



# Highlands School Newsletter

22 July 2025

## Information for the new academic year

Dear parents and carers,

Today is the final day of the 2024-2025 academic year, a year that has been one of the most successful in our school's 24 year history. In November, we had our long awaited Ofsted inspection. We were judged 'outstanding' in all areas by the inspection team, a judgement Highlands has held since 2011; we are proud that our students attend a school with a provision recognised by Ofsted for its excellence. Our sixth form has gone from strength to strength this year, with record numbers of students joining us from Highlands but, also, from other schools across north London. Our sixth form progress scores, published in the Department for Education's performance tables, put us 47th out of all state school sixth forms in England this year, an incredible achievement for our students and the staff who support them. We received awards for having attendance in the top 10% of all schools, and similar schools, in England; this is important as the more students are in school, the more they learn and the more successful they are. We saw the number of suspensions we issued drop again, and we are proud to have now gone six years since a child was permanently excluded from Highlands - not because we tolerate poor behaviour, but because our 'prevention before sanction' approach to behaviour management means that the vast majority of our students make the right choices, steer clear of serious incidents at school and can learn in a disruption free, safe environment. We continue to be an example of excellence in terms of our approach to inclusion with very high numbers of children with EHCPs succeeding here, and we are particularly proud of our thriving provision for deaf students.

However, as those of you who have been associated with Highlands for a long time will know, we do not think our school is perfect, and we are always trying to improve further. Each year we look at what we have achieved and we try to do it better the next year. Next year will be no different and we will return in September ready to focus on making our school better still.

Our journey of school improvement and pursuit of excellence would not be possible without your support though, and the support of our students. Thank you for this. A school community is successful when all those involved: parents, students, staff and governors, push in the same direction. We were so proud during the Ofsted inspection in November when the lead inspector told us how positive the anonymous parent and student surveys had been about the school, and the very high number of surveys that had been completed. I would also like to thank the Highlands School Governing Body, led by our Chair of Governors, Matt Miller, MBE. They provide us with the challenge and support we need to go from strength to strength.

Next year will mainly be one of evolution rather than revolution at Highlands. However, we do have one big change coming. On 31st August 2025 our PFI contract ends and we will be the first school in



England to come out of a PFI contract. Our school was the first to be built under New Labour's PFI scheme and we were opened by Sir Tony Blair when he was prime minister. We have been working closely with the local authority, the Department for Education and with the PFI contract holders to make sure the handback goes smoothly. In practice, this means that from 1st September this year we will be, for the first time, responsible for the maintenance of our site and building, lettings, our caretaking, catering and cleaning staff and other areas of the school that - thus far - have been handled by the PFI contract holders. The end of the contract also marks the 25th anniversary of our school opening and we will be holding some celebratory events during the year to mark this - more information on this will follow next year.

Although there have been many positives this year there was also great sadness at Highlands as we learned of the death of our former headteacher Mr Bruce Goddard. He led our school to its first two 'outstanding' judgements and built the foundations on which our recent success has rested. Once we have responsibility for the school grounds from 1st September we will prepare to start work on a wellbeing garden which will act as a place of peace and tranquility in honour of Mr Goddard and Ms Rosanna Rossi, another much loved colleague who died in 2024.

In the first week of September, as has become traditional, we will hold online information evenings for all year groups. The details are below, please make sure that you attend. Please read the rest of the information below very carefully. And please note the changes to our PE kit from September, with skorts no longer being part of the kit.

I am looking forward to next year and I hope you and your children are too. Have a wonderful summer; to those coming in on results days I will see you then and, to everyone else, I look forward to seeing you in September 2025.

Mr McInerney,

Headteacher



## Term dates

Please click [here](#) to view the full academic year 2025-26 term dates.

Please note that Friday 3rd October will be an INSET day, students will not be in school.

## Arrangements for students returning to school

- **Monday 1st September:** Year 7 only. Details have been sent to families.
- **Tuesday 2nd September:** Year 7 and year 12 only. Details have been sent to families.
- **Wednesday 3rd September:** Induction for all other students, see table below.
- **Thursday 4th September:** Normal teaching commences for all year groups.

