

Higham Lane North Academy

NEWSLETTER



Friday 12th December 2025

Spreading festive joy continues at HLNA!

A very warm welcome to our penultimate newsletter of the year! This week there have been so many highlights which have very much reminded us all of what a pleasure and privilege it is to be part of the Higham Lane North community. Alongside Miss Charles, I was delighted to attend the annual Christmas carol service at St Nicolas Church where our Year 7 choir and orchestra performed alongside ensembles from Higham Lane School. All students from both schools performed exceptionally well together and the students thoroughly enjoyed taking part – they were an absolute credit to us all! We would also like to express our sincere thanks to our music teacher, Miss Harris, who has been working hard with the students to make these opportunities possible. Within this newsletter you will see that Iris has written an account of the evening which I know that you will enjoy reading!

We look forward now to our Christmas Spectacular which takes place on Wednesday here at school – we hope that you can all join us to celebrate students' achievements in performing arts this term, and to all come together again as a community as we say goodbye to the students' very successful first term at HLNA! Tickets can be purchased via Parent Pay.

Our girls and boys football teams have also been active this week!

Our girls and boys football teams have also been active this week! The girls played in the Utilita Girls Cup and the boys played in the Nuneaton Schools Cup. As a brand-new school, a key challenge for us is to ensure that our students have opportunities to play for school teams and to represent the school. I am so pleased that we have been able to ensure that our students have always been able to compete in our local and regional school sports competitions, and this commitment will continue. Our History teacher, Mr Froome, goes above and beyond leading History, to coach both teams, and we are also currently without a minibus for transport. Therefore, not only are we grateful to Mr Froome, but we are also very appreciative of all parents who have helped with transport and general support. Thank you in particular with the girls' event, where the venue details changed on the morning of the tournament. We are very grateful for your flexibility and support, as ultimately this meant that the girls were given their opportunity to play as a team and represent the school which they thoroughly enjoyed.

We are so proud of how they worked together, listening and communicating, and they excelled themselves, playing against teams that are in Year 8 and 9, as well as in Year 7. Whilst the boys didn't win the game on Wednesday, as we always say, we have lost nothing when we keep moving forwards and learning from each other. Well done to all footballers who have represented the school this term – you have made the school very proud!



Christmas Raffle!



If you would still like to buy a ticket for our amazing raffle, you can buy a ticket via your child, either £1 per ticket, or £5 for a strip of tickets. We have some beautiful hampers full of tasty treats and drinks, gourmet ice-cream tubs from Noel's of Warwickshire, a free boiler service courtesy of BF Plumbing and Heating and a £20 garden centre gift voucher for Gates Garden Centre.



12 Days of Christmas Attendance Challenge!

Our attendance challenge is well underway! This week students who have been 'in it to win it' have won early lunchtime passes, 'sit next to a friend' pass, hot chocolates and goodies! Next week our daily draw will continue and students who achieve 100% attendance during the last 12 days of term will be rewarded with a treat on the very last day as well!

Thank you for supporting your child with their attendance – we all know that every day missed means 5 lessons' worth of learning that they need to catch up on. In turn, this can often lead them to feel even more anxious about their return to school. Please remember to send them in with tissues if they are feeling under the weather, and you can bring medication, such as paracetamol to the school office if you would like them to take this to manage pain relief. Please be reassured that any child who is ill is seen by either Miss Charles, Miss Rounce or myself and we make a decision about whether to ask you to collect from school if we feel that they are too unwell to remain in school.

Our Christmas Carol Concert – by Iris

On Tuesday evening our Choir and Orchestra performed at St Nicolas Church with Higham Lane School. Everyone was respectful and kind and we had a lovely time, it was great to see my old primary school friends again and perform with them in the orchestra. The choir performed many different carols, and the audience sang along with us. The play was also very funny! It was wonderful that so many families came to see us, the church was packed and fairy lights and Christmas decorations made the church feel full of joy at this time of year.

We all had such an enjoyable evening and thank you to Miss Harris for a fantastic experience!



Information from Community Autism Support Service

Our youth groups provide a fun, supportive environment where autistic children and young people can meet peers, feel accepted, and enjoy activities without pressure to conform. Typical sessions include games, sensory exploration, arts and crafts, and cooking, giving participants a sense of belonging while gently developing social skills in a neurodiverse-friendly space.

Our groups in Nuneaton run on a Wednesday evening, split into 3 age groups: 7-11, 11-15, 15-18. Please click on the link for more details.

[Community Autism Support Service](#)

Ofsted news

As you may be aware, we are very outward-facing and I welcome quality assurance procedures and visits from professionals to both support and challenge us in ensuring that we are providing the best possible education for your children. I am delighted with all quality-assurance visits that have taken place so far, which is a testament to your fantastic children, and our extremely dedicated staff. I look forward to our planned visits for the next two terms where we hope to celebrate our achievements and look closely at any areas where we may need to be even more effective.

