



Hazelwick School Newsletter

September 2026

*Special
Edition*

Dates for your diary:

Thu 17th Sept 2026:
Open Evening

Fri 31st Oct 2026:
Deadline for school place
preference procedure

Mon 1st March 2027
Offer date

Mon 6th July 2026:
Hazelwick New Intake
Parents'/Carers' Meeting

School Tour Dates:

Thursday 24th September
Friday 25th September
Monday 28th September
Tuesday 29th September
Wednesday 7th October
Thursday 8th October
Monday 12th October
Wednesday 14th October

The tours will be at
9.00am and 11.30am each
day.

To arrange a visit, please
make a booking through
the booking system on
the school website. This
will be available from
Friday 18th September.

Headlines

Mr D Leadbitter, Headteacher

Welcome to this special edition of our Hazelwick School Newsletter. I am delighted that you are interested in sending your child to our wonderful school.



Our online newsletter is produced and published to all parents and carers every month. In it, we recognise and celebrate achievements right across the school, both in terms of different areas and activities as well as different age groups. Past issues can be found on the school website (www.hazelwick.org).

In this special edition, we have put together a selection of articles to highlight the breadth and variety of opportunities open to our students here at Hazelwick.

You will also find details about various other aspects of our school life, such as the curriculum, trips, sports, music and drama which we hope is of interest. There is a great deal more information available on the school website. You will also be able to see and discuss these things at our Open Evening on Thursday 17th September.



After the Open Evening, we will be running Open Morning Tours, where you will be able to see the school in action and meet with a senior member of staff.

I hope that you enjoy reading the newsletter with your child, and you take the opportunity to explore and discover more about Hazelwick life.



Year 7 students on their first day at Hazelwick:



Year 8 look back at the highlights of their first year at Hazelwick:

- "Trying my best in exams."
- "Lodge Hill was great."
- "Getting to explore Hever Castle."
- "Making friends who help us when we need help."
- "Going to i360."
- "Having new lessons and teachers."
- "Going on school trips, especially to France."
- "Getting published in Young Writers."
- "Being in the best form."
- "Being in the school production."
- "Taking part in Xmas Factor."

What has been your biggest achievement to date?

- "Getting to try out new lessons."
- "Improving on my exam results in tests."
- "Extending my vocabulary in different languages."
- "Playing in the school football team and representing the school."
- "Getting lots of achievement points."
- "Getting purple slips."
- "Getting the PE award."
- "Getting into the athletics team."
- "Getting better at talking and reading Spanish."

Key Stage 3 Curriculum (Years 7, 8 and 9)

All students at Hazelwick follow a broad and balanced curriculum at KS3, studying a wide range of subjects, all taught by specialist teachers.

The aim of the curriculum at KS3 is to excite and engage children, to broaden their experience, open up new areas of knowledge, develop their independent study skills and lay down strong foundations for success in examination work at KS4.

Students are grouped in a variety of ways that we feel are most appropriate to their age and ability.

Full details of the KS3 curriculum can be found on the school website.



Trip to Hever Castle

Year 7 students enjoyed a really informative trip to Hever Castle where they took part in a workshop session about life in Tudor England and had a chance to explore the grounds.

Design Technology

Year 8 students explored different ideas for a phone holder design. They learnt how to use the coping saw with precision to cut their design and used pyrography techniques with wood burning pens to showcase their chosen symbol.



Food & Nutrition

Year 9 GCSE students had to choose a bread recipe and adapt it to create their own bread. Some incredible pieces were created, ranging from tasty cinnamon rolls to garlicky jalapeño doughballs.

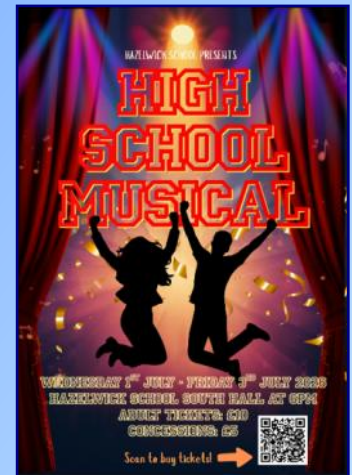


Annual Reading Ambassador Breakfast

Reading Ambassadors are students who actively contribute to promoting books and reading culture at Hazelwick. They represent us in the National Literacy Trust Reading Championship Quiz, they choose the Hazelwick *book of the month* and present assemblies. They are important student leaders in our community.

Drama Production - July 2026 High School Musical

Miss Palmer and Miss Murray joined forces for the first time to bring together the Drama and Music departments in the production of *High School Musical*. The show was a tremendous success, with three sell-out shows and special performances for two local primary schools, reaching an audience of over 900 people. The production received exceptional feedback from audience members, with comments including, "I can't wait for the next one in two years!" and "I don't remember enjoying a performance as much as I did High School Musical." The production showcased the remarkable talent, dedication and hard work of our students, creating an unforgettable experience for performers and audiences alike.



