



WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

FRIDAY 21ST NOVEMBER 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope this newsletter finds you well.

It has been a fantastic week here at Higham Lane School with some tremendous work and effort from our students across all year groups.

Photographic Highlights

A major highlight of the week has been the professional photoshoots that took place on Thursday and Friday. We captured the Year 11 whole year group photo, Year 11 tutor groups, the Year 13 whole year group photo, all of our sporting teams, and other key groups such as the Junior Leadership Team (JLT). We eagerly look forward to seeing our wonderful students in these professionally made photos, celebrating their time and achievements here at Higham Lane School.

Embracing the Cold Weather

The weather has been a little mixed this week; we've enjoyed some bright and sunny days, but they have been accompanied by some very cold temperatures! Please ensure that your child is suitably dressed for this cold weather with a winter coat. We would also recommend gloves and a small umbrella to help them stay comfortable throughout the school day.

Our Approach to Snow Days

As some areas of the UK have experienced a cold snap with snow, we want to outline our flexible approach to potential school closures later in the year. While there is no snow forecast for Nuneaton at the present time, if this occurs, we will update you with information about what to do as parents and carers. If a period of snow leads to a school closure, we will try to give you as much notice as possible.

We are also introducing a slight change in our approach to work provision. With the advent of modern technology and online portals, it is now much easier to set work via Google Classroom if school is closed. We are going to take a balanced approach to this: Work will be set via Google Classroom that students can complete if parents and carers would like their children to continue with education on a snow day. However, we are also aware that snow does not come very often in our country, and some parents and carers would like their child to benefit from a traditional snow day and enjoy being a child—having fun building a snowman or playing in the snow! As a result, we will be entirely flexible, and we will leave it to you as parents and carers to decide what you think is best for your child. Work will be set if you want your child to complete work, and if you would prefer your child is playing in the snow, that will be fine too.

Playground Fun and New Facilities

It is wonderful to see the students continuing to enjoy the facilities we have introduced over the last year, with the table tennis and table football tables remaining a big hit. The new covered area extending from the Food Technology and Canteen block also seems to be very popular, providing students with much-needed sheltered space in the playground. A big thank you must go to our excellent Estates team for ensuring the new covered area on the playground is now fully completed, with the roof completely installed. This will provide our students with a more comfortable and sheltered place to be during inclement weather.

I had a really touching moment on Thursday when I saw a group of Year 10 boys using their creativity to play an impromptu game of Twister on the colour dots on the ground! In my 25 years in education, I have never seen Year 10 boys playing Twister on a playground, but they were having such a great time and laughing a lot! It's these moments of spontaneous fun and community that truly make Higham Lane a special place.

Year 11 Trial Examination Results

I can confirm that the results will be shared with students very shortly in a special assembly. The students will have the opportunity to formally collect their GCSE trial examination results, mirroring the process for the real GCSE exams, so they can experience what that day will be like. Please be reassured that during the timeframe between the students sitting the exams and receiving their grades, our staff have been working incredibly hard marking and ensuring that we will give out high-quality feedback. Staff have been allowed to give both whole-class and individual feedback to students during this interim period but students will get the final results back in a special assembly. There is another set of trial exams scheduled for later in the academic year. A different approach will be taken for this final set, as their goal will be to give an accurate picture of where students are at that particular point, closely simulating the real GCSE experience. The most recent set of trial exams has been focused more on identifying specific areas for improvement and ensuring students get the feedback and guidance they need to improve, with less of a focus on the final result itself, as we would not expect Year 11 students to be consistently reaching their final target grades at this stage.

CEAT Visit

Today, on Friday, we had a very productive visit from key staff at the Central England Academy Trust (CEAT), including the CEO Mr. Dickinson, the Trust Learning and Development Director Ms Roberts, the Chief Operations Officer Mrs. Warren, and the CFO Mr. Elliott. We spent the day thoroughly reviewing our School Development Plan and discussing exciting future plans about how we can make our school even better. We are delighted to be the only Ofsted Outstanding school in Nuneaton and Bedworth. We are also proud to have the very best GCSE and A-Level results of any school or college in the locality, and I am very much enjoying working with the Multi-Academy Trust staff to help the school go from strength to strength.

Safeguarding: Tap Out or Blackout

We have been informed by the Local Authority that there is a dangerous TikTok trend called "Tap Out or Blackout." This trend encourages students, in the video, to place another young person in a headlock and strangle them for 6 to 8 seconds until they are on the verge of unconsciousness. It goes without saying that this is extremely dangerous and potentially life-threatening. An incident occurred earlier this week where a young man attempted this challenge. Fortunately, we can confirm that the young man who was placed in the headlock is physically okay. We have taken appropriate actions to ensure that all students understand how hazardous this is and that we will not tolerate such dangerous behaviour.

Please speak to your child to ensure they are fully aware that they must not take part in any such activities, either in or outside of school, as they are extremely dangerous. Please also remind your child that we are a no hands-on school, and we expect students to not engage in any form of physicality with other students.

The Importance of Languages

Learning a language is an invaluable skill that offers significant benefits both academically and in later life. Studies consistently show that learning a language can:

Boost Performance in Other Subjects: The cognitive benefits of language learning, such as improved memory, critical thinking, and enhanced problem-solving skills, often spill over and help students excel in subjects across the curriculum.

Improve Life Chances: In an increasingly globalised world, bilingual and multilingual individuals have a distinct advantage. Language skills are highly valued by universities and employers, opening doors to a wider range of careers, increasing earning potential, and fostering cultural understanding and international mobility.

To support this, we have invested in a fantastic program called *Languagenut* for all students in Years 7-11, where they engage in weekly homework to revise essential vocabulary. This has been such a big success that we are going to explore additional opportunities for students to push themselves further.

In other Languages news, we would like to thank our fantastic French Department, and in particular Ms. Fekih, for creating our first French podcast! The podcast focuses on what autumn is like in France, helping students not only to develop their French language skills but also their cultural knowledge of France.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vCiQJJDfncI>

FLU vaccinations will be taking place on Wednesday 26th November for students in Year 7 - 11.

The venue for the vaccinations will be the library and it will be closed to all staff and students.

Staff Departure

We would like to say a special thank you to Mrs. Albrighton, who will be leaving the school at the end of this week to commence a new exciting role with the Local Authority. We would like to thank her for all of her supporting work with some of our most vulnerable students, and we wish her the very best of luck in her new role.

We are excited to welcome our new Deputy SENDCO Miss Cato who will be joining us on Monday. She has a wealth of experience having worked as a SENDCO previously and having worked in a special school and has expert knowledge in the world of SEND as we look as a school to further improve our provision for our students with SEND.

Year 11 Student Progress Evening – Thursday 4th December. 3pm – 7pm.

These will be online video appointments. Please see details on how to book appointments in letter which will be emailed home on Monday 24th November. Booking opens: Wednesday 26th November 6pm.

School will close at 2.15pm on Thursday 4th December due to Year 11 Student Progress Evening.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support of Higham Lane School. Your partnership is greatly appreciated.

I wish you and your family a lovely weekend.

Best wishes,



Michael Gannon
Headteacher
Higham Lane School

Dates for your diary

Friday 28th November 2025 – Inset Day

Wednesday 26th November 2025 – Year 7-11 Flu Vaccination

Tuesday 9th December 2025 – Christmas Carol Service at St Nicolas Church

Wednesday 17th December 2025 – Christmas Concert

Friday 19th December 2025 – Final day before the Christmas break



45,533



44,600



41,514