

HMS WEEKLY UPDATE 21

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.

House Totals		Top 4 'P Points' in each year							
		Year 5		Year 6		Year 7		Year 8	
Aln	48,169	1	Mia C	1	Charlie A	1	Dylan W	1	Edward S
Coquet	48,575	2	Alexander D	2	Sophia B	2	Lottie H	2	Ianto T
Tweed	47,601	3	Colette M	3	Alfie S	3	Douglas B	3	Tyler H
Wansbeck	47,716	4	Mia B	4	Archie H	4	Sadie B	4	Oliver D

Head of School Spotlight Awards

Our new Spotlight Awards celebrate pupils who have an exceptional attitude to learning, attend well and make the most of the opportunities on offer in school. We want to recognise pupils who get it right every single day and make sure they are noticed and celebrated in school! Each half term, pupils in 'Band 1' for attendance and those with a very high P:S point ratio (i.e. high P points and low S points) will be entered into a special draw. Certificates and prizes will be presented in assemblies each half term. This half term's winners were presented with certificates and a Starbucks voucher to enjoy a lovely treat! Our first [Spotlight Award winners](#) are below. Congratulations everyone and thank you for shining every day!

Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8
Evie N Hugo E	Skye K James H	Dillon D Alexis L	Freddie H Daniel B

Lunar New Year

Thank you so much to our wonderful catering team who worked hard to prepare a delicious Lunar New Year lunch for us all today. The food was an absolute treat and choices included sweet and sour, chicken curry and tasty chow mein followed by a range of desserts and a



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Head of School: **Liam Watters**

fortune cookie for everyone! Everyone loved this special lunch as always - themed lunches are always a hit at HMS!

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.



Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8
Erin B	Alba B	Owen B	Rose L
Oliver L	Ethan W	Hazel L	Jack L
Tiggy G	Leo McS	Will M	Lucas S
Isaac J	Oran H	Joey R	Grace M
Charlie S	Lochie D	Edward H	George C

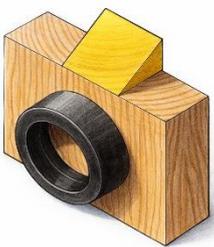
PTFA Spring Discos



What a way to end the half term last night with our Spring Discos! It was such a fun night and great to see so many of our pupils having a fantastic time despite the cold, rainy weather outside - joy all round! Special thanks to our PTFA and the many supporters who helped to make the event another great success. Thank you to Mr Atkins, Mrs Herrmann, Miss Kingett, Miss Scott and Mrs Downes for their support on the night. See [here](#) for more photos. I hope everyone had a lovely time!

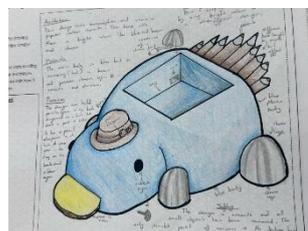
Curriculum Spotlight – Design Technology

This term in Design & Technology, our KS3 students have been developing their presentation and communication skills. Year 7 stepped into the shoes of professional designers, creating innovative desk-tidy concepts for the design company Alessi and even used AI to transform their sketches into realistic product visuals. Year 8 focused on graphic communication, learning a range of drawing techniques, from converting oblique drawings into isometric forms to applying rendering skills that bring their ideas to life. We're proud of the creativity and progress shown across both year groups!



Example of use of AI to bring this design from a Year 7 pupil to life! (on the right)

Year 8 graphic communication work (on the left).



News from Music

QEHS Winter Concert

Last week was the outstanding QEHS Winter Concert with many HMS students performing! The concert, held in the Winter Gardens, was full-to-capacity as audience members watched a jam-packed programme of around 80 performers, featuring the school's Show Choir, Wind Band, Jazz Ensemble, Session Singers, QEHS Choir, Soul Band, String Ensemble and a whole host of high-standard solos and duets. The Show Choir is one of the cross-trust groups, featuring students from both HMS and QEHS. The Choir performed 'All That Jazz' and 'Beauty and the Beast'.



Ski Trip 2026 - the final update!



Winter returned overnight and we woke up to an exceptional amount of snow. The teachers were worried about the visibility as the fog closed in, however, the conditions got better and better as the day went on! All groups ventured off piste and into the deep snow today. Mr Gaines' group skied it smoothly and gracefully. Mr Whitfield's group attacked it at 'full gas' and it was funny to watch how many people went splat! At some point in the afternoon, Mr Johnson's group went jumping and he photographed a number of skiers in mid-air - the pictures look great, yet the landings weren't!

All our groups met after dinner for the final presentations. It was brilliant to see all our groups with their instructors. The instructors praised all HMS pupils for their effort and positive attitude this week. Instructor Alice commented on how polite our pupils have been all week - so great to hear! We took thank you cards from school to present to the instructors - the card has a picture of our Hydro building on it. Instructor Elana was very interested in the age of the Hydro building as she had researched HMS before we arrived.