Creative Arts



Our annual summer Art Show exhibited the high-quality work of our students across the specialist areas of Fine Art and Photography.



Autumn & Spring Showcase

The Music and Drama departments collaborated for the autumn and spring concerts, showcasing the work of our talented students.



Junior Choir “Sings Live” at Christ’s Hospital School

On 11th February this year our junior choir took part in a concert at Christ’s Hospital School’s hugely impressive Chapel. The event was arranged by West Sussex Music and featured choirs from various schools around the Crawley/Horsham area.



The Wonder of Science

STEM — Science, Technology, Engineering, Maths



Students enjoying scientific discovery in their lessons.



Year 9 Students take on the Engineering Tomorrow Bridges Challenge

A group of Year 9 students took part in an exciting and highly engaging STEM workshop. The workshop, titled “*Bridges: Building Structures That Last,*” challenged students to think and work like real engineers as they designed, built, and tested their own bridge structures.



Annual Maths Challenge

Hazelwick competes against teams from across the region. The last team to enter performed tremendously well, working together to solve some very demanding mathematical challenges.



Charities and Community

Donations collected for Crawley Open House in December



Sixth Form Festive Friday



St Catherine's Hospice Youth Enterprise Challenge

Led by six of our Year 12 students, the team organised a wide range of fund-raising activities, including cake sales, a fun run, a car wash, non-uniform days and sports events to raise money for St Catherine's Hospice. For the fourteenth year running, the Hazelwick team won the award for the most money raised with the absolutely incredible total of **£7690.94**. This was a truly amazing result; their target was £1500, so to exceed that by over £6000 was phenomenal.

House System

The Hazelwick House System runs in addition to the well-established and highly effective Year Team pastoral system, to increase students' leadership opportunities and encourage further participation between different year groups. All students belong to one of 6 Houses, which are named after great British achievers - Inayat Khan, Moody, Faraday, Parr, Sancho and Lovelace. All students earn points for their House across all aspects of school life. There are regular events that take place throughout the school year, giving students the opportunity to compete together, often with other year groups, to earn points for their House. Events in the last year have included: World Quiz Challenge, The Big Music Quiz, Chopstick Challenge, Design a Planet competition, House Bake Off, Astronomy Scavenger Hunt, The Chase, Blackout Poetry competition, Blindfold Penalty Shoot Out, Balance Test competition, Photo competition, University Challenge, and a Chess Tournament. Each House also has a nominated House Charity for which they raise money throughout the year.



As well as taking part in events, students are key to the leadership of the House system with Charity, Sport and Student Voice representatives in every form, led by House Leaders and House Captains from the Sixth form. It is excellent to see students from across the age range of the school working together to organise, deliver and enjoy events for other students.

Results

Results

A Level

At A level this summer, Hazelwick once again achieved truly outstanding results. 118 A* and A grades were achieved by Hazelwick students, with 42% of all grades being A*-B. Amongst these wonderful results were 5 student achieving 2 or more A* grades and 12 students that achieved a clean sweep of A* or A grades across all their subjects. Crucially however, our focus remains on the progress of all students and their individual success in their Sixth Form studies. These results ensured that our students were able to progress on to the courses that they wanted at university, into the jobs that they hoped for or, for some students, accessing a place on the highly competitive degree apprenticeships.

There will be 7 students reading medicine and 1 reading Law at Oxford. 36 students have gained a place at a Russell Group university with a further 40 going on to study at a top 40 university. This means that 52% of our students moving to university are doing so at a top 40 university.

The courses that they are going on to study are wide and varied, highlighting the excellent preparation that Hazelwick has given them for their futures. The courses they will be studying at university include: Criminology, Chemical Engineering, Electrical and Electronic Engineering, Archaeology, Children's Nursing, Fine Art, Ecology and Wildlife Conservation, Marine Biology and Coastal Ecology, Philosophy and Politics, Modern Languages and Pharmacy with Biopharmaceutics.

GCSE

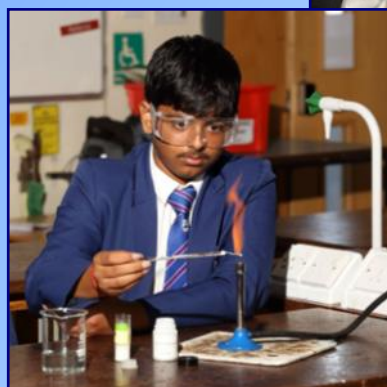
Once again, we were thrilled that our students achieved another fantastic set of GCSE results across the broad curriculum that we offer. At Hazelwick, we are committed to the progress of each and every individual student, with staff striving to get the best possible grades for each child. There will be no Progress 8 data this year due to these students not sitting their SATS at primary school during Covid. However, the progress made by the Year 11 students in summer 2026 was very strong indeed and their hard work enabled very good progress across the board.

