



NESTON
HIGH SCHOOL

Headteacher's report to Trustees

Spring Term 2026

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BEHAVIOURAL REPORTS

LAWRENCE CRAY

Number of suspensions days by cohort:

	Non-Disadvantaged			Disadvantaged			FSM			SEND			LAC			PLAC			Social Care Involvement		
Suspension Reasons	2025-26	2024-25	2023-24	2025-26	2024-25	2023-24	2025-26	2024-25	2023-24	2025-26	2024-25	2023-24	2025-26	2024-25	2023-24	2025-26	2024-25	2023-24	2025-26	2024-25	2023-24
Alcohol related	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Bullying	0	24.5	2	0	5.5	5	0	2	4	0	3.5	1	0	0.5	3	0	3	1	0	5.5	0
Challenging/unacceptable behaviour	58.5	91	60	112.5	127.5	104.5	67.5	110	89.5	42	79	81	9.5	0	0	28	5.5	6.5	54.5	0	0
Disobedience/disrespect to staff	5.5	9	8	5	11.5	13.5	3.5	11.5	9	5	4	14	0	0	0	1.5	0	2	0.5	0	0
Drug related	5	5	0	0	4.5	0	0	4.5	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Inappropriate use of social media or online technology	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Non-acceptance of school code of conduct	9.5	1	4.5	7.5	0	0.5	7	0	0.5	2.5	0	2.5	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Persistent disruptive behaviour	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Physical assault/violent behaviour against a pupil	13	27.5	30	7	25	17.5	4.5	24	11.5	2.5	11	22	0	0	0.5	2.5	1	1	2.5	4	0
Physical assault/violent behaviour against an adult or staff	2.5	0	0	0	2	1	0	2	1	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Racist abuse	2	6	1	2.5	0	0	2.5	0	0	1	6	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0
Refusal of punishment	1	0	0	0	0	0.5	0	0	0.5	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sexual harassment	0.5	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sexual misconduct	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Smoking/Vaping	7	11.5	1	8.5	10.5	0	8	9	0	2	5	0	0.5	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	0
Substance abuse	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Truancy/absconding from lessons	2	0	0	1	0.5	0	0	0.5	0	0.5	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	3	0.5	0
Use or threat of use of an offensive weapon or prohibited item (incl. possession)	0	0	1	0	0	5	0	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Vandalism, Challenging/unacceptable behaviour	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0
Verbal abuse/threatening behaviour against a pupil	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Verbal abuse/threatening behaviour against an adult or staff	0	0	0	0	4	5.5	0	4	3.5	0	4	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	107.5	188.5	112.5	144	194	155	93	170.5	124.5	62.5	121.5	127.5	10	0.5	3.5	33	9.5	12.5	64.5	13	0

Note that some pupils would be counted in multiple categories.

Classroom behaviour in 2025 to 26 shows clear improvement at the midyear point with systems now fully embedded and expectations raised across the school. Overall incidents have reduced by 26% when comparing with the previous academic year. The consistency in routines has supported a calmer learning environment. Staff direction has focused on maintaining high standards and this is reflected in stronger conduct in lessons and around the site. The raising of standards has meant an increase in higher level sanctions and therefore suspensions as leaders have an unbending desire to further improve the culture of expectations.

Although disadvantaged pupils still account for a notable proportion of suspensions, the overall pattern shows a steady shift toward lower level incidents rather than serious harm. Categories such as bullying and physical assault remain low and stable which suggests that early intervention and pastoral support are having a positive impact on pupils who often present with more complex needs.

Specific groups within the disadvantaged cohort such as FSM, SEND, LAC, PLAC and pupils with social care involvement show the benefits of targeted support and greater staff confidence in applying the behaviour framework. Midyear figures suggest that these pupils are responding to clearer boundaries and more predictable follow up from staff. The school is now well placed to use this momentum to secure further improvement over the remainder of the year ensuring that the most vulnerable pupils continue to experience a safe, orderly and positive environment that supports their learning.

