



OCTOBER 2026 | AUTUMN TERM 1

A Wonderful Start to the School Year!

Dear Team Hebden Parents, Families and Staff

What an amazing first half term we've had at Hebden! It really has been a fantastic start to the new school year, and I wanted to take the opportunity to share some of the highlights with you, celebrate everything our pupils have achieved and look ahead to another exciting half term.

Firstly, I want to say how incredibly proud I am of all our children and young people. They have settled back into school so well, embraced new experiences and continued to make progress in so many different ways. Every achievement matters at Hebden, however big or small, and it has been wonderful to see so much learning, development and happiness across school.

A particularly warm welcome to all our new pupils and families who have joined Team Hebden this term. Our new pupils have settled in exceptionally well, and it has been lovely getting to know so many new members of our school community. I've really enjoyed meeting families over the last couple of months, and I hope you already feel happy, welcomed and very much part of Team Hebden.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support. It makes such a difference to everything we do.



Working Together – Our Families Matter

One of the things that makes Hebden so special is the relationship we have with our families.

A huge thank you to everyone who has joined us for our family engagement opportunities this half term, including parents' evenings, coffee mornings and our very first Expedition Showcases. It's been wonderful to welcome so many of you into school and share the learning and experiences your children are enjoying.

Please remember that **you are always welcome at Hebden**. We are always happy to talk about your child's learning, progress, experiences or anything you may be wondering about.



Your key contacts

If your child is in Primary, Becks Stedman is your key contact, and for Secondary, Faye Bye. You can, of course, also contact your child's class teacher through reception or your child's home-school communication book to arrange a conversation, meeting or telephone call.

Family engagement isn't something extra we do at Hebden; it is an integral part of our offer. We know that the very best outcomes for our children happen when school and families work together. Your knowledge of your children, your support and your involvement is vital to their success, and we couldn't achieve what we do without you.



Our Expeditionary Curriculum – Stories That Shape Us

This half term, our whole-school Expeditionary Curriculum theme has been '**Stories That Shape Us**'.

For those of you who are newer to Hebden, our Expeditionary Curriculum is an exciting part of how we bring learning together across school.

Each half term, we have one shared theme across the whole school. Every pathway and age phase then explores a different learning focus linked to that theme, ensuring that the experiences and projects are meaningful and appropriate for the pupils involved.

Across the half term, classes work on their own projects, applying the skills they are developing through their key curriculum areas to purposeful, practical and creative learning opportunities.

It's about making connections, giving learning meaning and helping our pupils understand how the skills they are developing can be used in different situations.

Thank you to everyone who joined us for our first Expedition Showcases. These were a wonderful opportunity for families to see the projects pupils have been working on and celebrate their learning alongside them. If you would like to send any feedback please do contact Faye or Becks. We look forward to developing these opportunities further throughout the year.

COMING NEXT HALF TERM

Let There Be Light

Our next whole-school theme is 'Let There Be Light', and we're really looking forward to seeing where this next expedition takes our pupils!



Beyond the Curriculum – Learning Beyond the Classroom

Our Beyond the Curriculum offer certainly hit the ground running this year, with pupils getting out into the community and beyond from our very first week back!

At Hebden, we place huge importance on ensuring that the skills pupils learn in their classrooms are applied in the real world. Whether that's using money skills in a local shop, developing map-reading and navigation skills, choosing books independently at the library or learning how to access and enjoy different community environments, these experiences are an essential part of our curriculum.

Skills for life matter enormously to us. Even for our very youngest pupils, we want to ensure that we are building the foundations for independence, communication, confidence, choice and participation in the world around them. We want our pupils to be equipped not just for their time at Hebden, but for life beyond our gates.

We've also enjoyed some wonderful enrichment experiences this half term.

Last week, we welcomed M&M Theatrical Productions into school for an interactive performance of *Snow White*. What a fantastic way to bring our 'Stories That Shape Us' theme to a close! Pupils across school thoroughly enjoyed the performance, and it was lovely to see everyone sharing such an exciting experience. These opportunities are so important to us. Learning should be rich, varied, memorable and, most importantly, enjoyable!

Contributions & 'Buy it Forward' tickets

Thank you to everyone that has already purchased their child's BTC ticket or made a donation towards this fabulous offer for our pupils.

As in previous years, we have invited parents and carers to make a **one-off voluntary contribution of £25** towards their child's Beyond the Curriculum (BTC) ticket. These contributions help us to provide the wonderful range of educational visits, enrichment activities and experiences planned throughout the school year.

We also recognise that families may wish to contribute a different amount, and all donations, however big or small, are very gratefully received.

As with last year, families, friends and supporters of Team Hebden can also choose to purchase a 'Buy it Forward' ticket. This is a lovely way to support our school community by contributing towards the cost of these experiences for another pupil, helping us to ensure that as many children as possible can enjoy the opportunities on offer.

All contributions are entirely voluntary, and every pupil will be included in our BTC experiences regardless of whether their family makes a contribution.