20% of all grades were grades 9-7, with some stellar results from students including 4 students achieving seven or more grade 9s. However, just as importantly, when looking at the progress of all students, it was equally high across our higher, middle and lower ability students. This highlights the recognition and support that every student receives at Hazelwick, challenging and inspiring them to get the best results possible for them.

First Class Facilities for your Child

Hazelwick School as an Academy

- Increased funding and greater autonomy
- Improved services for our students
- Site and facilities upgrades and developments
- Enhanced curriculum flexibility
- No change to our admissions criteria
- No change to our ethos



GROUPS
Extensive, high quality
sports pitches and
playground



**Fantastic sports equipment in
North Gym**



More Able, Gifted and Talented

Hazelwick is fully committed to ensuring that all students make the best possible progress, tailored to their individual needs. Within this are the wealth of opportunities that we offer to our able, gifted and talented students through our Aspire programme.

Spanish Spelling & Translation Bee National Finals

In only our second year entering the Spanish Spelling Bee, Hazelwick achieved exceptional national success. Shanmukh Dhulipala (7PWE) was crowned National Champion, Subi Baskar (7PWE) finished 2nd nationally, and Rob Fecko (7PWE) secured an outstanding 5th place. Equally impressive was our first participation in the Spanish Translation Bee, where Nayonika Sujitkumar (8GPR) achieved an outstanding 2nd place nationally.



Talented Athlete Programme

Students on our Talented Athlete Programme attend a variety of fitness and nutrition workshops throughout the year.



Duke of Edinburgh's (DofE) Bronze Award

After months of training, preparation, and determination, Year 9 students completed their qualifying expedition in Dorking. The expedition certainly put them to the test walking in relentless rain, hiking the highest hill in Sussex, and doing it all with a 12.5kg backpack.

Alongside the expedition, students have dedicated time to volunteering, developing new skills and participating in physical activities, demonstrating commitment across all sections of the award.

Sport — some examples of what's on offer

District Badminton Tournament



Our U14s badminton teams showcased fantastic talent and sporting spirit at the district tournament.

Both teams demonstrated impressive determination and competed strongly, delivering some standout performances.

Town Sports 2026

The annual Town Sports athletics competition took place on Tuesday 7th July at K2 athletics track. This is the final event in our calendar and all of the Crawley schools work hard with their athletes to win. Hazelwick students showed great determination and spirit throughout the very hot day winning points in a wide range of events and coming second place overall.



Badminton Success

The KS4 boys' and girls' badminton teams achieved outstanding success in their area district competitions.

As area district champions, both teams progressed to the County Championships.

U16 Netball Team

The U16 Girls Netball team won the league which meant they could progress to the County Netball Tournament in 2026 where they played all schools who won in their district.



Sport

Hazelwick UI5s Crowned County Cup Shield Champions



The under 15 boys' football team produced a memorable performance in July to lift the County Cup Shield, completing a remarkable cup run with a deserved 3-1 victory over Heathfield Community College in the final.

Sussex County Schools Golf Champions

Hazelwick won both the Net and Gross competitions at the Sussex County Schools Golf championships over Easter.



District Cross Country

Students participated in the District Cross Country event, held at Crawley Rugby Club. Each age category had to run distances of around 3km up to 5km.

All students dug in and fought what was a pretty challenging course. There were some excellent times and places from all students.



Cricket Success for our UI3 Team

Our UI3 team have been crowned District Champions after an outstanding campaign in which they defeated every school in our locality. Every player has made a valuable contribution, whether with the bat, ball, or in the field, demonstrating the strength and depth of the squad.



Educational Visits



Team-building

Year 7 students thoroughly enjoyed their day trip to Lodge Hill in their first term at Hazelwick. They developed a range of skills, formed new friendships and had lots of fun.



Boulogne

In the summer, Year 7 French students visit Boulogne where they practise their language skills around the town, including visiting a boulangerie and making their own croissants.



Paris

Year 8 French students use their listening, speaking, reading and writing skills on the annual summer term trip to Paris.



Granada

Over four days, A-Level students took part in guided visits to the Alhambra, the Albaicín, the Sacromonte and key Lorca sites, including Fuente Vaqueros and a theatrical visit to his birthplace. Year 9 and 10 students will visit in 2027.



Transition at Hazelwick

Helping everyone to find their way at secondary school

Transition to secondary school is an exciting process with a great deal to look forward to. It can also feel daunting to Year 6 pupils with lots to learn about moving to “big school”. At Hazelwick, a huge amount of care, consideration, preparation and communication with primary schools goes into supporting our Year 7s make the move up to secondary school each year. This excellent practice was identified by the national educational magazine ‘Teach Secondary’, whose editor contacted Hazelwick in order to showcase our work on transition. They commented on the experience and expertise that Hazelwick staff have in supporting students into Year 7, along with the care, compassion and commitment they show to them. All staff at Hazelwick are focussed on ensuring the move is successful, beneficial and positive.