This year was Mrs Barnett's final ski trip, and we all owe her a HUGE thank you for finding The Hotel Skilt. It has been amazing to take groups away with her for the last decade - Mr Gaines has learnt a lot from her about leading trips and she will be so missed! Mrs Barnett officially retired from HMS a number of years ago and we have been so grateful for all of her continued support over the last few years.



The best comment of the week came from some of our girls who are all planning to re-do Year 8 again so they can go on next year's trip! There were definitely a lot of wobbly lips as we handed in our skis and boots after the last run. It will be great to get home and see our loved ones but a lot of our hearts want to stay and ski! As an instructor in Norway once told me, 'Skiing is white fever - once it gets in your veins, it is very difficult to control!' I think a lot of people have experienced 'white

fever' this week! It has been an amazing adventure this week. It was a pleasure to take HMS to the Alps again. Skiing is definitely life changing education - what an experience!

Mid-Year Equipment Check

As we move past the mid-point of the school year, we kindly ask all parents/ carers to take a moment over the half-term break to check that pupils are fully stocked with the essential equipment they need for lessons. A quick "reset" at home by checking pencil cases, replacing missing items, and ensuring everything is in working order would be greatly appreciated. If you need support with equipment or your child needs help with organisation, please contact their form teacher. Thank you for your continued support in helping pupils stay prepared and ready for learning.



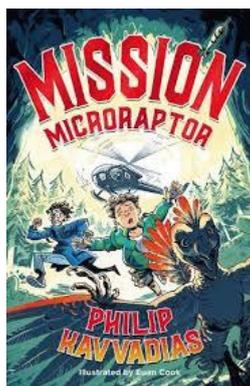
News from the HMS Library

Reading for Pleasure: Year 5 author visit

We are so lucky in Hexham to have our own Book Festival. As part of the Schools Festival, the amazing organisers are bringing author, playwright, poet, illustrator and screenwriter Philip Kavadias to HMS. Philip will present his latest book, Mission Microraptor, to Year 5 on Friday 27th March.



The event is designed to inspire a love of reading and Philip specialises in encouraging reluctant readers. Pupils will participate in the funny and engaging Raptor Survival Quiz on the day!



Schools Festival Book Orders

If you would like to order a signed book for your child at a discounted rate, please follow the link below to the Hexham Book Festival's own site. Please put your order in by Tuesday 10th March, including the name of your child and Hexham Middle School in the checkout. Hexham Book Festival will bring the books to school for collection on the day. Mission Microraptor will also be added to HMS Library. <https://www.hexhambookfestival.co.uk/product/mission-microraptor-by-philip-kavadias>

Personal Development Updates

Aspire Week (all year groups)

Our Aspire Week is fast-approaching in March. There is a draft timetable for parents/carers that have kindly offered their time and we will be contacting volunteers individually to confirm availability. This Careers and Aspire programme will involve parents giving a 20-minute talk followed by a Q&A and pupil reflection. We look forward to welcoming the parent community into the school to create some meaningful encounters for our pupils.

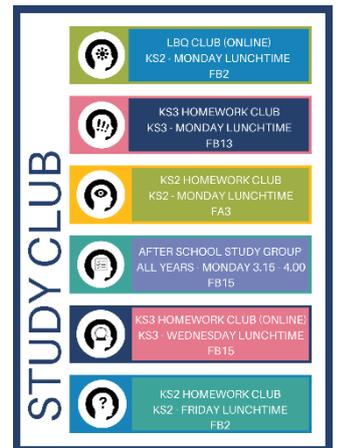


Clubs Update

Study/Homework Clubs

Is your child struggling to complete homework? Is accessing online platforms a challenge? Does your child need more support? Please encourage them to come along to one of our six homework clubs in school throughout the week. There are so many opportunities for pupils to get their work finished before it even gets home and to do this with support from school staff.

From Monday 2nd March, we'll be offering a new after-school study group on Mondays 3.15-4.00pm. To be a useful club, we aim to run this as a drop-in so pupils can decide when they need to come along. This session will be led by school staff who can support with homework and accessing online platforms. As there is no regular sign-up, parents must know whether their child is attending. At 3.30pm each week, a text will be sent to parents of children in attendance. Snacks and drinks will be made available.



Attendance – Top 3!

This week's attendance remained at **95%** and we hope all our pupils will be able to return to school refreshed in the first week of the new half-term! 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 – especially as we enter the colder months. Thank you for your support.

