



Queen Elizabeth High School

spes durat avorum

26th January 2024

QEHS WEEKLY UPDATE 18



Dear Parent/Carer

Update on school life

There are many favourite moments you can have as Head of School and the joy of watching the school production is always one of them. There is a long period between selecting the school show and that first night. The work that goes into casting, rehearsing, choreographing, preparing the music, the tech, the lighting, the costumes and the set is immense. However, the hours of work are worth it to see the enthusiasm, talent and sparkle in the students. A colleague once reminded me that students remember these moments of school for the rest of their life. The participants in Grease will have memories of the fun, camaraderie and success of pulling off an amazing production.

Well done to the students involved, to the staff who have made it happen and



Jude Long who returned to produce the show this year. Thank you to the QEPTFA for selling refreshments. The tickets have now all Sold Out!

Queen Elizabeth High School

Whetstone Bridge Road, Hexham, NE46 3JB

T: 01434 610300 E: admin@qehs.net

www.qehs.net

Executive Headteacher: Graeme Atkins

Head of School: Neil Seaton

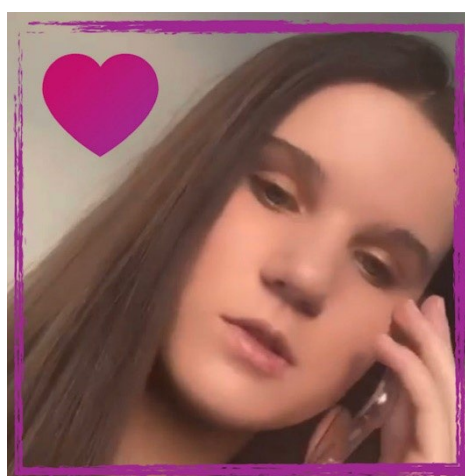
Respect

Today is wear purple day in the high school in memory of Holly Newton who tragically died on 27 January 2023. We remember Holly and our thoughts extend to her friends and family at this time.

Message from Holly's mam

At 11am on Saturday 27 January everyone is welcome to join family and friends of Holly Newton in an act of remembrance at Hexham Abbey to mark one year since Holly was tragically killed in the centre of the town.

A moment of silent reflection will be followed by some words from Curate Henry Hope and tributes from myself and friends. Attendees are welcome to light a candle and there will be the opportunity to dedicate special purple stars in Holly's memory as part of the Abbey's 'Stars for Eternity' installation, which will be open to the public from the beginning of February until the autumn. For those unable to attend, stars can be dedicated in the Abbey between now and Tuesday 30 January. Candles can also be lit in the Abbey in Holly's memory at any time during normal opening hours.



Anyone that feels unable to attend the abbey or can't at that time but would still like to leave a tribute can do so by leaving flowers etc at the bandstand.

The media are welcome to attend if they wish but we ask for no photos or videos to be taken during the service. I won't be doing 1-1 interviews at this stage so please don't ask.

Thank you again for all of your support and kindness

Micala (Holly's mam)

Engage

Northumberland Schools' County Championships at Temple Park

Over 30 HMS and QEHS students had qualified for this event.

The going was solid underfoot and students ran in a snowstorm. Everyone displayed amazing effort on the day.

We had great success with a number of students finishing in the top 16 and proceeding to the next round to represent Northumberland at the Inter Counties. Special mention to Morgan V (Junior Boys) who finished 3rd and Ania S (inter Girls) who finished 2nd.



Looking after your child's emotional well-being Parent / carer workshops

Thank you for the many expressions of interest around mental health and wellbeing awareness workshops.

A 2 hour workshop 'Looking after your child's emotional well-being workshop' will be running at QEHS. There will be three opportunities to attend the workshop as we have tried to offer a variety of times to accommodate as many parents/carers as possible:

Thursday 25th January 10am – 12pm

Thursday 25th January 5pm – 7pm

Wednesday 7th February 1 -3pm

This is the same workshop, you only need to attend one slot. For more information about the workshop, please see the attached flyer. If this sounds like something you would like to do, please contact **Jen Ballantyne, Student Standards and Support Co-ordinator** at jballantyne@qehs.net to book which slot you would like.

