



Queen Elizabeth  
High School  
*spes durat avorum*

Some tickets are still available  
for the  
QEHS Winter Concert  
[here](#)

Tuesday 3 February 7pm



30<sup>th</sup> January 2026

### QEHS WEEKLY UPDATE 19



What an extraordinary week it has been at QEHS. Our school production of *West Side Story* was nothing short of breathtaking. The sheer talent of our performers, the emotional depth they brought to the stage, and the precision with which every moment was delivered made this a production that will live long in the memory. The musicians who accompanied the show were outstanding—bringing energy, nuance and a level of musicianship that elevated the entire performance.

Productions of this scale only come to life through the dedication and expertise of many people, and I want to offer some special thanks. To **Jude Long**, whose direction shaped a powerful, moving, and beautifully crafted production; to **Clair Caris**, whose musical direction brought such richness and vibrancy to the score; and to **Kevin and Jo**, whose technical support ensured every light cue, soundscape and scene change landed with professional precision. My sincere thanks also go to our fantastic **Drama Department** for their warm and efficient work front of house, and to the **PTFA** for their ever-valued support—and for selling what must surely be *the cheapest glass of wine in Hexham*.

Beyond the brilliance of the performance, *West Side Story* remains a deeply relevant piece of theatre. Its themes—division, identity, belonging, and the urgent need for understanding across communities—are as resonant today as when the musical was written. Our students captured these ideas with maturity and sensitivity, reminding us of the power of the arts to reflect the world around us and to inspire change within it.

To everyone involved: thank you. You made our school incredibly proud.

“There’s a place for us. Somewhere, a place for us.”

### **Northumberland Area SEND inspection**

Northumberland County Council have been notified that Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission will undertake an Area-wide SEND inspection over the next few weeks. Officers at the local authority are keen to ensure that a clear, positive and accurate picture of the quality of practice is given to inspectors. To this end, they have asked that the links to their surveys be circulated to parents and carers, and children and young people with SEND. You can find these links [here](#), along with attached supporting letters. The deadline for responses is 9:00am on the 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2026.

Queen Elizabeth High School

Whetstone Bridge Road, Hexham, NE46 3JB

T: 01434 610300 E: [admin@qehs.net](mailto:admin@qehs.net)

[www.qehs.net](http://www.qehs.net)

Executive Headteacher: Graeme Atkins

Head of School: Neil Seaton

## Respect

### Attendance

#### Why Being in Band 1 Matters

At QEHS, being in **Band 1 attendance (95% and above)** is one of the most important foundations for a student's success. Put simply, students who attend school every day are more likely to achieve their best academically, sustain strong friendships, feel confident in their learning, and make positive progress over time. Even small amounts of absence add up quickly—just one day a fortnight equates to a full week of lost learning over the school year.

Band 1 is our benchmark for *excellent* attendance. It reflects a pattern of reliability, readiness, and positive habits that set students up not only to thrive in school, but also to build the routines they will need for future education, training, and employment. By maintaining Band 1 attendance, students remain fully engaged with their lessons, benefit from consistent teaching, and stay connected with their peers and the wider life of the school.

**BE IN BAND 1**

## Engage

### House update

Mr Jesper

Ms Coleman

Ms Buxton-Collins

Mrs Fraser

Miss Snowdon/  
Miss Macken



Beech

Birch

Ash

Oak

Sycamore

67,152

68,101

62,189

61,095

61,464

**Total points per 29 January 2026**

### Music QESH/HMS session singers performance

In our own nod to Burns' Night, here are our Session Singers from QEHS and HMS performing

#### 'Wild Mountain Thyme'.

The song is rooted in both Scottish and Irish origins with the lyrics and melody being a variant of the song The Braes of Balquhither by Scottish poet Robbert Tannahill (1774-1810) and Scottish composer Robert Archibald Smith (1780-1829). These were adapted by Belfast musician Francis McPeake (1885–1971) into 'Wild Mountain Thyme'.