1st form class – 99.4%	2nd form class – 99%	3rd form class – 98.5%
7-PGA	5-YTA	6-FHA

Sports News

Table Tennis Competition

Well done to all our Y5 & 6 boys who competed in the table tennis county championships on Friday. Nearly all of those selected had been practising and developing their skills at table tennis club on Wednesday after school and had a chance to compete with other players from Corbridge and NSB. They played 4 different rounds, each being seeded based on their performance. The final standings are listed below - well done boys! We must also say a big thank you to Mr Blatherwick at Corbridge for hosting and organising the U11 and U13 boys and girl's county championships over recent weeks.



Girls' Rugby



Well done to our Y7 and Y8 girls rugby players who took part in a community festival held at Kingston Park, home of the Newcastle Red Bulls. Girls experienced playing on the first team pitch (albeit in very wet & cold conditions!) All the girls were outstanding, and despite the harsh conditions they demonstrated some excellent rugby throughout. This event was always about participation rather than results, but from their 3 games the Year 7's won one and drew one, whilst the Year 8's teamed up with Corbridge and won 3 out of their 4 games. Extra credit to the Year 8's who also teamed up with Ovingham to ensure they had a full side out, demonstrating the true spirit of rugby!

Online Safety Update

Online Safety Guidance

The government has launched a new [online safety website](#) to support families and encourage regular conversations about what may be seen online. Based on parents' main concerns and needs, it provides:

- tips for parents' conversations with their children
- actions to support each stage of their child's life
- parental controls information

Trusted resources from charities and third parties are signposted where parents can access other forms of support (like speaking to an expert). The website will continue to grow and be developed this year, supporting the [Online Safety Act](#) and wider government aims around protecting young people from harm.

Maths News



TTRS Update (Years 5 and 6)

Congratulations to this week's TTRS winners! Our focus last week was percentage completed, and it proved to be a very competitive challenge, with many pupils achieving over 100%. A big well done to all of our winners for their fantastic effort. After the half term break, our next focus will be accuracy, and we look forward to announcing the winners for that challenge then.

Isaac J, Toby S, Hugo E, Elliot C, Eloise H, Owen F, Reggie T, James C, Darcey H, Charlie A, Jessica S, Alfie H

Last Friday we celebrated Number Day, and it was a brilliant success!

We ran two exciting competitions for the pupils. The first was our Teacher Scavenger Hunt. Staff wore number badges, and pupils worked hard to match the numbers to a variety of facts. We had a fantastic number of entries with thoughtful and creative responses. Two winners were selected from each group, Izzy O, Millie B, Sophia B, Oran H, Kate H, Jessie T, Theo T and Joanna R. Congratulations to all of them, and well done to everyone who took part! Our second competition was the Number Day T-shirt Design Challenge. A winner was chosen from each year group:

- Year 5: *George* created a bright and eye-catching design featuring mathematical symbols and number lines.
- Year 6: *Sebastian* produced a detailed black-and-white design filled with calculations—his attention to detail was exceptional.
- Year 7: *Mollie* designed a vibrant T-shirt with the slogan “*Maths: Eat, Sleep, Repeat*”—a fantastic idea and beautifully presented.
- Year 8: *Callie* created a colourful design bursting with different numbers.

We were so impressed by the creativity and effort shown across all year groups. Well done to every pupil who entered—your designs were wonderful! We look forward to more fun and inspiring maths competitions in the future. The conversations around school about numbers were brilliant to hear!

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.

School Calendar

Date	Event	Who
Monday 16 – Friday 20 February	School closed for half-term break	All year groups
Monday 23 February	School reopens at 8.40am	All year groups
Monday 23 Feb to Friday 6 March	Aspire Weeks (National Careers Week)	All year groups
Tuesday 24 February	NERAP ‘Exploring Careers’ workshop	Year 5
Wednesday 25 February	NERAP ‘CSI Forensic Science’ workshop	Year 8
Wednesday 25 – Friday 27 February	Ford Castle Residential	Year 5
Thursday 26 February	NERAP ‘Lego Engineering’ workshop	Year 7
Thursday 26 February	Head of School Award Breakfast – Teamwork	All years - nominees
Monday 2 March	High Borrans Information Evening, 5.30pm	Year 8 (group)

Monday 9 March	STEM Week	All year groups
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Have a great half term holiday everyone!

Mr Watters

Pupil Support and Safeguarding

Designated Safeguarding Leader: Mrs Mackenzie

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

Heads of Key Stage: Miss Bell (Y5), Mr Scott (Y6 and Y7), Miss
Lamont (Y8)

SENDCo/Assistant SENDCo: Mr Morgan, Mr Rutherford-Orrrock and
Miss Poxton

Academic Support Coordinator: Mrs Toor

Pupil Support Workers: Ms Thompson and Mrs Richards

Attendance Officer: Miss Parradine

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).