

16 February 2023

Dear Parent/Carer

We reach the end of another busy but enjoyable half term this week, with us now half-way through the academic year. I am writing to you in the absence of Mr Seaton who had quite a nasty fall at the weekend. He is now home having been in hospital but it may be a few weeks before we see him back in school. In the meantime, we wish him well for a speedy recovery.

Funeral arrangements for Holly

Tomorrow, Friday 17 February, Holly's funeral will take place in Hexham Abbey at 11am. Holly's family have indicated that those wishing to attend the service, which will have a purple theme in recognition of Holly's favourite colour, will be very welcome. Please note that the burial service afterwards is private and not for general attendance.

Holly's cortege will pass the school en route to the Abbey at approximately 10.50am tomorrow. Staff not attending the funeral will line Whetstone Bridge Road at that time as a mark of respect. Students of course are not in school tomorrow as it is a teacher training day. However, those not attending the funeral who would like to join the staff would be welcome to do so.

NEU Industrial Action, Tuesday 28 February 2023

The Tuesday of the first week back sees the second day of industrial action by the National Education Union. Arrangements on the day will be similar to those of the previous strike day, whereby students in years 11, 12 and 13 will be able to attend school, with students in years 9 and 10 sent work to complete remotely at home.

Those in school that day will attend lessons if their teacher is in school. For lessons where teachers are not in, year 11 students will be provided with revision or enrichment activities and sixth formers can undertake private study. Please note: the year 11 options meetings schedule for Tuesday 28 February will still go ahead.

A small number of vulnerable and critical worker children will also be in school that day and I will write separately to their parents.

As before, if your child has free school meals and will be in school, they will get their lunch as normal. If your child is not attending and is entitled to free school meals, they will be invited to collect a packed lunch from the dining hall on the Monday afternoon.

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Executive Headteacher: **Graeme Atkins**
Head of School: **Neil Seaton**

I shall write to you again on Monday 27 February with further details.

Year 9 Immunisations

An immunisation session has been arranged in school on Wednesday 1 March for Year 9 booster vaccinations for Meningococcal ACWY (MenACWY) and Tetanus, Diphtheria and Poliomyelitis (Td/IPV). A letter containing a link to provide consent will be sent out via Schoolcomms today to all Year 9 parents.

Inter-County Cross-Country Success

Seven students from Y9 through to Y13 donned their running shoes and travelled to Sunderland for the next round of this year's Schools' Cross Country Competition. Having come in the top 16 in the recent County Championships at Temple Park, they each earned the honour of wearing the yellow and red Northumberland vest to race against the other northern counties of Cleveland, Cumbria, Durham and North Yorkshire. Our runners were:

- Junior Boys – Magnus R (County Champion) and Arthur D L, both Y9
- Inter Girls – Ania S (Y10), Emily L (Y10) and Poppy W (Y11)
- Inter Boys – Arty W (Y10) – qualified but unable to run
- Senior Boys – Ben B (Y12)
- Senior Girls – Jess S (Y13)

Magnus came home as the first finisher for Northumberland and Northumberland also emerged as the overall winning County Team.

On the basis of their results, Magnus, Arthur, Ania, Emily and Jess have each received an invitation to represent Northumberland once again at the English Schools' AA Cross Country Cup on Saturday 18 March at Wollaton Park in Nottingham. We wish them all the best.

With best wishes for an enjoyable half-term break.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Graeme Atkins', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Graeme Atkins
Executive Headteacher