**Arrangements for Wednesday 3rd September. Lunch will not be served at school although year 7 students will be able to purchase a snack at breaktime.**

Year group	Arrival/line up	Assembly	Tutor time	Departure
<b>7</b>	8.30am	Induction day 3.		1.00pm
<b>8</b>	8.30am	8.40 - 9.10am	9.15 - 10.30am	10.30am
<b>9</b>	9.00am	9.15 - 9.45am	9.45 - 11.00am	11.00am
<b>10</b>	9.40am	9.50 - 10.20am	10.20 - 11.40am	11.40am
<b>11</b>	10.15am	10.25 - 10.55am	10.55 - 12.15pm	12.15pm
<b>13</b>	10.50am	11.00 - 11.30am	11.30 - 1.00pm	1.00pm



## Staffing update - pastoral teams from September 2025

Year group	Head of year	Behaviour mentor	Assistant headteacher	Associate deputy headteacher / Deputy head
7	Ms V Berrill	Mr S Carrim	Dr V Tsoni	Miss A Husseyin
8	Mr J Friend	Mr J Gbo	Mrs A Jeynes	Miss A Husseyin
9	Ms T Casimir-West	Ms K Forshaw	Ms A Touli	Mr T Hurst
10	Mr W Edwards	Ms T Brown	Ms S Hutchinson	Mr T Hurst
11	Ms R Halstead	Ms N O'Sullivan	Ms S Hutchinson	Mr T Hurst
12	Ms S Halil	Mr M O'Doherty (Assistant head of year)	Mr S Marcus (senior AHT)	Ms M Lloyd
13	Mr M Tuton	Ms K Gunning (Assistant head of year)	Mr S Marcus (senior AHT)	Ms M Lloyd

## Parent information webinars

We will be holding parent and carer information webinars in September to make sure parents and carers are aware of the priorities for the upcoming year for each year group. Please make a note of these times in your diaries. We will send links to the meetings soon. Students are encouraged to watch along with parents and carers.

Years 12 and 13	Tuesday 9th September 6:00pm
Years 7 and 8	Wednesday 10th September 6:00pm
Years 9, 10 and 11	Thursday 11th September 6:00pm

## Reading for pleasure programme

Highlands School is committed to providing students with the opportunity to read high quality literature. Engaging with such literature not only supports students' learning in English, but across the curriculum as a whole. It also plays an important role in fostering a life-long love of reading.

It is for this reason that the English department has published its list of suggested reading (see below). These books have been carefully selected in order to supplement the department's literature based curriculum as well books that are read to students during form time. Please do contact the school



should you have any questions or concerns. If you would like financial support please contact [get.reading.books@highlearn.uk](mailto:get.reading.books@highlearn.uk) for more information.

Please see the last two pages of this letter for the recommended reading lists.

- [Year 7](#)
- [Year 8](#)
- [Year 9](#)
- [Years 10-11](#)

### **School uniform**

All students should come to school each day (unless they have PE) wearing our full school uniform, which includes the following:

- Black school shoes (please see below for more detail).
- Black socks or plain black tights.
- Plain black kilt skirt or plain black trousers (no jean style, chinos or tight trousers). Skirt hems are worn in line with the knee.
- White school shirt or open neck blouse (long or short sleeved).
- Summer polo shirt can be worn in the summer term only (optional).
- A long-sleeved plain white t-shirt can be worn under the polo shirt for religious reasons. This will need to be agreed with the head of year.
- Green blazer (with school badge).
- V-neck green jumper (optional).
- School tie, worn to the waistline (if wearing a buttoned up school shirt).
- Students are required to wear their lanyard at all times when in the classrooms and when moving around the building.
- Single ear stud per ear in each ear. No piercings other than the ear.
- Religious necklaces (if required) must be worn inside a blouse/shirt.
- Headscarves worn for religious reasons should be black/green.
- Blazers must always be worn when moving around the school building, unless otherwise advised by the headteacher.
- Nothing should be worn on the wrist apart from a digital or analogue watch.



This picture sets out what shoes should be worn to school.



**Students are also expected to follow these uniform rules:**

- Trousers must be a traditional tailored style. Tight/stretch style trousers or jeans-related are not permitted. Trousers should be worn on the waist.
- Skirts worn full length on the knee.
- Blazer sleeves must not be rolled up.
- Shirts should be fully buttoned and tucked into trousers.
- Ties must be knotted and worn down to the waist, or within three closed fingers of the waistband.
- Visible t-shirts under the white school shirt are not permitted (a white non visible t-shirt is permitted). Long-sleeved, plain white t-shirts can be worn under the short-sleeved PE tops, and polo shirts for religious reasons. These can only be worn once the head of year has agreed.
- Hats and caps should not be worn, unless for religious purposes.
- Only plain black trouser belts are permitted.
- Hats, hoodies and any other non-uniform items or outdoor garments must not be worn in the building at any time.
- Blazers must always be worn when moving around the school building unless otherwise advised by the headteacher.
- Shoes with brightly/differently coloured laces are not permitted (only black permitted).