To make a contribution or purchase a 'Buy it Forward' ticket, please click the payment link below or scan the QR code.



Scan the QR code or click the button

Make a BTC Contribution or Buy it Forward Ticket

pay.sumup.com/b2c/Q7EBOKAZ

Thank you so much to everyone who has already supported our BTC programme. Your generosity really does help us to create special experiences, lasting memories and meaningful opportunities for our pupils.



Art and creativity at Hebden

We are delighted to announce that we have launched an exhibition at Winsford Library, featuring the creative work of our fabulous pupils who took part in a collaborative arts project.

The display is part of a wider project involving 12 schools from the Cheshire Academies Trust, all inspired by the book *Nature's Treasures* by Ben Hoare. The exhibition is on throughout half term if you'd like to pop along and have a look.

IN THE NEWS • NORTHWICH GUARDIAN

Hebden Green pupils' artwork on show at Winsford Library

[Read the article →](#)



Celebrating Music at Hebden – A Very Special Visit

We were delighted to welcome Adam Ockelford from The Amber Trust into school this half term to spend time with pupils who receive music tuition supported by the Trust. What a wonderful visit it was!

Following his time with us, Adam shared some incredibly lovely feedback, describing his day as "really inspiring" and praising the music taking place across school. He was also extremely complimentary about our vision and the offer we provide for our pupils. Most importantly, he was full of praise for our children. Adam was incredibly proud of Gracie and the progress she is making, thoroughly enjoyed his session with Freddie and described Charlie B's musical talent as "remarkable."

We are also absolutely delighted that Gracie has been invited to perform in concerts across the country, including The Amber Trust's Annual Concert in London next May. What an incredible opportunity and achievement! Music is such a powerful part of learning and development for so many of our pupils, providing opportunities for communication, expression, creativity and enjoyment. We're incredibly grateful for our partnership with The Amber Trust and the opportunities it provides. A huge thank you also to the staff who support our pupils' musical development and helped make Adam's visit such a success.

We couldn't be prouder of our young musicians!



Team Hebden – Bringing Our Families Together

Next half term, we're excited to be launching an opportunity for families to become even more involved in our school community.



On **Friday 27 November**, Faye will be leading our first Team Hebden Meeting, with the aim of bringing together parents, carers and family members who would like to help us develop our wider Team Hebden community.

Think of it as something a little like a traditional PTA, but with a much broader purpose!

Yes, we'd love to explore fundraising opportunities that can provide additional experiences and resources for our pupils, but more importantly, we want to bring people together. We want to create opportunities for families to get to know one another, support each other, share ideas, organise events and help us make Team Hebden an even stronger community. You don't need to have lots of spare time, experience of fundraising or any particular skills. We'd simply love to hear from families who want to be involved in whatever way works for them.

Team Hebden is about all of us – pupils, families and staff – working together.

More information about the coffee morning will follow, and we really hope lots of you will come along.



Team Hebden – Our Staff

✨ A Warm Welcome to Amanda

After half term, we're delighted to be welcoming Amanda to Hebden as our new School Business Manager. Amanda joins us from Kelsall Primary School and will become an important member of our school leadership and operations team. We're incredibly excited to have her joining us. She brings valuable experience, knowledge and enthusiasm, and I know she will make a hugely positive contribution to our school. I can't wait for Amanda to become part of Team Hebden, and I know you'll all make her feel very welcome.

♥ Wishing Fiona a Wonderful Retirement

This half term, we also say a very fond farewell to Fiona Lunnon, who has decided it's time to retire and enjoy life to the full! Fiona has enjoyed an incredibly long and successful career working across special education in Cheshire West, making a huge difference to children, families and professionals over many years. Her expertise, particularly in Early Years and autism, has had a significant impact across the local authority. Through her teaching, training and outreach work, Fiona has helped shape and improve provision for so many children. We feel incredibly fortunate that Fiona chose to spend the final chapter of her professional career here at Hebden. Her knowledge, commitment, experience and care for the children she works with have been invaluable, and she will be very much missed by us all. Fiona has given so much throughout her career, and now it's time for her to enjoy some well-deserved adventures of her own!

On behalf of everyone at Hebden, thank you, Fiona, for everything. We wish you every happiness in your retirement.



Improving Our School Environment

You may have noticed that there is always something happening to improve our school site! We firmly believe that our pupils deserve the very best possible environments in which to learn, play, develop and thrive, and we continue to invest time and resources into making our school spaces even better. Over half term, there will be more exciting improvements taking place.



Oak Classes Playground will benefit from new artificial grass, further enhancing the outdoor spaces available to pupils and creating more opportunities for play, learning and exploration.



We're also completing the final finishing touches to our extensive **fire doors project**, which has been a significant piece of work across school.



In **Foundation Stage**, classrooms will be decorated over the half-term break, continuing our work to ensure our youngest pupils have beautiful, welcoming and purposeful spaces in which to learn.

