



WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

FRIDAY 25TH SEPTEMBER 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we conclude another fantastic week at Higham Lane School, I am delighted to share a summary of the remarkable achievements, events, and key updates from across our vibrant HLS school community. It remains an absolute privilege to lead this school and witness daily the dedication of our staff and the extraordinary talents of our students.

Celebrating Student Excellence

It has been a week of outstanding student achievements, and it was a true privilege to present several Headteacher's Awards to some exceptional young people:

- **Sporting Stars:** Huge congratulations to Mason, who has been selected to represent Warwickshire in football, and Molly & Summer, who have been selected for Warwickshire in netball! A special mention goes to Ava, who achieved a magnificent Gold medal at the English Swimming Championships. We are incredibly proud of your hard work and national-level success.
- **Cambridge Biology Challenge Success:** Three of our brilliant Year 13 Biologists—Melisa, James, and Arwen—achieved an extraordinary 17th place out of almost 1000 competing teams across the country in the Cambridge Biology Challenge. I met with them this morning to present their Headteacher's Award, a coveted Headteacher's pen, and a well-deserved treat. What an exceptional academic accomplishment!



Inspiring Visits & Personal Development

- **High Sheriff of Warwickshire Visit:** On Monday morning, we were honoured to welcome the High Sheriff of Warwickshire, who delivered an engaging assembly to Year 9, Year 10, and Year 11. The High Sheriff launched an exciting competition where students can win cash prizes, and one standout applicant from Higham Lane will be nominated to serve as the Young High Sheriff of Warwickshire for the next 12 months! Please encourage your child in Years 9-11 to take part and submit an application.
- **Year 11 Personal Development Day:** On Thursday, our Year 11 students were off-timetable for a focused Personal Development Day. The sessions covered practical interview practice, effective revision techniques, and guidance on post-16 next steps. It was a superb day designed to equip our students with confidence as they prepare for this crucial academic year and their future careers.
- **European Day of Languages:** Assemblies this week focused on the European Day of Languages and the vital importance of language learning. Communication remains one of the most vital life skills our young people can develop as they grow into a globalized world.

Headteachers' Conference

On Thursday, I attended the Nuneaton and Bedworth Headteachers' Conference at Ambleside, which featured several deeply thought-provoking speakers:

- Sal Naseem, former Regional Director for London at the Independent Office for Police Conduct (who led efforts to address toxic workplace culture in the Met Police), spoke powerfully about standard-setting and integrity. His message strongly aligned with two of our three core Higham Lane values: Be Kind and Take Responsibility.
- Jodie Gosling, MP for Nuneaton, spoke passionately about local social issues and the transformative power of education to improve life chances.
- Adrian Simpson highlighted global economic shifts, particularly the rapid growth of technology and developments in China, changing the future job market that our young people will enter.

These insights mirrored my assembly to students last week. While achieving excellent GCSE and A-Level grades remains vital, technical qualifications alone will not be enough in a world increasingly shaped by Artificial Intelligence. AI cannot replicate genuine human interaction, empathy, or nuanced communication. Developing robust "soft skills" and interpersonal capabilities is why our Personal Development curriculum at Higham Lane is so crucial for preparing students to thrive.

Macmillan Coffee Morning Success

A huge thank you to everyone who supported our Macmillan Coffee Morning and Bake Sale today! Students enjoyed an array of delicious cakes at break and lunch, while staff gathered for a cuppa and a treat. Together, we raised a fantastic **£551.21** for a cause that touches so many lives. Thank you for your wonderful generosity. If you would like to donate online, you can do so here:

<https://cm26.macmillan.org.uk/fundraising/cm26017448?edit=settings>



Important Operations, Policies & Safety Reminders

To ensure our school environment remains safe, focused, and conducive to learning, please note the following operational reminders:

1. Mobile Phone Policy Update (Effective Monday 28th September 2026)

- **Year 7:** Mobile phones must be handed in at the start of the day and are collected at the end of the day.
- **Years 8-11:** Mobile phones must be switched off and kept inside bags at all times.
- **Sixth Form (Years 12 & 13):** Personal mobile phones may only be used inside the Sixth Form Centre. They are strictly prohibited anywhere else on the school site, including walkways, pathways, fields, and main buildings.
- **Important Notice:** We actively use screening wands on arrival to check for banned items, including vapes, weapons, and mobile phones on a student's person. Following an initial grace period, from Monday morning, if a student is searched and found with a mobile phone in a blazer or trouser pocket, the phone will be confiscated. Confiscated phones will only be returned to a parent or carer, and an appropriate sanction will be issued. Please talk to your child to ensure their phone is switched off and stored in their bag. Tip: Supplying your child with a small plastic Tupperware container to keep inside their school bag is a practical way to protect their device from accidental damage.

2. Gate Screening & Safety Protocols

We will continue routine and random screenings on the gate in the morning and throughout the school day to ensure banned or illegal items are kept off-site. The safety of our students and staff is our highest priority. In line with Department for Education (DfE) guidance, schools are not required to seek parental or student permission prior to conducting searches or screenings, nor do we contact parents in advance when a search is authorized.

