

Higham Lane North Academy

NEWSLETTER



Friday 9th January 2026

Happy New Year and Welcome to the Spring Term!

I'd like to extend a warm welcome to all of our students and families as we begin the spring term. As you are aware, this week has presented several challenges for us, both as a school and as part of the Trust. I would like to sincerely thank you for your patience, understanding, and continued support during this time.

Recap of the current situation

Ahead of re-opening on Monday, we were already dealing with IT and cyber-security issues. Unfortunately, we also encountered heating problems due to an issue with the boiler, which left the school quite cold on Monday. However, thanks to the hard work of our caretaker, along with BAM engineers and the use of portable heaters, we were able to address the situation. Most importantly, the positive attitude, resilience, and teamwork displayed by both staff and students helped us to get through the day successfully. I am very grateful to everyone who contributed to this effort.

As part of the ongoing focus on IT systems, internet and phone usage remains very limited to ensure everything is secure and robust. Consequently, students are unable to use computers in school until we receive confirmation from the external company working with Higham Lane School and the Trust that it is safe to do so.

In the meantime, Miss Charles has adapted Computer Science lessons to minimise disruption, and staff are continuing to plan and deliver lessons as usual, though they are having to be creative in finding solutions to work around the restricted IT access. As you can imagine, while IT is an invaluable tool in our daily learning, its absence certainly presents challenges to our usual ways of working, and I am grateful to our staff for their professionalism.

As you may have seen in my separate communication, we will be supporting Higham Lane School in the coming days as they continue to experience disruption. Whilst we are pleased to offer our support, please rest assured that this will not impact the smooth operation of our own school. The safeguarding and health and safety of all students at both schools remain our top priority, and we have worked closely together to ensure these standards are upheld.

We have discussed with the students how this act of support reflects our core values, particularly the idea of being 'proud because we do what is right.' By supporting students at our sister school, they are demonstrating compassion, and we have been incredibly impressed by the maturity and positive attitude.

Additionally, we have faced challenging weather conditions, and as mentioned in my previous email, making this decision was not easy. I sincerely appreciate your understanding and support during this time.

A joy to visit lessons despite the challenges!

Despite the challenges we've faced this week, it has been a genuine joy to visit lessons and see the positive strides our students are making. We are working hard to ensure that learning routines are firmly in place, so no time is lost and students can make the most of every moment in the classroom.

It is inspiring to witness the excellent practices that are already in place, from students moving calmly between lessons, to consistently demonstrating routines at the start and end of each class.

Whether it's engaging in thoughtful discussions, speaking with staff or peers, or participating in structured activities, our students clearly understand and follow the routines that help create a productive learning environment. We have also introduced a new initiative called '**321-SLANT!**' please do ask your child about this! This approach is designed to keep students focused and engaged throughout lessons, minimizing distractions to maintain high levels of concentration.

Our staff training has been focused on ensuring students always know exactly what is expected of them and how they can achieve it. The practice already happening in our school is impressive, and visits to lessons this week confirmed this ongoing commitment to clarity and consistency in teaching and learning.

Whilst there has been so much excellent learning taking place, this is a snapshot of what I've been particularly impressed with this week:



Art: Students using exceptional vocabulary to explain and describe their work in detail, showing both skill and understanding.



English: Students articulating structured, insightful responses about Romeo and Juliet, demonstrating not just comprehension but also higher-order skills like interpretation and evaluation.



Maths: Students working efficiently to factorise, explaining clearly why their methods are effective and how they arrived at their solutions.



Religious Studies: Students evaluating what makes a reliable source and thinking critically about the information they encounter.

In every lesson, our goal is to ensure 100% engagement and participation, and we actively discuss what this looks like with both students and staff. It has been a privilege to see this in action throughout the week, and I would like to congratulate both students and staff for their fantastic commitment.

Both Miss Charles and I visit lessons every day, popping in to see how well students are working, while Miss Rounce also monitors lessons to evaluate the progress of SEND students, ensuring we continue to remove barriers and enhance their learning experience.

These mosaics are tile-rific!

Our North Stars have shown incredible creativity and technical skill in their Design Technology home learning, producing truly outstanding functional mosaics.

A massive thank you to Miss Quigley for inspiring the project, and to all the parents/carers and other family members who helped piece it together at home.

Well done Year 7 !



Coming up! Exciting career opportunities in our Ambitions programme

This term, as part of our Ambitions programme, we are thrilled to offer some fantastic opportunities to help our students explore careers and think about their next steps.

Next week, we are privileged to welcome Amrik Singh, one of our Governors, to school. Amrik is a solicitor working in the youth justice sector, and he will be sharing his career journey with our students. He'll provide valuable insights on how to make the right decisions, both in everyday life and online, and highlight the consequences of poor judgement. In addition to this, Amrik will be an inspiration to students as he talks about his path into law, showing how ambition and determination can shape a successful career.

We are also excited to welcome colleagues from Vistry, a leading local construction and housing company, over the coming weeks. Their team will be presenting to our students and inviting them to take part in an exciting, hands-on project! They will also share how students can pursue a career in the construction industry, offering insight into the variety of roles and opportunities within this growing sector.

Starting career conversations in Year 7 is a crucial step as we help build the foundations for our students' futures and we are committed to providing them with the knowledge, skills, and inspiration to make informed decisions as they begin to explore their potential career paths. We also have a further exciting Careers Week coming up soon...more details to follow! However, as we continue to build our Careers programme for our students, your children, and help them prepare for their futures, if you know a company, or someone, who would like to support us with this, please get in touch!

Co-Curricular Clubs

Our co-curricular programme resumes on Monday. Please note that Football has moved to Tuesday. Our Trampoline Club has unsurprisingly been very popular, and we will run this club in four-week blocks to ensure that those who are interested, can attend. Students will be informed of further details from Miss Rounce.

We are also delighted to be hosting a dance club with Miss Emma from Chater Dance Academy on Wednesday. There are a few places remaining – please ensure that your child signs up on Monday if they want to take part!



**NORTH STARS -
GET YOUR DANCING FEET READY!**

Contemporary/Hip-Hop class with Miss Emma from Chater Dance Academy.

Every Wednesday in our Dance Studio
3.30pm – 4.15pm

All levels welcome from beginner upward!



Teacher Recruitment event – Tuesday 13th January 4pm – 6pm

You may have seen details of this on our social media account. We are now actively seeking high-quality teachers as our school continues to grow. If you know anyone who may be interested, please let them know about our event and to follow us on our website and social media accounts for details of teaching posts that will be advertised shortly.

Those interested can register their attendance here:
<https://forms.gle/BloWNV5YE4XGkJEw7>



**HIGHAM LANE
NORTH ACADEMY
IS RECRUITING
TEACHERS!**

Find out more about what it's like to teach at HLNA and be part of CEAT

Join us for our Teacher Recruitment Information Evening at HLNA

Tuesday 13th January 2026
4pm – 6pm



On a personal note,

Once again, thank you for your invaluable support and I wish you all a pleasant and peaceful weekend.

Best wishes,



Kirstie Robinson.

Headteacher
Higham Lane North Academy.