Categories	Attendance Average			Persistent Absenteeism		
	2025-26	2024-25	2023-24	2025-26	2024-25	2023-24
Overall	91.8%	90.7%	91.1%	21.1%	20.3%	21.6%
Non-Disadvantaged	93.4%	93.2%	92.7%	16.3%	13.5%	15.6%
Disadvantaged	85.7%	86.1%	87.6%	38.2%	33.1%	34.5%
FSM	85.1%	84.3%	85.5%	39.2%	40.9%	44.3%
SEND	87.8%	87.0%	88.5%	32.8%	31.7%	29.2%
LAC	90.8%	82.8%	85.2%	41.7%	28.6%	25.0%
PLAC	87.9%	86.2%	86.4%	26.3%	26.5%	26.9%

Overall attendance is trending in the right direction. The whole school average has risen which shows stronger day to day participation. Non disadvantaged pupils are leading the way at 93.4 percent which is the highest point across the three years shown. Whole school persistent absenteeism is 21.1 percent which is close to the 2023 to 2024 position and remains within reach of further improvement as the year progresses. Both current attendance and absenteeism rates are in line with nation averages and above regional levels.

There are encouraging signs within key cohorts. Free school meals attendance has edged up and persistent absenteeism for this group has improved. SEND attendance has lifted which suggests wider engagement is working and provides a platform to translate into lower persistent absenteeism through continued support and consistency. Disadvantaged pupils remain the cohort the focus for targeted attendance work.

Looked After Children have made a significant gain in attendance to 90.8 percent compared which is also negatively skewed by two complex cases that have now left our roll. Previously looked after children continue a steady pattern with attendance and a small improvement in persistent absenteeism. Building on these gains while sustaining the upward trend for free school meals and maintaining the high standard among non-disadvantaged pupils puts the school in a good position to close the remaining gaps.

Attendance is everyone's responsibility and there has been a culture developing to demonstrate the power and importance of excellent attendance. This is through tutor work, rewards, messaging, assemblies, contact home and a whole host more.

Year 9 Options Process

The Year 9 options process is progressing well. All student choices have now been collected, and work has begun on college referrals for those pursuing alternative or specialist pathways. This process has benefited from strong collaboration between the SEND team, the Year Team and SLT, ensuring that each student's needs, aspirations and next steps are carefully considered. Early indications suggest that the breadth of our offer continues to support a wide range of pathways and learner profiles.

Year 12 Options Process

The Year 12 options process is also underway. Curriculum Leaders have contributed detailed subject

information, and students have been actively engaged in the guidance and selection process. This collaborative approach ensures that choices are well-matched to students' progression goals and the school's commitment to offering rigorous academic and applied learning pathways.

Quality Assurance and School Improvement Partner (SIP) Report

All internal Quality Assurance (QA) processes for the year are now complete. A comprehensive subject-by-subject report has been provided by the School Improvement Partner, identifying:

- **Areas of strong practice** across departments
- **Key development priorities** aligned with whole-school improvement goals
- **Specific actions** needed to support consistency and further raise standards

These findings are now being used to inform departmental action plans and targeted professional development, and actions and improvements are now underway.

Teaching & Learning Strategy Implementation

The new *Recommended Teaching and Learning Strategies* booklet has been produced and disseminated across staff teams. Grounded in recognised best practice and current educational research, the booklet offers clear, practical strategies to enhance classroom practice. Early feedback has been positive, and leaders are monitoring implementation through ongoing QA and drop-ins.

Curriculum Modelling and Financial Sustainability

Responsible curriculum modelling continues to ensure that our offer remains both high-quality and financially sustainable. This work considers staffing structures, class sizes, student uptake trends and statutory requirements, helping to safeguard a broad and balanced curriculum within an efficient financial framework.

