



WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

FRIDAY 12TH DECEMBER 2025



Dear Parents and Carers,

It has been another wonderful week here at Higham Lane School, filled with tremendous successes, festive cheer, and hard work across all year groups. I have really enjoyed seeing the Christmas themed doors around the school welcoming our students to their tutor time and lessons. We can't wait to see who Andrew Dickenson (CEO of the trust) will choose as the winner!

Celebrating HLS's Achievement

I am delighted to share a fantastic piece of news: Higham Lane School has been rated as one of the top schools in the West Midlands! This is a wonderful and well-deserved accolade for our fantastic school, reflecting the dedication of our students, staff, and your continued support. You can read more about this wonderful recognition in the CoventryLive article: [The Nuneaton school named one of the best in the West Midlands.](#)

Student Success and Recognition

A huge congratulations to Amelia in Year 10, who has won the prestigious Lord Ferrers Award 2025 from Warwickshire Police! This award is in recognition of her amazing work in the Heritage Cadet Challenge 'Missing Pieces' project. Amelia's commitment to community and heritage is truly inspiring.



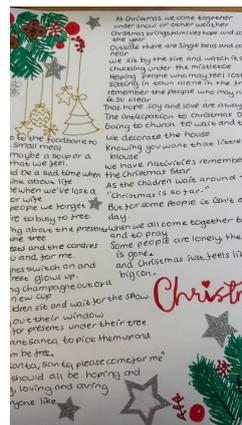
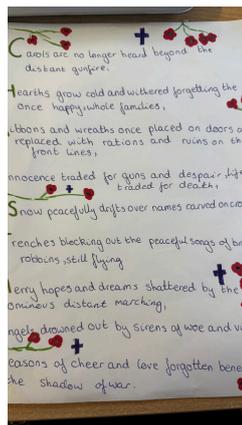
Christmas Ho-Ho-Poetry Competition!

A huge congratulations to all students that entered our English Christmas Ho-Ho-Poetry Competition! Your creativity, poetic skills and enthusiasm were fantastic! All students have received a certificate for their entry.

Our Winners have been invited for hot chocolate and biscuits as a reward in the Library on Wednesday Lunchtime.

Our top 4 poems were from:

- 1st Place - Zeena C - Year 8
- 2nd Place - Isla P- Year 8
- 3rd Place Cody H - Year 9
- 4th Place - Kasia T - Year 7





The 12 Days of Christmas Challenge

Our '12 Days of Christmas' challenge is in full swing, bringing daily treats and challenges for our students.

- Congratulations to our Year 8 'Find the Elf' winners who have enjoyed selection boxes, and to the highest attending tutor groups who received 'jump the queue' passes for the canteen this week!
- We are currently on day 5 of the '12 Days of Christmas Attendance Challenge,' and I am thrilled to report that we have had over 1,000 students achieve 100% attendance so far. Well done to all students—keep up the good work!

Festive Activities and Events

We have several exciting festive events taking place next week that we encourage all students and families to attend:

Christmas Fayre - Monday, December 15th (Lunchtime)

Please encourage your child to come along and get involved in the festive stalls.

Christmas Concert - Wednesday, December 17th (7pm)

We look forward to welcoming parents, carers, students, and visitors for this musical extravaganza.

Staff Karaoke - Thursday, December 18th (Lunchtime)

Students can purchase tickets to watch their teachers make a fool of themselves with a microphone! It promises to be great fun.

Life at HLS

- Music in the Canteen: We have trialled playing music in the canteen at lunchtime, which seems to have gone down well with the students. While students may not always be in agreement with the choice of music from Heart, the Christmas songs certainly seem to be popular!
- Hot Chocolate and Toast: Following a successful trial, we offered free hot chocolate and toast in the canteen this morning. This provided students with a warm place to sit and enjoy a tasty treat with friends, offering a great start to the final day of the week.
- Assemblies: This week, Deputy Headteacher, Mrs. Bissett, led fantastic assemblies focused on the importance of working hard and being the best that you can be. Please do discuss this with your child as this is such a key life skill.