- Performers: Anna M, Paloma P, Evie W, Isis T H, Georgia O, Lizzie L, Etta L, Rosie O, Artie O B, Gwen C W, Phoebe B and Katie B
- Directed by: Miss Tindall
- Accompanist: Mr Watson
- Sound and Video: Mr Smith

If you love this, then the group will be performing the song again (but with additional accordion accompaniment!) at the [QEHS Winter Concert](#) on Tuesday.

### Taekwon-Do success

Y9 student, Ralph, took part in Taekwon-Do Championship competition Glasgow over the weekend. He won all 3 of his fights and came away with a gold medal to add to his collection.

On Sunday, Y11 Tess B won one bronze and two gold medals.

Congratulations Tess and Ralph!



### Irish Dance competition success



Tabatha competed at the Irish Dance, Orchard County Championships in Belfast on Sunday 25/1/26.

She won 1st place in her Easy Reel, second place in the Slip Jig, Fifth in Single Jig and Fourth in the Cup Competition.

Well done Tabatha!

### **Netball success**

The Year 9 team played Blyth putting in a great performance to win 12-6. A few girls played a competitive game for the first time and played very well.

The Year 11 team played Prudhoe and controlled the game early on. An outstanding performance led to an impressive win. We all wish the girls good luck as they compete in the regional tournament on Sat 31<sup>st</sup>.

### **Badminton**

In PE, over the last 8 weeks, we have been delighted to welcome Joe Robinson, Badminton Development Officer with the Tyneside Badminton Centre and Northumberland Badminton Association, into our lessons to coach some of our year 9 students. This has been a brilliant opportunity for some of our students and staff to work alongside Joe with a view to improving their badminton skills and exploring opportunities to continue the sport within our community. It has been amazing to see so many students coming along to our lunchtime badminton club in PE, where Joe has also been supporting.

If any of our QEHS students or their families are interested in getting involved in the sport more regularly and wish to join Whitley Chapel Badminton Club, please check our [website](#), which provides details of the times and venue of club sessions. Any questions, don't hesitate to contact the PE department or liaise directly with the club using the contact details provided on the advert.

## **Aspire**

### **Career of the week**

This week's career of the week was social media manager:

<https://www.unifrog.org/student/careers/keywords/social-media-manager>

The above link will take you to further information on 'Unifrog'. This includes Labour Market Information (LMI). It is important both parents and students are aware of this as it includes current and predicted figures relating to the profession, particular attention should be paid to the expected growth figure. All students have received a 'Welcome' email from Unifrog. This can be found in their school email account. Please encourage them to activate their account if they haven't already done so. We also have a 'dummy' code for parents. Use 'QEHSparent' on this page: [unifrog.org/code](https://www.unifrog.org/code).

## QEHS Parent Teacher & Friends Association news

The QEHS Parent Teacher and Friends Association is run by volunteer parents/carers, teachers and friends of the school who work together to raise funds to make QEHS an even better environment for students to learn and thrive, engaging in activities or providing facilities or equipment which support the school community.



Registered Charity 1201950

### Upcoming events

PTFA volunteers will be at the QEHS Youth Theatre's West Side Story performances again both **tonight** (Friday) and **Saturday night** serving refreshments, including beer, wine, soft drinks and confectionery to raise funds. **Doors open at 7pm** and the **show starts at 7.30pm**, giving plenty of time to purchase drinks/refreshments to take into the auditorium or to place pre-orders ready for collection during the interval. Both cash and card payments are accepted.

 **Tuesday 3rd February** – We will also be serving refreshments at the [QEHS Winter Concert](#)

**Sunday 15th February** - Pop-up Prom Shop at Tynedale Hospice Shop, Fore Street 10am-4pm

### Prom outfits needed - to sell or donate



We're still looking for any dresses, suits, shoes and accessories you may have either to sell or donate to allow all Y11 students the chance to buy prom outfits in a more sustainable way and at an affordable price at our pop-up Prom Shop. Donations can be dropped off at school. If you would like us to sell an outfit on your behalf for a small selling fee, please complete this [selling form](#).

### JustGiving

If you can't make it to any of these events but would still like to show your support, you can make a donation through [JustGiving](#). If you would like to offer any other form of support to the work of the PTFA, email [gehs.ptfa@gmail.com](mailto:gehs.ptfa@gmail.com)

### What the PTFA has funded

So far this school year, the PTFA has made contributions towards school trips, music tuition, reading books and a new house trophy, as well as supporting the Youth Theatre.