3. Cycle Safety

If your child cycles to school, please ensure they wear a properly fitted bicycle helmet. Helmets are a mandatory requirement for students riding to and from school in accordance with our HLS bicycle permit. A reminder that no E-bikes will be allowed to be used to cycle to or from school and will not be allowed to be stored on the school site.

4. Updated Phone Line Hours

Please note a minor adjustment to our administration hours: school phone lines are now open from **8:20 am to 4:00 pm.**

Sector News & Staff Wellbeing

You may have seen recent national headlines regarding calls from school leaders' unions to halt graded Ofsted inspections, highlighting the extreme stress placed on school staff following the tragic passing of Ruth Perry and recent health emergencies experienced by leaders under inspection pressure. We are extremely proud that Higham Lane maintained its Ofsted 'Outstanding' rating in our inspection in May 2025, remaining the only secondary school in Nuneaton, Bedworth, and North Warwickshire to hold this top grade. However, achieving excellence must never come at the expense of wellbeing. Staff health and mental well-being remain top priorities for us. Teaching is a deeply rewarding yet demanding profession, and I kindly ask all parents and carers to continue offering our staff courtesy, respect, and support so we can maintain a strong, united partnership in service of your children.

Government Qualification Proposals: The government recently announced proposed changes to Year 11 qualifications, aiming to introduce more vocational pathways by 2029. While broader pathways can benefit students who thrive outside purely academic routes, these courses are not yet designed. With less than three years until the proposed launch—and amidst a national teacher recruitment and retention challenge—it presents clear implementation hurdles for schools and exam boards. We will keep you updated as official guidance develops.

School Support & Opportunities to Help

- **Business Sponsorship:** We are launching a business sponsorship initiative to support key school projects and resources. If you own or work for a business that could offer a one-off or regular sponsorship, please contact Mrs Lawton via contactus. Look out for our upcoming social media posts for details!
- **School Fund:** We will shortly be introducing optional School Fund payment options (monthly, annual, or one-off contributions). These contributions will directly support our extracurricular clubs, equipment, and enrichment activities. More details will follow soon.

Upcoming Key Dates

- **Year 10 Information & Work Experience Evening:** Tuesday, 29th September (5:30 pm – 6:15 pm). We look forward to welcoming Year 10 parents and carers to launch the work experience process.
- **School Open Evening & Early Closure:** Tuesday, 14th October (5:00 pm – 7:30 pm). School will follow SPE timings on this day and will finish early at 2:15 pm. A sincere thank you in advance to all our student volunteers helping as ambassadors, guides, and car park attendants!

We are very proud to announce that we have become an ASDAN (Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network) accredited school!

ASDAN programmes are flexible curriculum courses that help students aged 13 and older build vital life and employability skills through a personalised portfolio of evidence! ASDAN courses are for learners whose strengths are in practical, portfolio-based skill-building over traditional exams. Higham Lane School specialises in the Personal Development Programme which offers imaginative ways of developing, recording, and certificating a wide range of young people's personal qualities, abilities, and achievements, as well as introducing them to new activities and challenges. All the programmes link to nationally recognised qualifications. This programme will be delivered by Mr Bliss and Ms Wain from the Support 4 Learning team who will be helping our most vulnerable, DA students achieve their Bronze qualification this year.

Thank you, as always, for your unwavering support and partnership with Higham Lane School. I wish you and your families a wonderful, restful weekend.

Warm regards,



Michael Gannon
Headteacher
Higham Lane School



Key Dates:

Tuesday 29th September Year 10 Information Evening (including Work Experience Launch) – 5:30–6:15pm

Thursday 8th October – Year 7 Information Evening – 5:30–6:15pm

Wednesday 14th October – School Open Day

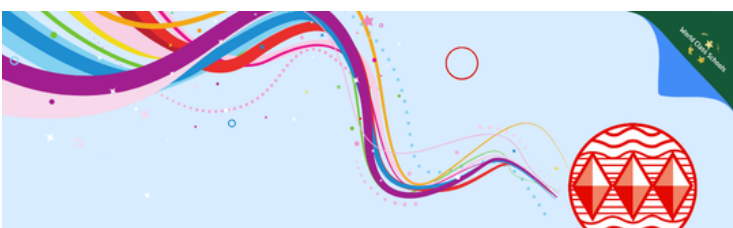
YEAR 10 INFORMATION EVENING

Everything you need to support your child
for the year ahead!

Tuesday 29th September 2026

5.30pm - 6.15pm

Coombe Hall



OPEN DAY

WEDNESDAY 14TH OCTOBER 2026
5PM - 7.30PM

WWW.HIGHAMLANESCHOOL.CO.UK

SHANKLIN DRIVE, NUNEATON, CV10 0BJ
02476388123



- Listen to the vision of Headteacher, Mr Gannon, during his talks at 5.15pm and 6.15pm.
- Explore our subject departments and meet our teachers
- Talk to our students about life at Higham Lane
- Take part in exciting demonstrations and experiments!

We can't wait to meet you!

#HLSOpenDay2026



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