Aspire

Y11 Mock Exams

Y11 mock exams begin on 7 February. Next week students will have an assembly on effective revision strategies. Please remind your child that drop-in sessions are available at lunchtime and after school. Y11 students are also meeting with the sixth form team about entry to Y12 and we encourage students to make aspirational choices and work hard to achieve what they need for their post-16 destinations.

Year 11 Students – Special Exam Arrangements

Mrs Wood held an assembly this week for the students in Year 11 that qualify for special exam arrangements for their GCSE's/BTECS. The arrangements will be put in place to ensure that all students receive the support they are entitled to in the classroom setting and exams and assessments. Formal letters will be sent to parents/carers of students that will have special exam arrangements over the coming weeks confirming the nature of the arrangement relevant for your child. The SEND team can help with any enquiries relating to Special Exam Arrangements.

News from the community

Online Safety Updates for Parents by Alan Mackenzie, online safety advisor:

For Parents - Assessing Smartphone Readiness

"Is my child old enough to have a phone?" It's a common, understandable question for many parents. For younger children it's often peer pressure, with older children social isolation is very common.

The Institute for Digital Media and Child Development have put together some tip sheets for parents which I think are really useful. There are 3 parts:

- Assessing readiness.
- Preparing for healthy use.
- What now?

You can view all the tip sheets [HERE](#).

For Parents - Social Media Influencers

The things social media influencers do and say online can be quite impactful. Around a third of children and young people think that, because the influencer is a 'celebrity', what they share is always good. But we know that isn't the case, sometimes it can be advice based on pseudo-science, selling something because they've been paid to and much more.

Internet Matters have a great article where various specialists offer advice and guidance to parents/carers to help them make their children think critically about social media influencers. You can find the article [HERE](#).

Snapchat - New Parental Controls

In April 2023 Snapchat introduced My AI, essentially a chatbot. There was no choice, it was an embedded feature and whilst many users are reporting a positive or mixed experience there have been some significant concerns over the advice being given to younger users (see [HERE](#) and [HERE](#) for examples).

Last week Snapchat expanded their Family Center tools which, amongst other features, allows parents to restrict the ability for My AI to respond to chats. Further details of these new features can be found [HERE](#) and the full list of teen protection features can be found [HERE](#).

WhatsApp - Locked Chats

Did you know that you can hide conversations and lock them away in WhatsApp? This was a feature introduced in May 2023 and was easy to spot (if you knew how), but WhatsApp have updated the feature which makes it much more difficult to find.

In the original update you had to swipe down in the 'Chats' window to see locked chats, then input a code, fingerprint or Face ID to unlock (see [THIS](#) 1 minute video on YouTube). However, this meant that other people (parents, teachers, partners) would be able to see that you have got locked chats, even if you can't see the content. WhatsApp have just updated this (being rolled out worldwide from the beginning of December) and locked chats can now only be viewed by entering a secret code into the search bar, meaning that you will not be able to tell if there are any locked chats without knowing the code which WhatsApp briefly explains [HERE](#).

Reminders/ Key Dates

Date	Event	Who
Wednesday 31 st January	GCSE Science Live Trip	Year 9 and Year 10
Wednesday 31 st January	Theatre Royal Trip	Drama students - year 11
Monday 5 th February	Biology trip Centre for Life	Biology students - Year 13
Wednesday 7 th February	Year 12 Parents' Evening	Year 12
Wednesday 7 th February	Start Mock exams	Year 11
Wednesday 7 th and Thursday 8 th February	Hate Crime Presentation Northumbria Police	Year 9

Additional information

Please find information attached with the bulletin:

- Parent/carer workshop for child wellbeing flyer 2024
- Be creative parent/carer flyer
- Home Energy and Electrical event Sat 10 Feb 2024 flyer

Yours faithfully



Neil Seaton
Head of School

Pupil support and Safeguarding

Designated Safeguarding Leader: Mrs Hattie Curry
Deputy Safeguarding Leaders: Mr Emerson Brown and Ms Sarah Albert
SENDCo Mrs Jill Wood

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@qehs.net)

For queries regarding attendance or absence, please email attendance@qehs.net