



WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

FRIDAY 5TH MAY 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

What a wonderful week it has been at Higham Lane School! Whilst the weather has certainly been a little mixed at times, today has been bright and sunny, and it has been lovely to see our students making the most of the sunshine. Across the school site, students have been enjoying football on the field, football and basketball on the tennis courts, and table football and table tennis on the playground. I also popped into Crochet Club this afternoon, which was taking place indoors, and it was fantastic to see the students thoroughly enjoying themselves and developing their creative skills.

TeenTech Success

We are absolutely delighted to announce that our Year 9 girls have secured a place at the prestigious TeenTech National Finals in London later this month. The team overcame strong competition at both the local and regional stages with their innovative app, "Shic Forever". The app acts as a personalised assistant to help users choose outfits for the day. Whilst promoting confidence and style, it also has a strong sustainability focus by encouraging the recycling and re-use of clothing from a variety of sources. This is a fantastic achievement, and we wish the team the very best of luck as they compete to become National Champions. We are incredibly proud of them.

Water Safety Reminder

The Royal Life Saving Society (RLSS) has recently issued a warning following nine tragic water-related deaths during the recent warm weather, many of which involved children. The organisation has highlighted that warmer weather unfortunately sees an increase in accidental drownings. We have reminded students in school about the importance of staying safe around water. Please could I ask that you reinforce these messages at home and speak to your children about making safe choices around rivers, lakes, canals, reservoirs and other bodies of water. Working together, we can help keep our young people safe.

The Reward Shop Has Moved!

Students can now visit our Reward Shop in its new location on the playground every Friday to exchange their hard-earned House Points. We have secured the use of the kiosk, which provides a fantastic venue and opportunity for students to collect rewards for their hard work, kindness and responsibility. A huge thank you goes to Ms Lish and her Year 9 helpers, who have been instrumental in distributing rewards and supporting the shop. From bags of sweets and stationery to sports equipment, there is something for everyone!

Social Media and Mobile Phones

A recent report stated that social media use now ranks alongside smoking as a significant threat to the health of young people, according to the UK's most senior doctors. This is understandably a grave concern. It reinforces our decision to prohibit the use of mobile phones by students during the school day. We believe this policy helps to reduce reliance on social media and encourages students to engage positively with one another. We would encourage all parents and carers to have regular conversations with their children about social media and to monitor carefully the content they access on their devices. In most cases, parents and carers have purchased the phone and pay the contract. As such, you have every right and responsibility to check devices, set boundaries, confiscate devices where appropriate and discuss online behaviour with your child. By working together, we can help ensure our young people remain safe and minimise the negative impacts that excessive social media use can sometimes have.

Developing Skills for Life

Another recent report suggested that one in six young people could be out of work or training within five years unless action is taken. Whilst travelling into school this morning, I listened to an interview on BBC Radio 4 with Gareth Southgate speaking. He spoke thoughtfully about the challenges facing young people today, particularly young men. He highlighted the importance not only of gaining strong qualifications but also developing the personal qualities that employers value. Good attendance, punctuality, politeness, resilience and respect for others are all essential life skills that help young people succeed both in education and later in employment. I would like to thank our parents and carers for your continued support in ensuring your child attends school regularly, arrives on time and embraces our school values. By encouraging young people to work hard, be kind and take responsibility, we are helping them develop qualities that will benefit them for the rest of their lives.

Celebrating Inclusion and Respect

National statistics released this week indicate a concerning rise in racist, homophobic and sexist language, along with increasing numbers of suspensions nationally related to discriminatory behaviour. We are incredibly fortunate at Higham Lane School that incidents of discriminatory behaviour remain extremely rare. I was particularly delighted by the success of our recent Cultural Day, where students celebrated their heritage and backgrounds with pride. The event was exceptionally well received, and it was wonderful to see students being open, inclusive and accepting of one another's differences. Thank you to our parents and carers for helping to instil these important values. Kindness, respect and taking responsibility for our actions are qualities that strengthen our entire community.

World Environment Day

Today, Friday 5th June, we celebrated World Environment Day. Throughout the week, environmental posters have been displayed around the school focusing on important issues including climate change, pollution, renewable energy, food waste and extreme heat. The posters formed part of a school-wide challenge and contained facts, statistics and examples for students to learn. Today, form groups participated in a World Environment Day quiz based on the information displayed throughout the week. It was fantastic to see forms working together as teams and competing enthusiastically for the highest score within their year groups.

Year 12 Experience Day

Our Year 12 Experience Day (for current Y11 students) is fast approaching and will take place on Monday 22nd June. The day will begin with an introduction to the Sixth Form before current Y11 students attend up to four bridging lessons. These sessions are designed to introduce students properly to their chosen courses, explain bridging work requirements and provide a realistic insight into studying subjects at A Level here at HLS next year when they would be in Y12. We are delighted by the continued success of our Sixth Form, which has become the destination of choice for students across the local area. This year we received over 500 applications for just 150 places. However, I am pleased to remind Higham Lane School students that they are guaranteed a place in our HLS Sixth Form, provided they meet the entry requirements. Only HLS students have this guarantee.

Parking and Site Safety

Please be considerate when parking in the local community around our school site and show respect for our neighbours. Unless you hold a Blue Badge or it has been agreed for you to access our school car park, please do not park on the school site. We are responsible for ensuring the safe arrival and departure of over 1,500 students each day. Additional vehicle movements on site during arrival and dismissal create unnecessary risks and could potentially lead to accidents. Please also be aware that if you choose to park on the school site, you may be unable to leave until all students have safely exited. Thank you for your support in helping us keep everyone safe.

Year 10 Student Progress Evening

Thank you to all the parents and carers who attended the Year 10 Student Progress Evening yesterday. We hope you found the event informative and valuable in helping you understand the progress your child is making. Strong partnerships between home and school play a vital role in ensuring every student can reach for the stars and be the very best they can be.

Important Information – Year 8 Student Progress Evening

Please note that we have made a change to the Year 8 Student Progress Evening scheduled for Thursday 2nd July. **The event will now take place face-to-face rather than online, as previously communicated and as currently stated on our website.** Following feedback received during the recent Year 8 Information Evening, parents and carers expressed a preference for meeting staff in person. We have therefore amended the arrangements to facilitate these valuable face-to-face conversations. We would be grateful if parents and carers could adhere carefully to their allocated appointment times so that staff can meet with all families as scheduled throughout the evening.

Thank You

As always, thank you for your continued support of Higham Lane School. The positive partnership between home and school is one of our greatest strengths, and we are incredibly grateful for all that you do to support your children and our wider school community.

I wish you and your families a restful and enjoyable weekend.

Kind regards

Michael Gannon
Headteacher – Higham Lane School