### PTFA Lottery - cash prizes every month

Tickets for the lottery are £1 per entry with 2 monthly cash prizes. Entry is simple and online. For more information and to sign up complete the [online application](#) or email [gehsprizedraw@gmail.com](mailto:gehsprizedraw@gmail.com)



Thank you to all parents, carers and staff supporting our fundraising efforts. If you can spare an hour or two to help out on occasion and would like to join our mailing list to keep up to date with what help is needed when, email [gehs.ptfa@gmail.com](mailto:gehs.ptfa@gmail.com)

## Sixth Form

### Fundraising

Y13 Iryna is co-organising a volleyball tournament to raise funds to support the participation of the Ukrainian team in the Invictus Games in Birmingham in 2027. Volleyball is her passion and also a way for her to cope with the realities of being a refugee.

We would greatly appreciate any support you might be able to offer. Here is the fundraising link:

<https://gofund.me/862ee85ac>.

Y12 Angelina is doing some more fundraising for M10 Mission, a charity organisation whose mission is to support families living in extreme poverty in Mexico. Angelina and her team will be selling origami roses in the LRC in the run up to Valentine's Day (1-12 February) for £2 per rose (cash only). Thank you for your support.



### Sixth form noticeboard

[The sixth form Noticeboard](#) is regularly updated with new opportunities. Please see two new opportunities for the week ahead:

We rely on parents 'feeding' opportunities into the students, so if an organisation you are involved with is doing something in the future that a young person may find inspiring, please email [sixthform@gehs.net](mailto:sixthform@gehs.net). Equally, if you would like to advertise local job opportunities (paid or voluntary) please send the details.

## News from the community

### PEGS supporting parents

PEGS is a social enterprise set up to support parents, carers and guardians who are experiencing Child to Parent Abuse (including those with adult offspring). See [here](#) for further information.

### Junior Bake off


Love Productions, the production company behind The Great British Bake Off, The Great British Sewing Bee and The Great Pottery Throw Down, recently opened applications for the 12<sup>th</sup> series of **Junior Bake off**, a Channel 4 competition series celebrating Britain's young baking talent!

We are looking for young budding bakers between **9-15 years old** and interested bakers can apply online at - [www.applyforjuniorbakeoff.co.uk](http://www.applyforjuniorbakeoff.co.uk). Filming would take place from July 2026, but our **applications close on Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> March 2026**.



Online Safety
<p><b>For Parents - Set Up Safe Guide</b></p> <p>Once again Internet Matters have put together a brilliant new resource for parents and carers. This time it's a Set Up Safe guide which simplifies all the confusing tech/device settings advising that online safety works best when it's shaped around how children actually use their devices, it's all about 'layering'.</p> <p>Download and read the <a href="#">Internet Matters Layer Up for Online Safety Guide</a>.</p> <p>(by Alan Mackenzie, Online Safety Specialist).</p>

### Reminders/ Key Dates

Date	Event	Who
Thursday 29 – Saturday 31 January	Youth Theatre – ' <a href="#">West Side Story</a> '	Very limited availability for Friday only: <a href="#">here</a>
Tuesday 3 February	<a href="#">QE Winter Concert</a> 	There are still some tickets available: <a href="#">here</a>
Monday 9 February	Parents' Evening	Year 12
Wednesday 11 February	Youth Elections 2026	All year groups
Friday 13 February	Teacher Training Day	All year groups
Monday 16 – Friday 20 February	Half Term Holiday	All year groups
Monday 23 February	School reopens at 08.40am	All year groups

### 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.



Neil Seaton  
Head of School

**Pupil support and safeguarding**

Designated Safeguarding Leader: Mrs Anne Lloyd  
Deputy Safeguarding Leaders: Mr Emerson Brown  
SENDCo: Mrs Laura Warland

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@gehs.net](mailto:admin@gehs.net)

For queries regarding attendance or absence, please email [attendance@gehs.net](mailto:attendance@gehs.net)