These projects take an enormous amount of planning, coordination and hard work, much of which happens behind the scenes or when school is closed. I want to say a huge thank you to our site team, who work incredibly hard to maintain and improve our environment. Their commitment, care and pride in our school make such a difference, and I'm extremely grateful for everything they do. We will never stop looking for ways to make Hebden an even better place for our children.



Beyond Our Gates – Supporting Other Schools

I also wanted to share a little about some of the wider work Team Hebden has been involved in this half term.

As some of you may be aware, I have been spending one day a week working to support Dee Banks Special School, alongside colleagues from our leadership team and Trust. Dee Banks is a fellow special school that has needed additional leadership and specialist support, and we have been asked to help them on their school improvement journey.

I believe very strongly that when we have the knowledge, experience and capacity to help others, doing so is simply the right thing to do. We are incredibly fortunate at Hebden to have developed a team with such a wealth of specialist expertise, and there are times when sharing that knowledge beyond our own school gates can make a real difference to other children, families and staff.

Of course, Hebden and the children in our care remain our absolute priority, and this work has only been possible because of the way our leadership team and wider staff have pulled together, supported one another and adapted to ensure everything continues to run smoothly here. Once again, Team Hebden has demonstrated what can be achieved when people work together with a shared purpose. I am enormously proud that our expertise and experience are helping to support improvements beyond our own school community.

For me, this reflects everything we believe in at Hebden: Love, Learning and Individuality, and the importance of making a positive difference wherever we can. Thank you to our staff for making this possible and to our families for your continued support.



Keeping You Informed About Your Child's Learning

This half term, you should have received your child's class curriculum overview, sharing the learning focus and experiences planned for their class. We want you to understand not only what your child is learning, but why they are learning it, the skills they are developing and how these contribute to their wider progress and development. Please remember, if you haven't received information you were expecting, or you don't feel you have a clear understanding of your child's learning, progress or wider offer in school, do let us know.

We never want families to feel unsure about what their child is doing or how they are progressing. Communication is a two-way process, and we are always happy to explain, share, listen and work together.



Looking Ahead – Key Dates for Autumn 2

We have another incredibly busy and exciting half term ahead, with lots of opportunities for pupils and families to get involved.

NOVEMBER

2–13 NOVEMBER

Poppy Appeal and Remembrance activities

**FRIDAY
6 NOVEMBER**

Diwali Assembly

**WEDNESDAY
11 NOVEMBER**

Whole-school Remembrance Day

**MONDAY
16 NOVEMBER**

INSET Day – School closed to pupils

**TUESDAY
17 NOVEMBER**

Primary School Photographs

**WEDNESDAY
18 NOVEMBER**

Flu Immunisations

**FRIDAY
20 NOVEMBER**

Children in Need – Pyjama Day

**FRIDAY
27 NOVEMBER**

Team Hebden Coffee Morning – family community group launch

DATE TBC

Secondary School Photographs – TBC

DECEMBER

**TUESDAY
1 DECEMBER**

Christingle Day

WEDNESDAY 2 DECEMBER	Choir Concert at David Lewis Centre
MONDAY 7 DECEMBER	Christmas Sculpture Competition
WEDNESDAY 9 DECEMBER	Leftwich High School Band Visit
THURSDAY 10 DECEMBER	KS2 Christmas Assembly – 9:45am – Parents welcome
THURSDAY 10 DECEMBER	Team Hebden Parent Gift Wrapping – from 11am
THURSDAY 10 DECEMBER	Team Hebden – Carols Around the Christmas Tree – from 2:15pm, for families and taxis
MONDAY 14 DECEMBER	Foundation Stage Christmas Assembly – 9:45am – Parents welcome
WEDNESDAY 16 DECEMBER	Secondary Christmas Lunch
THURSDAY 17 DECEMBER	Primary Christmas Lunch
THURSDAY 17 DECEMBER	Santa Visit – TBC
FRIDAY 18 DECEMBER	Whole-school Christmas Assembly and last day of term

Further details and invitations for individual events will be shared nearer the time. Please note that not all assemblies are necessarily open to families.



Finally, Thank You!

As we reach the end of our first half term, I want to finish by saying a very genuine thank you.

Thank you to our pupils, who continue to amaze us every day with their achievements, determination, personalities and enthusiasm. Thank you to our staff, who give so much of themselves to make Hebden the special place it is. Their hard work, expertise and commitment to our children never go unnoticed. And thank you to all our families for your trust, your encouragement, your involvement and the support you give us.

I'm incredibly proud of the school community we continue to build together. There is always more to do, more to improve and more we want to achieve, but when I look at everything that happens across Hebden each day, I feel very fortunate to be part of such a wonderful team.

I hope you all have a lovely half-term break, enjoy some time together and return refreshed for what promises to be a very exciting lead-up to Christmas!

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Helen Ashley – Headteacher

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Putting pupils' minds, bodies and souls at the heart of everything we do.