Educational White Paper – Alignment with Curriculum Recommendations

Recent recommendations within the national educational white paper emphasise several curriculum priorities, including:

- Strengthening **oracy** as a core component of learning
- Embedding high-quality **literacy** across all subjects
- Ensuring access to a **broad and balanced curriculum**, including the arts
- Providing pathways for **technical and vocational** learning alongside academic routes

We are confident in our preparedness for these recommendations due to the strong foundations already in place. Our curriculum already prioritises oracy—for example, through embedded drama practice—and literacy is a whole-school focus with established strategies across subjects. Students benefit from meaningful choice within the arts, and we continue to offer diverse technical and vocational pathways, ensuring all learners have access to routes that match their strengths and ambitions.

1. Low attendance rates sometimes linked with behavioural issues compared to non-disadvantaged peers. (See Attendance report page 2)
2. Literacy and numeracy levels on entry, and oracy skills caused by gaps in learning.

Literacy -In year 7, the total number of students to date who have accessed Literacy gold intervention is 103, of which 75 students are Disadvantaged.

Of the 103 initial students, 87 now have a reading age of 12 or above, whilst 16 remain under 12 and further interventions are taking place.

Numeracy - All year 7 students are assessed in the first 2 weeks, and this, alongside key stage 2 data highlights a cohort of students that receive maths small group interventions to plug the numeracy gaps. In addition, a small number of students access 1:1 intervention. Students are set in maths and this is reviewed at key points during the year.

Oracy - Increasing opportunities for student oracy is an effective way to secure students' knowledge and develop their confidence. All students develop the oracy skills of speaking and listening through the curriculum. At key stage three all students access drama lessons once a fortnight. Through drama activities, students practice articulating ideas, projecting their voice, using expressive language, and responding to others in real time. This repeated practice helps build both confidence and fluency in spoken communication.

3. Literacy skills (in all years) caused by gaps in learning.

For all students including OFSTED disadvantaged students.

From the table those attending Literacy Gold intervention LG.

Year	Total Number of students	Disadvantaged students OFSTED Disadvantaged	EHCP		Sen Orange		SEN Monitoring		Reading age at least 12	Reading age below 12
			Total	LG	Total	LG	Total	LG		
8	131	92	15	5	45	13	47	20	101	30
9	121	72	11	5	41	10	43	4	94	27
10	112	69	11	4	52	5	41	6	87	25
11	93	65	14	3	37	1	34	1	67	26

A full programme of personalised intervention is in place for students in years 8 to 11. The intervention program has had a significant impact on students reading, and therefore their ability to access the whole school curriculum.

4. A lack of parental engagement with school life compared to non disadvantaged peers compounds these students disadvantage further, along with lower attendance at parents' evening. The school allows parents of disadvantaged students to book parents evening appointments before other parents, and they all receive a phone call reminder.

Engagement of Disadvantaged students in school activities.

Through our PDEx Point system, we recognise the full spectrum of enrichment activity, track students' engagement and take action to ensure the programme keeps evolving. We also seek to recognise the occasions when students not only get involved, but exceed expectations and offer leadership or staff support.

Total with Points	Of Student With Points: Number of Ofsted Disad.	Of Student With Points: Number of SEND	Of Student With Points: Number of Young Carers	Of Student With Points: Number of LAC
1404 82%	459 32% Target 35%	250 18% Target 19%	9 0.6% Target 1%	11 0.8% Target: 0.9%

Programme Design

We seek to create opportunities for all students to benefit from our enrichment programme. We also understand that many students are limited in their experiences of unfamiliar cultures, leadership opportunities, rich natural spaces or physically demanding activities. This in turn can lead to a lack of confidence in engaging with enrichment activities. A wide range of opportunities to participate are planned throughout the year.

Grease the musical, Cadbury World 2026, Ski lesson - Snow centre, Carol Concert 2025, D of E Gold Assessment Expedition 2026, D of E Gold Training Expedition 2026, Year 12 Liverpool Fieldtrip, Criminology Emergency Service Trip, Blackpool - Computing & Business, Y12 Capel Curig Geography NEA, Walk of Light 2026, Y12 Particle Physics Masterclass, UCAS 2026, European Youth Parliament 2026, Edge Hill Uni Trip 2026, English Language A Level Conference, Ski Trip Austria 2026, Mock Assessment Center, Jobs and Apprenticeship Fair,

5. A lack of aspiration of disadvantaged students at the key transitions into KS4 and KS5 compared to non-disadvantaged peers.