Hazelwick can look like a big school on paper and it can seem like a very big site when you visit. The school does everything it can to benefit from its size - the large spacious leafy site ensures there is always a calm feel and there is plenty of space for all year groups to have their own distinct areas for socialising, eating and playing. However, in spite of its size, every student is known and the school does not feel very large to our students. New Year 7s are supported by Sixth Form students as they settle in. The Sixth Formers escort groups to and from their lessons and support them at social time as well. Our large and diverse student body enables the school to offer a broad and engaging range of subjects. The transitions between lessons are very smooth and visitors always comment on how they cannot believe that there are over 1900 students on the site.



In September 2025, the Year 7 students arrived from 29 different primary schools. To coordinate their successful arrival, and ensure that all students are well understood, Hazelwick creates a partnership with primary schools. ‘Teach Secondary’ commented on this, stating that Hazelwick staff “work very closely with local primary schools, meeting both teachers and pupils. Through these conversations, they understand the friendship groups that already exist and are able to understand the needs of each child to create well balanced form groups that are paired with the right form tutors.” Armed with knowledge of every child, socially and academically, students are placed into 11 tutor groups. The information from their primary school ensures the best combinations of classes to enable students to feel settled and comfortable in their new learning environment.

In July each year, all students that will be joining the following September are invited to attend an Induction Day at Hazelwick. They are welcomed on this day by the Headteacher before going through an engaging and carefully tailored programme of lessons, tours and team building induction activities with their new tutor group. This day gives the soon-to-be new Year 7s a range of experiences and they leave with new friends, an understanding of the school and an exciting and high quality shared experience with their new form teacher that stands them in excellent stead for their arrival in September.

Hazelwick staff seek feedback from students and primary schools every year to continually tailor the transition processes to the needs of the cohort. The involvement of our Sixth Form students epitomises the diligence and care shown in the transition process at Hazelwick. We believe that the whole school community has a role in welcoming Year 7 students into the school. This approach, alongside the very careful grouping and understanding of the children that are joining us, enables all students to quickly and happily find their way at Hazelwick and enjoy the start of their secondary school experience.

‘Your child – your choice’

Secondary School Admissions in Crawley

Does my child’s primary school affect his/her eligibility for any secondary school?

No – for any of the non-church maintained secondary schools in Crawley (Hazelwick, Ifield, Oriel, Thomas Bennett, The Gatwick School), your primary school does NOT make any difference to your chances of gaining admission.

I hear parents talking about ‘Feeder Schools’ having priority admissions. Is this true?

No – in Crawley there is no such thing as a ‘Feeder School’. Your child has the same opportunity to come to Hazelwick as any other primary school child.

As an Academy, does Hazelwick have completely different admissions rules?

No – they are broadly the same as for the other (Local Authority) secondary schools in Crawley and they have not changed drastically since Hazelwick became an Academy. Hazelwick’s admissions are still administered for us by the Local Authority’s Pupil Admissions Office.

Is there any selection at Hazelwick, either by academic ability or by ‘aptitude’?

No – Hazelwick remains a fully comprehensive, non-selective, inclusive school.

What are the main factors that determine admission to Hazelwick?

- Living within the defined ‘catchment’ area.
- Having an older sibling already attending the school.
- How close you live to the school.
- Having an ‘EHCP’ or other specific exceptional need.
- Being a Looked After Child or living in care.
- Full details are in the Admissions Policy under Key Documents on the school website.

The letter that came with my application form named a secondary school as the ‘catchment school’ for my address. Does this mean that my child has to go there?

No – this simply reflects where your home is located. It is **your** decision as to which preferences you want to put for your child’s secondary school. It is only when a school is oversubscribed that living inside the school’s catchment area gives you an advantage over those living outside it.

What is the size of Hazelwick’s annual intake into Year 7?

Hazelwick’s PAN (‘Published Admission Number’) is 300 – the largest in Crawley.

How many different primary schools did Hazelwick’s current Year 7 students come from?

In total, our current Year 7 is made up of children from 29 different primary schools.

If I want my child to come to Hazelwick, do I need to put Hazelwick as my first choice?

If you believe Hazelwick is the best choice for your child, name Hazelwick as your first choice as this gives you the best chance of getting a place. West Sussex also strongly recommends that parents/carers put their child’s catchment school as one of their three preferences. The choice of where to put it in the preferences is up to you.

**If you have any further questions about admissions to Hazelwick, contact Mrs Howland
thowland@hazelwick.org.uk, 01293 403344**