found [here](#).

Free School Meals

If you feel that your child may be eligible for free school meals, please read the criteria and make an application as soon as you can. Find out more on the [Northumberland County Council website](#). To apply, please [complete this form](#) via Northumberland County Council.

Upcoming Dates

Date	Event	Who
Monday 3 November	School re-opens at 8.40am	All year groups
Sunday 2 to Thursday 6 November	London Trip	KS3 group
Tuesday 4 November	Flu Immunisations	All year groups
Wednesday 5 November	Themed Lunch Day – Day of the Dead Mexican	All year groups
Thursday 6 and Monday 10 November	Year 6 Parents' Evenings – 3.45-6.45pm (bookings open next week)	Year 6
Sunday 9 November	Hexham Remembrance Service	All welcome
Monday 10 November	Great North Museum Visit	Year 5
Friday 14 November	Children in Need Fundraising Day	All year groups
Thursday 20 and Wednesday 26 November	Year 7 Parents' Evenings – info to follow	Year 7

Please note that school will close at 1.30pm on Friday 19th December for the Christmas break.



Dare I say it... but the festive season is fast-approaching, and I know lots of you will be wanting to update your diaries. Here are some initial dates – more to follow in our full festive calendar soon.

Date	Festive Event	Who
Friday 21 November	Hexham Christmas Lights Switch-On, Sele Bandstand	All welcome
Monday 8 December	HMS PTA Festive Forest Evening, 5.30pm	All welcome
Tuesday 9 and Thursday 11 December	HMS PTA Christmas Pop-Up Shops	All year groups
Wednesday 10 December	HMS Christmas Lunch	All year groups
Friday 12 December	Year 7 Christmas Trip	Year 7
Monday 15 December	HMS Carol Service, Hexham Abbey, 7.00pm	All welcome
Tuesday 16 December	Year 5 Pantomime Trip	Year 5
Tuesday 16 December	Year 8 Centre for Life Trip incl. ice-skating	Year 8
Wednesday 17 December	HMS Carols in the Community	Community visits
Wednesday 17 December	Year 6 Pantomime Trip	Year 6
Thursday 18 December	Christmas Celebration Assemblies	All year groups
Friday 19 December	Christingle Services	All year groups

Have a lovely half-term break everyone!

Mr Watters

Head of School

Pupil Support and Safeguarding

Designated Safeguarding Leader: Ms Karn

Deputy Safeguarding Leaders: Mr Scott, Mr Rutherford-Orrock, Miss Lamont and Miss Bell

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).