Key Stage 4

The Key Stage 4 options package is designed to be aspirational and inclusive for disadvantaged students, balancing the school's commitment to EBacc subjects—through the continued compulsory study of History or Geography—with an expanding range of creative pathways that reflects growing student interest in the arts, particularly drama and music. Strong performance in subjects such as Religious Education further supports a curriculum that values both academic rigour and personal development, while the overall breadth and diversity of the offer aligns with the recommendations of the 2028 curriculum reviews, ensuring that all learners can access a rich, well-rounded education that nurtures talent, widens opportunity, and removes barriers to progression.

Outcomes

	2025-2026	2024-2025	2023-2024	2022-2023
L3VA	-0.02	-0.23	-0.13	-1.07
Disad (overall)	-0.07	-0.06	-0.09	-1.04
Non-disad (overall)	-0.01	-0.25	-0.14	-1.07
A level All	-0.09	-0.31	-0.18	-1.2
Disad (A level)	-0.21	-0.1	-0.2	-1.2
Non-disad. (A level)	-0.07	-0.33	-0.17	-1.19
Applied General (all)	0.4	0	0.08	-0.6
Disad (App Gen)	0.66	0.05	0.2	-0.57
Non-disad (App Gen)	0.37	0	0.06	-0.61

Destinations 3 Year Trend for Disadvantaged students

Year	Total Disad students	Apprenticeship	Employment	FE College	Neston High Sixth Form	Other Sixth Form	Other Sixth Form College	Undecided / Unknown
2024-2025	70	1	0	22	16	6	12	12
2023-2024	42	2	2	20	12	0	0	7
2022-2023	61	8	0	24	9	0	6	14

6. As a result of all the above, lower academic progress and attainment compared to that of their non-disadvantaged peers.

	Last year's Y13 Spring CAE data	Final outcomes for last year's Y13	Current Y13 Spring CAE data	Applying previous year's increase/decrease to current year...
Overall	-0.4 (C-) -0.3 52 Males -0.54 45 Females	-0.24 (C) -0.13 M -0.36 F	-0.02 (C) -0.14 59 Males 0.11 61 Females	0.14 0.03 M 0.29 F
Disadvantaged	-0.16 11 students	-0.06	-0.07 11 students	0.03
SEND	-0.56 8 students	-0.24	0.28 20 students	*
L	-0.47 (E+) 13 students	-0.1 (D)	0.07 (D+) 34 students	0.44
M	-0.36 (D+) 57 students	-0.11 (C-)	-0.09 (C-) 50 students	0.16
H	-0.45 (C+) 29 students	-0.54 (C+)	0.01 (B) 36 students	-0.08

Y13 data has been collected after the most recent CAE exams in January. CAE data was then compared with last year's Y13 students as above. The uplift that was gained last year from this time until summer results data has been applied to the current Y13 cohort. The only key group this hasn't been applied to is the SEND students, due to the nature of each SEND student having a different profile and the small number of SEND students last year compared to nearly three times more SEND students this year. There is the same number of Y13 disadvantaged students as last year and if the same uplift applies this year, they would have a positive L3VA as a cohort of 0.03.

The most able cohort will continue to be a focus as we approach the external examinations.

	Last year's Y11 Spring CAE data	Final outcomes for last year's Y11	Current Y11 Spring CAE data	Applying previous year's increase/decrease to current year...
Overall	42.1	43.42	45.2	46.5
Males	42.8 161 Males	44.6	43.95 161 Males	45.75
Females	41.2 138 Females	42.0	46.58 139 Females	47.38
Disadvantaged	31.9 68 students	32.4	34.9 75 students	35.4
SEND	31.7 57 students	34.5	34.9 50 students	*

The Sixth Form team have been working hard to ensure that progress is being made towards improve outcomes for Sixth Form students.