Year 13 Law Trip to London

Our Year 13 Law students had a very successful trip to London on Wednesday, visiting key locations including the Supreme Court, the Houses of Parliament, and Covent Garden. This was a wonderful opportunity for them to see their studies in action. A huge thank you must go to Ms. Davies, Mr. Martin, and Ms. Walton, who had a 15-hour day on Wednesday to provide this invaluable experience for the students.

Trial Exam Results and Resilience

On my way into school on Wednesday, I was listening to a fascinating article on BBC Radio 4 discussing the world of sport. The research highlighted the disproportionate number of twins who excel at sport, concluding that this success is down to competition, opportunities to fail (which builds determination and resilience), and the will to do what is needed to succeed. The article also gave examples of early success not translating into world-class careers later in life, such as the junior Wimbledon champion who often doesn't become an adult champion.

As our Year 11 students have just received their trial examination results, it is inevitable that some students will have grades they want to improve by the summer. It is crucial that the school and parents work together to reassure students that it is perfectly okay to not be achieving their final grades at this current time. They must use this as momentum to build on their successes, learn from their mistakes, and work hard now on the areas they need to improve so they can reach their full potential in the summer. This approach, of course, applies to all students, in all year groups, with all assessments. Home and school working together is crucial to support our young people to reach for the stars!

The Future of Examinations

On Friday, I read a report from OFQUAL regarding the potential introduction of online assessments for real GCSE examinations in the future. Research studies indicate that teachers across the country believe this is inevitable, and it looks like the government intends to roll this out, initially in smaller subjects, to give schools time to prepare. Significant investment in infrastructure, such as IT networks and devices, would be needed for a full rollout. This development underlines the direction of travel for education and society, and it is important that we continue to make our young people as IT literate as possible to prepare them for the future.

Carol Concert and Pantomime

- I had the privilege and honour of attending the Christmas Carol Concert at St. Nicholas Church in Nuneaton on Tuesday, December 9th. Students from both HLS and Higham Lane North Academy performed wonderfully, with a series of acting performances and wonderful musical contributions, including choir singing, piano, and flute. Thank you to our amazing Music and Drama departments for their fantastic work!
- Next week, on Tuesday, December 16th, a group of students from HLS and our other Multi-Academy Trust schools will be attending the pantomime in Bedworth. We hope they have a wonderful time!

Christmas Jumper Day Reminder

- Christmas Jumper Day will be on the last day of term. Students should wear a Christmas jumper with their normal school uniform (e.g., skirt or trousers with a school shirt).
- This is not a non-uniform day. Students who do not wish to wear a Christmas jumper must wear full school uniform. Own clothes are not permitted.



A Note on Parking

Please may I remind parents and carers to park considerately in the local community when picking up and dropping off students. In particular, students' safety is paramount, and drivers should never stop on the zig-zag lines outside the school. Please also avoid parking across private driveways and also on private land such as the post office.

End of Term Reminder

A final reminder that school will be closing for the Christmas holidays on Friday, December 19th. Students will be dismissed between 12:30 PM and 1:00 PM.

Thank you once again for your ever-present support this week. I wish you all a lovely and relaxing weekend.

Yours sincerely,



Michael Gannon

Headteacher
Higham Lane School



Dates for your diary

Wednesday 17th December 2025 - Year 7, 8 & 9 Disco 3.30 - 5pm and Christmas Concert 7-9pm

Monday 22nd December - Friday 2nd January 2026 - Christmas Holiday

Monday 5th January 2026 - Back to school

Thursday 15th January 2026 - Year 8 Student Progress Evening

Thursday 5th February 2026 - Year 9 Student Progress Evening

Thursday 12th February 2026 - Year 9 Options Evening & Information Evening (5:30-7:30pm)

Monday 16th February 2026 - Friday 20th February 2026 - February halfterm Holiday



54,514



53,865



50,892



Dear Parent or Guardian

Trespassing on the railway network is extremely dangerous and endangers not only the lives of those on the track, but also passengers, railway staff and the general public.

