



WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

FRIDAY 6TH SEPTEMBER 2024

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome back to what promises to be another exciting and successful academic year at Higham Lane School! I hope that over the summer holidays you were able to enjoy some well-deserved rest and quality time with family and friends. It is always a joy to welcome our students back, refreshed and ready to embrace the new school year. We are delighted to see both familiar faces and new ones as we begin this term with great enthusiasm and a renewed sense of purpose.

Outstanding GCSE Results

Firstly, I must share the wonderful news regarding our recent GCSE results. We are so proud of our Year 11 students who worked incredibly hard, and their efforts have truly paid off. The results were fantastic, and I am pleased to announce that our Progress 8 score is expected to be even higher than last year. This figure, which measures the progress students make between Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4, is projected to be significantly above the national average. We are also delighted to announce that 83% of our Year 11 students attained a grade 4 or above in English and Maths which is 18% above the national average and 64% of our students gained a grade 5 or above in English and maths which is also 18% above the national average. As a result, Higham Lane School is likely to once again be one of the highest performing, if not the top-performing, state non-selective schools in Warwickshire!

This achievement is a testament to the determination, resilience, and commitment of our students. They have shown what can be achieved through consistent hard work, dedication and the support of our brilliant teaching staff. To our Year 11 cohort from last year, we extend our heartfelt congratulations, and we wish them the very best as they move on to the next stage of their educational journey. Whether they are continuing into our Sixth Form, entering into apprenticeships, or pursuing further studies elsewhere, or starting employment, we are confident they will go on to achieve even more success in the future.

Exceptional A-Level Results

Equally impressive are the results achieved by our A-Level students. We are absolutely delighted with their performance. A staggering 28.3% of all grades at A-Level were A*/A, which is above the national average and a nearly 2% increase from last year at Higham Lane School. Additionally, 58.5% of all grades were A*-B, reflecting a 5% improvement from the previous year. These results speak volumes about the dedication and talent of our students and staff alike. Our average grade across A-Levels remains a grade B, a truly remarkable achievement for a comprehensive school. It highlights the strength of our academic programme and the incredible work of both our students and teachers. As we reflect on these achievements, it is important to acknowledge the tireless work of our Sixth Form team. I want to pay particular tribute to Mr. Ladha, who has been the driving force behind the success of our Sixth Form for the past eight years. As Mr. Ladha retires, we offer him our deepest thanks for his leadership, commitment, and the positive impact he has had on so many students. He will be sorely missed. Fortunately, we are thrilled that Mr Sears, who has been an outstanding Assistant Head of Sixth Form, will be stepping into the role as Head of Sixth Form. His expertise and understanding of our students' needs will ensure a smooth and seamless transition. We are confident that Mr Sears will continue to guide the Sixth Form to even greater heights.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank our Sixth Form team, who generously gave up their own time during the summer holidays to assist with enrolment and provide crucial guidance to our Year 13 students as they prepared for their next steps. Whether our former students are heading off to university, beginning apprenticeships, or entering the workforce, we wish them all the very best in their future endeavours. We look forward to hearing about their continued successes as they move into the next exciting phase of their lives.

Record-Breaking Sixth Form Enrolment

This year, we are delighted to report that we have had the highest number of students ever apply for places in our Sixth Form. The demand was so high that, unfortunately, we were unable to offer places to a large number of high-achieving external applicants, as we had reached full capacity. The majority of places were taken by our own Higham Lane students, thanks to their remarkable GCSE performances. It is truly a reflection of the success and popularity of our Sixth Form, and we are incredibly proud of the academic excellence and supportive environment we provide for our students.

Trauma-Informed Schools Training

At the start of this term, all of our staff underwent Trauma-Informed Attachment Awareness Schools (TIAAS) training, delivered by educational psychologists from Warwickshire Local Authority. This training was incredibly valuable, as it focused on how trauma and adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) can impact brain development and learning. Staff learned practical strategies for supporting students who may be experiencing difficulties in regulating their emotions, and ways to de-escalate situations to create a calm and supportive learning environment for all students. We are confident that this training will further enhance the care and understanding our staff provide, ensuring that every student feels safe, supported, and able to achieve their potential.

A Warm Welcome to Year 7

We are also delighted to welcome our new Year 7 students into the Higham Lane family. They have already had a fantastic start to their time with us, and we are excited to watch them grow and thrive over the coming years. Starting secondary school is a big step, and our new students have embraced it with enthusiasm and positivity. We look forward to supporting them every step of the way.

An Incredibly Strong Start for All Year Groups

Across all year groups, we have been extremely pleased with how students have settled back into school life. In our welcome-back assemblies, we reminded all students of our high expectations, both academically and behaviourally. I am proud to say that behaviour has been excellent, with very few negative behaviour points issued and many students earning praise points that they can spend in our reward shop. It is fantastic to see our students living up to our school vision: "Work hard, be kind, and take responsibility" - values that will help them to be the best they can be.

Attendance and Holidays in Term Time

I would like to take this opportunity to remind all parents and carers that the Department for Education (DfE) guidelines state that headteachers cannot grant leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Unfortunately, holidays do not fall into this category, and Warwickshire Local Authority will be issuing fines to parents of students with low attendance or those taking holidays in term time. Regular attendance is vital to students' success, and there is a strong correlation between attendance and achievement. We appreciate your support in ensuring that your child is in school every day and ready to learn.

Welcoming Our New CEO

We are also excited to welcome our new CEO, Andrew Dickinson, to the Central England Academy Trust. This is a very exciting time for both Higham Lane School and the Trust as we continue to grow and develop. By sharing expertise and collaborating across schools within the Trust, we are confident that we will further enhance teaching and learning, providing even more opportunities for our students to thrive.

Celebrating Science Success

This week, I had the privilege of meeting with some of our wonderful Year 8 students who participated in the Science Spelling Bee at the end of the last academic year. It was a pleasure to present certificates and prizes to these outstanding students, who demonstrated both their scientific knowledge, their strong literacy and their commitment to learning. Well done to all who took part!

Parking and Safety Reminders

Please could I remind all parents and carers not to park on the zig-zag lines in front of the school or use the school car park for drop-offs at the start of the day. This creates a potentially dangerous situation for students. Similarly, we kindly ask that you do not drive onto the school site via Shanklin Drive, as this area is where many of our students walk to access the school. Your cooperation with this is greatly appreciated and helps to ensure the safety of all our students.

Year 11 Curriculum Evening

A reminder to parents of Year 11 students that we will be holding the Year 11 Curriculum Evening on Tuesday 10th September. The presentation will begin at 5:30 pm in Coombe Hall and will provide an overview of the year ahead, including key strategies for success. There will be brief presentations from the subject leads for English, Maths, French and Science, who will share valuable insights into how we can work together to maximize achievement in these core subjects. There will also be an informal drop-in session before and after the presentation where parents can meet with our learning mentor for study and revision advice. We hope to see many of you there, as it promises to be an informative and important evening.

Once again, I would like to thank you for your continued support. We are looking forward to an exceptional year at Higham Lane School, filled with achievements, opportunities and success for all our students.

Wishing you all a lovely weekend, and we look forward to another exciting week ahead.

Warm regards,



Michael Gannon
Headteacher, Higham Lane School



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