Our year 13 cohort are currently working at an Average grade of a C, male students are currently C and female are at a C+ based upon current teachers predicted grades provided after the recent mock examinations in January. We are coming to an end of a series of data meetings, where each department KS5 data is reviewed with senior staff and actions are decided upon for both departments and the Sixth Form team to ensure the best outcomes for students.

Students performed well in their January mocks scoring an average grade of a C with Girls again achieving slightly higher with a C+. We are confident that with coursework to be finalised and a final push towards the summer exam series, students have a good chance of achieving improved outcomes compared with last year.

The Sixth Form team and wider staff are working hard to ensure that our high ability students perform better than they have done previously. Departments with underperforming high ability students have been asked to attend specific CPD designed to enhance teachers' ability to stretch and challenge our more able students. Data meetings have been conducted following the January mock exams with a focus on high ability students and ensuring sufficient support is in place for these students. Students who are both high ability and underperforming are being provided with a mentor to meet with on a regular basis for additional support

This year we have seen 84 students apply through UCAS (70% of the year group), 10 of these apply as early applications to ensure places on courses such as medicine and dentistry or Universities like Oxford and Cambridge. Two students currently hold offers to attend Cambridge University, one to study Maths and one to study History. Our previous cohort saw 66 students apply through UCAS but from a smaller year group (65% of the year).

This year students in year 12 have been taken to the UCAS Discovery event to offer students the opportunity to speak with over 80 universities and a further 30 Apprenticeship providers. Students will also be taken to Edge Hill University on the 27th March to gain experience of a Campus University and The University of Liverpool to experience a Russell Group University. A visit to Magdalene College at The University of Cambridge is also offered to a group of year 12 students.

We have continued to work with The Pledge Wirral to offer a programme of support for our students looking at access to the apprenticeship market. This year's programme has been expanded to included sessions on the use of LinkedIn when finding apprenticeships as well as the previously ran sessions including Interview preparation, CV writing, attending a mock assessment centre and careers fair events. This year we have added a visit to the National Apprenticeship fair for students in year 12 and year 13 to attend who are considering apprenticeships.

The team have a focus on students' academic performance and have coordinated a number of activities throughout the year in order to ensure students continue to progress. Students test scores and attitude to learning data is monitored and feeds into regular data meetings with department leaders. Students are attending study skills workshops and bespoke intervention programmes to ensure they have the required skill set to be successful at A level. The Heads of Year led parental meetings to ensure all stakeholders are involved in conversations regarding student progress and suitable support at home. Timetables are amended to increase time with teachers when required, and all students in year 13 have been assigned and attended

two SLT mentoring sessions to discuss progress and future plans. This year we have vastly increased the numbers of rewards events for the Sixth Form, students are now rewarded for their attitude to learning, CAE results and attendance.

Recruitment Update

This year we have 179 Internal applicants to join the Sixth Form as of data collected in November. 142 of these students indicated we are their first-choice destination and fifteen indicate that they are considering us as first choice destination. Of the 142 students indicating we are first choice sixteen are more able students, this represents 53% of all higher ability students in the year. 107 of the applications are middle ability, representing 52% of the middle ability students in the year group. Seven of the applications who indicated Neston as a first choice destination came from lower ability students, this represents 22% of the low ability students in the year group.

An additional 35 external students have applied, thirteen of them have indicated that Neston is their first choice destination. The number of external students is higher than at the same point in previous years. All external students who have applied have been offered a visit to the school. The number of internal students applying in November has remained consistent year on year with 179 applying this year in comparison to 175 the previous year.

Efforts have been made to ensure that the courses on offer are suitable for our year 11 cohort. A full curriculum comparison has been completed for the next academic year with our local competition.

The recent addition of Criminology and Law has benefited our recruitment and appear to be very popular again with our current year 11 students. The most popular courses for this year's applicants are Criminology, History and Psychology. We are currently in the process of analysing student responses to finalise option blocks. The final stages of our recruitment will be each applicant attending an interview with a member of the Sixth Form team or SLT to discuss the suitability of the courses selected, progress towards the entry requirements and final preparations towards their summer exams.