Ofsted are due to visit the school in the academic year 2027-28 which we have already begun planning for, to ensure that you as families can be proud to send your child to Higham Lane North Academy.

The current Ofsted framework changed in November (there is no longer a 'good' or 'outstanding' single-word measurement for schools). Ofsted has produced a short video that explains the new report cards and grading system to parents. It helps to show that the new system cannot be compared to the previous one. It is available on Ofsted's YouTube channel and can be found [here](#). I hope that you find this useful and we will provide you with more information and updates about our Ofsted preparation over the course of the next academic year and beyond, so that you as families are fully informed.

DATES and NOTES for your DIARY!

Tuesday 16th December PM – Christmas rewards:
Pantomime at Bedworth Civic Hall/Christmas activities in school
Wednesday 17th December – HLNA's Christmas Spectacular 6.00pm
Thursday 18th December – Staff and Pupils Karaoke/HLNA's Got Talent!
Friday 19th December – last day of term. School closes at 1.15pm to all students. There is no after-school clubs on this day.
Monday 5th January – Return to school 8.35am
Monday 16th February to Friday 20th February – Half term

On a personal note,

As the term draws to a close, we are continuing to remain focused in lessons, and please be assured that next week, students will continue to follow the KS3 curriculum – every second of learning counts! However, we will of course also take some time to come together as a school, as 'Team North Stars' to spread joy and celebrate both the end of term, and time of year, with students, which we are all very much looking forward to! Have a peaceful weekend and thank you for your excellent support as families,

Best wishes,



Kirstie Robinson.
Headteacher Higham Lane North Academy.



SUBJECT SPOTLIGHT

French

This term in French, students have made an excellent start to their language-learning journey, showing enthusiasm, curiosity and a growing confidence in using the language. We began by learning core foundations such as greetings and the alphabet, helping pupils develop accurate pronunciation and recognise key sound-spelling patterns. From there, we moved on to talking about siblings, which linked naturally to our work on the present tense of avoir (to have). Students have been using this verb to form full sentences, supported by our work on definite and indefinite articles and how to form negatives.

Our vocabulary themes have expanded further with units on what is in a school bag using *il y a* and the various items found in a classroom. These topics have allowed students to apply grammar in context, build essential everyday vocabulary and practise using cognates when translating. Alongside this, students have been developing an important skill for all linguists: using a bilingual dictionary effectively to support independent learning.

As part of our Remembrance activities, students completed a thoughtful poppy word-art task. They used dictionaries to research French vocabulary linked to the Great War, combining creativity, cultural understanding and language skills in a meaningful way. Assessment this year follows a rotating two-skill model. In November, pupils completed reading and writing exams based on the topics studied so far. Our upcoming assessments will include a videoed speaking interview with a partner, in which students will talk about themselves, followed by a listening test linked to the same themes.

Looking ahead, our next focus will be expressing likes and dislikes, before we move on to a new module all about school life. Prior to the Easter holidays and May half term, in preparation for any family holidays to Spain, students will also learn some Spanish holiday vocabulary as part of our cross-linguistic enrichment.

To support progress at home, students and parents can:

- Review vocabulary regularly using Knowledge Organisers, booklets, flashcards or apps.
- Practise pronunciation using online audio clips, the radio or even changing the language on streaming platforms and watching shows in French with English subtitles which will also support them in their English literacy.
- Revisit class notes and sections in the Knowledge Organisers to reinforce grammar such as avoir, articles and negatives.
- Use a bilingual dictionary (www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english-french) to look up new words.
- Encourage short, regular practice instead of long, infrequent sessions.

Here are just a few ideas to help you enhance your child's experience in French:

Local French Restaurants for Real-Life Cultural Experience

Café Rouge (Birmingham) – French-style dining

<https://www.caferouge.com/>

Bistrot Pierre (Leamington Spa/Birmingham)

<https://www.bistrotierre.co.uk/>

A great way for students to try French food and interact with real menus.

Duolingo French Podcasts

True stories told in simple French with English support

<https://podcast.duolingo.com/french>

National Geographic Kids – France

Accessible cultural facts on French geography, traditions and food.

<https://kids.nationalgeographic.com/geography/countries/article/france>

Students continue to impress me every day with their willingness to try, their excellent work ethic and their increasing independence in French. They take their learning seriously while still having fun—whether proudly mastering a new concept or enthusiastically requesting one of our French songs at the recent spooky disco! Their positivity and engagement make our lessons a joy.

Merci à vous tous!

Mlle. Hampton