## Hair, makeup and jewellery

- Subtle makeup may be worn. Subtle makeup means foundation or face powder.
- Eye makeup, spot stars, fake eyelashes, lipstick and lip gloss are not permitted.
- Jewellery is not permitted apart from one stud earring in each ear. Religious symbols (if required) can be worn on a chain inside a blouse/shirt. No rings, bracelets or non-religious chains are permitted. Nothing should be worn on the wrist apart from an analog or digital watch (no smart watches).
- Nose studs or nose rings are not permitted.
- Extreme hair styles, brightly coloured hair (e.g. pink, blue, green), shavings, and tracks (including eyebrows) are not permitted. Dyed hair should be a natural colour and style.
- Nail extensions or coloured nail varnish are not permitted.

## PE kit

Students in years 7-11 should wear their PE kit to schools on the days that they have PE.

All PE kit items must be Highlands School specific items and not branded or generic sportswear. Students are expected to only wear a full PE kit that has been purchased from our suppliers Lyons or Smiths schoolwear shops. **Please note the skorts are no longer part of the school's PE kit.** The PE kit includes:

- Highlands school PE hoodie.
- Highlands school PE t-shirt.
- Highlands rugby shirt (optional).
- Highlands school black tracksuit bottoms.
- Highlands school black shorts. These should be loose fitting and worn to, or just above, the knee.
- Highlands school black sports leggings.
- Highlands School black rugby socks outdoor lessons or plain white socks for indoor lessons.
- Shin pads (optional).
- Non-marking trainers.

Football boots for lessons on the field (winter period only, optional). If students wear their PE kit on days that they do not have PE they will be removed from circulation and given a uniform to wear. They will lose the right to wear their PE kit to school and will have to bring it in a bag and get changed in PE.

## Incorrect uniform process

- Students who arrive at school without the proper uniform will be offered a spare uniform or parents and carers will be contacted to request that they bring the correct uniform to school for their child.
- Students in incorrect uniform will receive a detention, unless the parent or carer has notified the pastoral team in advance of any unavoidable issues with their child's uniform.
- Students in incorrect uniform may also not be allowed in circulation until they are in the



correct uniform.

- Any requests for reasonable adjustments to our uniform policy should be put in writing to the headteacher.

## Equipment

All students are expected to carry their everyday equipment in a bag of suitable size.

Students should bring a pencil case, which should include the following items:

- 30cm ruler
- 2 HB Pencils
- Pens (Black/blue and green)
- Eraser
- Sharpener
- Protractor
- Compass
- Colouring pencils
- Scientific calculator

All students will be provided with a whiteboard, whiteboard pen and rubber at the start of term. They should bring these to school every day. Students should also bring their reading book (see above) and planner with them to school every day.

## Reminder of timings of the school day

Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, Fridays		Wednesdays	
The school gates open at 8:20am. Students are expected to arrive by 8:30am. Students not in school by 8:30am are late.			
AM Reg	8:40am	8:40am	8:40am
P1	9:00am (PSHE on Friday)	9:00am	9:00am
P2	10:05am	P2	10:05am
Break	11:10am	Break	11:10am
P3	11:35am	P3	11:35am
P4 / lunch*	12:40pm Y10+11 lunch 1:10pm Y7 lunch 1:40 pm Y8+9 lunch	P4 / lunch*	12:40pm Y10+11 lunch 1:10pm Y7 lunch 1:40 pm Y8+9 lunch
P5	2:10pm	PM registration / end of day / Ed-Extra activities	2:10pm
End of day	3:15pm	Staff CPD	2:30pm
		End of staff CPD	4:30pm





\*Period 4 is divided into three half hour sections. Year groups are taught for two of them and have their lunch during the other.

### **Behaviour policy**

There will be no changes to our behaviour systems next year. Below is a summary of key aspects of our behaviour systems. These will be explained further during our webinars.

### **Detentions**

- Detentions take place Monday - Friday from 3:15pm for 30 minutes, for students issued with a C2 or C3 that day or after the 1.30pm cut off point the day before,
- Students who fail to attend their detention will be required to serve a longer detention of 40 minutes the following day.
- Students who receive more than one C2 in one day will receive a deputy headteacher detention where they will be given the opportunity to reflect upon how to improve upon their behaviour. Deputy headteacher detentions will last for 45 minutes, from 3:15 - 4:00.

### **Morning routines**

- The gate opens at 8.20am and students are expected at their line up point by 8.30am. Students who arrive at the gate after 8.30am will be marked late (exceptions made where a parent/carer has made the school aware of a valid reason for lateness or there is a known issue on the local roads).
- All students in years 7-10 line up on their line-up points.
- Year 11 students are not required to line up in the mornings. Instead, upon arrival at school in the morning, year 11 will go to our canteen. This procedure is in place in recognition of their maturity and to prepare students for being in the sixth form in the following year. Staff will use this time each morning to ensure year 11 are in the correct school uniform and ready for learning.
- Year 7-11 students will attend a daily 20min tutor time session from 8.40am.

### **Safeguarding**

Safeguarding information can be found on our [website](#).