Leadership

Alongside their academic studies, sixth form students have been involved in a number of other leadership initiatives around school. Sixth Form students are involved in mentoring lower school students each morning. Around thirty students work closely with year 7 students to improve their reading and twenty students work with lower school maths students to help improve their numeracy skills. A further eight students act as pastoral mentors for lower school students who need additional peer support and guidance.

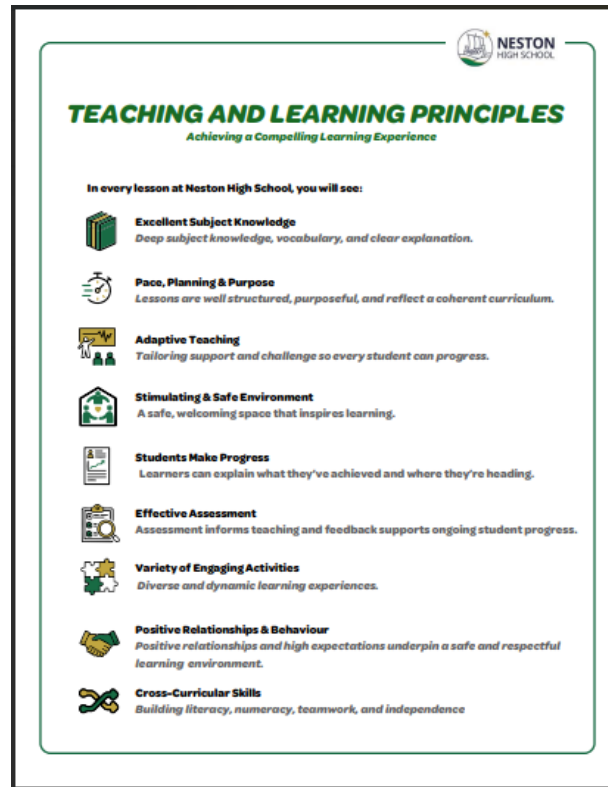
Sixth Form students have been involved in a number of charity events including arranging and hosting a Christmas dinner for some of the elderly members of the Neston community.

Students have had the opportunity to enjoy a number of social events to reward them for their hard work, including a Christmas movie night held in school. The next one is a bowling trip scheduled to take place on 19th March.

Summary update of the year so far in Sixth Form -

- Enrolment day for new year 12 students
- Year 12 Parents information evening
- Huddersfield University outreach and admission tutor- personal statement checking day
- Year 13 SLT mentoring day- round 1
- Year 13 Progress Event
- Social Mobility Foundation Applications
- Bursary applications
- Year 13 Parents meeting day
- Apprenticeship- Parents Information Evening
- Medics and Me Support
- Year 12 In class assessment
- Year 13 CAE
- Employment Readiness Program in school PHSE sessions
- UCAS Early Application Deadline students (medicine, dentistry, veterinary science, Oxford or Cambridge)
- EPQ launch for y12
- Sixth Form Open Evening
- Year 11 Application Process launch
- Year 12 Work Experience Launch
- TEFL course for year 12 students
- Departmental Data meetings
- Mock Interviews Y13
- Past year 13 certificate collection morning
- UCAS deadline
- Year 12 Progress Event
- Apprenticeship and Jobs Fair trip (local)
- National Job and Apprenticeship fair
- Mock Assessment Centre Trip
- Sixth Form Social Events
- Enrichment PSHE
- Year 12 SLT Mentoring Event
- Edge Hill University Visit
- UCAS conference Visit
- Oxbridge Assemblies

In terms of Teaching and Learning we have a clear vision of 'Achieving a Compelling Learning Experience' underpinned by our teaching and learning principles that are present in every lesson and are well understood by all staff.



In order to achieve this, we have high quality CPD to ensure inclusive practice is a focus, further supported by a Teaching and Learning Strategies booklet with high impact strategies made clear for all with a lesson structure of 'Strong Start-I Do-We Do-You Do-Consolidation' to ensure consistency. To embed this further we have now introduced a 'Focus for the Fortnight' to encourage staff to use a particular strategy to ensure inclusive practice is at the heart of what we do. This focus is helping staff refine how they meet the diverse needs of learners and ensure that every student is able to access the curriculum.