Many people - especially young people - fail to understand the danger they put themselves and others in, when they make the choice to stray onto the rail network. As summertime approaches, we are already seeing an increase in the number of incidents being reported in the local area of Bugbrooke and incidents we're seeing involve children and young people:

- Walking along the railway lines
- Throwing stones at trains
- Placing objects on the railway lines
- Using the railway as a playground

I am sure you agree that all of the above activities are extremely dangerous.

The British Transport Police and Network Rail are seeking the support of parents, guardians and the local community to highlight the danger and implications of these activities to help us reduce the number of young people putting themselves and others at significant risk.

To assist with the conversation there are a number of online videos available and range depending on the age group of your child:

www.switchedonrailsafety.co.uk

www.networkrail.co.uk/communities/safety-in-the-community/safety-education/

www.youvstrain.co.uk

Key Messages

Trains are **ALWAYS** running on the railway and can differ in times meaning that you can never predict when a train will pass

The Electricity is **ALWAYS** switched on around the railway
Always **Stop, Look and Listen** before using a Level Crossing

DO YOU KNOW WHERE YOUR CHILDREN ARE?

Trespassing on the railway is also a **criminal offence** which can involve your child obtaining a criminal record and a fine of £1000.

If you wish to report any information to us, please call us on Freephone 0800 40 50 40 or text the information to 61016.

What is AI?

AI stands for artificial intelligence and can be used to create text, images, videos, music and artwork based on instructions given to an AI tool.



What is an AI tool?

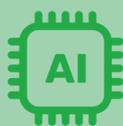
AI tools are applications, such as ChatGPT, Snapchat My AI, Google and Google translate. There are many more!



*The list of certain suppliers of AI-related products is for information purposes only and does not constitute an endorsement by JCQ and awarding bodies. It is each centre's responsibility to investigate and verify any suppliers they use, including any terms and conditions which govern the sale or use of the supplier's products. The list provided is not exhaustive.

When can I use AI?

- Your teachers may use it in class when teaching the course, but remember teaching in the classroom is not an exam!
- There are some assessments where you can use AI – your teachers will tell you if you can or cannot use an AI tool.
- Remember, the rules are different for different assessments and subjects, so always check with your teachers first!
- When an AI tool is allowed, **you must acknowledge**** the AI tools and the material produced by the AI tool that you have used in your work. If you do not acknowledge AI use, it will be **considered as cheating**.



When can I not use an AI tool?

- AI tools cannot be used in an exam or any other assessment where exam rules apply.
- This is what exam boards call **AI misuse and is a form of cheating**.



**Acknowledgment – When producing a piece of work, if you use the same wording as a published source, you must place quotation marks around the passage and state where it came from. This is known as referencing. You must make sure that you give detailed references for everything in your work which is not in your own words, for example, *ChatGPT 3.5 (https://openai.com/blog/chatgpt/), 25/01/2025*.

IF YOU USE AN AI TOOL, YOU CANNOT GET MARKS FOR WHAT THE AI TOOL HAS PRODUCED, AS IT IS NOT YOUR OWN WORK

If I'm allowed to use AI, how is this breaking the rules?

- AI misuse is when you use an AI tool in an exam or assessment where you are not allowed to; and/or
- Where you use an AI tool to create work and then say it's your own.



How to make sure you don't misuse AI

DECLARE

- Remember to sign your declaration form when handing in your work for final assessment.
- Your signature on the declaration form tells your teacher and the exam board that you are saying all the work you're handing in is your own.
- If you have used an AI tool, **you must declare***** that you have used it before signing the declaration form!

*****Declare** – this means that when you submit your work for marking, the awarding body will normally require you to sign an authentication statement confirming that you have read and followed the regulations.

ACKNOWLEDGE

If you are allowed to use an AI tool in your assessment (remember to check!), you must do the following:

- reference the AI tool you have used
- give the date of when the AI tool generated the content
- give details of how you used it.
- save screenshots of what you have asked or instructed the AI tool to do and what answer the AI gave you, and include this with the work submitted.