This term we have continued to use Steplab to support high-quality professional development across the school. Staff are engaging with the library materials and Walkthrus resources in order to access tailored CPD that meets their specific needs. The platform is also proving valuable in promoting reflection encouraging staff to trial incremental steps to improve their practice.

We have also made positive use of Steplab's 'shout outs' feature to celebrate examples of strong teaching and learning. This has helped create a supportive culture in which good practice is recognised and shared.

So far lesson drop-in feedback shows strong consistency in core classroom practices and a positive culture for learning. Lessons typically begin with clear routines such as "Do Now" tasks and calm entry expectations, enabling students to settle quickly and maximise learning time. A real strength this year is the quality of questioning which many departments have worked on using strategies such as cold calling and probing questions to engage all students and deepen thinking. Retrieval practice is widely embedded helping students connect new learning to

prior knowledge and strengthening long term memory. Teachers also make effective use of modelling and scaffolding including visualisers, worked examples and structured frameworks. This helps students to understand processes clearly before moving into independent practice.

Feedback and the rapid addressing of misconceptions are another strength, with teachers frequently using whole-class feedback, live marking and improvement routines to refine student work in real time. Drop-in feedback also highlights a calm purposeful atmosphere and positive relationships. Structured independent work is common particularly in older year groups, helping build exam readiness and student ownership of learning. Overall the evidence suggests that consistent routines, strong questioning, retrieval practice and effective feedback are supporting high levels of cognitive challenge, improving retention and contributing to a positive behaviour culture across the school, with next steps focusing on increasing whole class participation, sharpening checks for understanding and further strengthening modelling and vocabulary instruction.

HEALTH & SAFETY

JOHN MILLINGTON / TINA PHILLIPS

Accident/Incident/Near Miss reporting

Accidents reported since the last report are summarised on the table below

Date & Time	Adult / Student	Department	Accident/Incident Brief
02/03/2026 11:21	Student	Break	Hit on leg by water bottle deliberately kicked by student
11/02/2026 10:15	Student	PE	Hit with hockey stick in eye during game play
30/01/2026 13:45	Student	Science	Student squirted a pipetted containing 0.5mol hydrochloric acid towards another student's face. Lucas initially ran out of the classroom, I brought him back, he was unsure if it went in his eye but could feel stinging around it. I administered 500ml saline bottle to the eye and face.
28/01/2026 14:37	Student	PE	Student was tackled from behind by another student on the 3G pitch. He fell and twisted his knee and heard a crack. He could not move his knee. he said he was a 8 out of 10 for pain and he was very pale and upset. I made the decision to ring an ambulance. I also rang Mum via Noah's auntie. The ambulance took an hour to come and transported Noah to hospital. Whilst he was waiting for the ambulance we kept Noah warm and gave him plenty of TLC.
13/01/2026 13:40	Student	Science	Splashed hydrochloric acid near to eye, goggles were on but went underneath. AMS administered eye wash using 2 bottles of 500ml saline over the course of 15 minutes. Student said it no longer hurt at all. Sent to first aid room to double check and he washed his face with soap once more.
07/01/2026 12:55	Student	Science	Mercury thermometer broke
07/01/2026 13:50	Student	Science	May have gotten some limewater on his lip

07/01/2026 08:55	Staff	Maths	Hit head when picking up a chair and moving it
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Near Miss

A science stool collapsed on a student, a number of stools (PFI provided) have failed in the past year. Issue raised as a 'near miss' with JLL, resulting in a comprehensive review of Group 1 furniture. Investigation has revealed that a substantial number of stools are exhibiting signs of deterioration, which has rendered them unsuitable for continued use and beyond the scope of maintenance.

Key Findings

- 48 science stools were found to be in a deteriorated condition.
- An order for 60 new stools was placed and has been delivered to site as of yesterday.
- The new stools have replaced those removed from use, with 12 stools retained as spares for future replacement needs.

Visits this term from our Health and Safety consultants Compliance Education focussed on:

- Site security
- Staff risk assessments (maternity)
- Accident reporting

Next term:

- Curriculum area risk assessment reviews

Fire Drill / Evacuation

Scheduled prior to end of term.

IT UPDATE

JAMES CALDWELL

Windows 10 End of Life

Preparation for the Windows 10 end of life was completed during the summer holidays. All critical systems, devices, and IT rich computer suites were reviewed, updated, and confirmed compatible with Windows 11. The school's digital estate remains fully up to date and supported by Microsoft.

Elements of the rolling device refresh programme were brought forward to support this transition.

Cybersecurity Training

Mandatory online cyber training, required by the Department for Education, has been completed and is included in onboarding for new staff.

To help staff stay aware of evolving cyber risks both in school and in daily life, we would still like to introduce short online refresher sessions during the year. These would consist of six 20-minute modules (two each term), to complement the annual DfE training.

The training portal is already in place, and we are awaiting confirmation of CPD time before rolling this out.

Policies & Security

The **IT Acceptable Use & Cyber Security policy** remains current and does not require any updates.

There have been no cyber incidents to report.

There have been positive developments in terms of how we gather staff voice in relation to well-being. Last academic year, we ran staff well-being group made up of the same 10-12 staff each week. While this brought about some positive changes, we felt it was important to gather the voices of a much broader group of staff this academic year. As such, Stuart Nuttall now leads a well-being group every Wednesday after school with a different group of staff (from both teaching and support teams) invited to each. The group starts by discussing positive steps forward already made (phone pouches and the removal of mirrors from student toilets are regular features here) before the discussion moves to issues causing concern. Following each meeting, Stuart spends time actioning items raised, ensuring that written feedback is sent back to the relevant group within two weeks of the meeting. This has proved much more successful than the previously-trialled anonymous staff well-being surveys which did not allow us to plan bespoke actions to support specific staff members.

Examples of positive changes made as a direct result of discussions at the new-format staff well-being groups. Please note this is just a sample of the many different developments made:

- Time given over to staff during CPD sessions to work through Steplab modules. Staff are very keen to engage fully with Steplab but have at times felt that the time available in Thursday CPD is almost always used for whole-staff presentations in the Hall by SLT members. Staff want to feel that they can be trusted to work through these modules in a self-directed way so that they can make the most of this important staff training resource.
- Consideration of a return to a single, rather than split, lunchtime due to the impact on staff well-being of trying to teach the period 4 lesson while half of the school community is on lunch. This is now being moved forward as a substantive item on SLT agendas for potential implementation in September 2026, and will require considerable planning time, but we do feel that impact on staff and student well-being in terms of reducing corridor disturbance during period 4 will be very significant indeed.
- Central bank of walkie-talkies now available for staff who are on duties around school (rather than just SLT and Pastoral Teams) so that staff feel more secure in calling for help if there is a concerning or unnerving situation encountered while on duty.
- Development of the staff Intranet so that all duty rotas, calendars, policies and staff bulletins are stored in one single location for ease of reference. Staff no longer have to search in multiple places to find all of these documents.

- Trial of the full narrative of behaviour incidents being sent to parents rather than just the general heading or incident type. The aim of this would be to reduce staff workload having to respond to parent emails and calls asking for more information about the precise nature of the incident. Staff training is required around the tone of these narratives and potential GDPR considerations, e.g. other student's names not featuring in these accounts.
- Positive handling / restraint training for all staff to support them in feeling confident about dealing with physical altercations between students. This is an area which causes staff real anxiety. Tom Cairney is attending a "Train the Trainer" course which takes place over 3 days (18-20 March), after which he will be qualified to train the whole staff in this key area.

STAFF ABSENCE

STUART NUTTALL

The school's much more robust approach to staff absence management has had a demonstrable and significant impact, as can be seen from the data set below.

On the first day of absence, staff receive a welfare phone call from Stuart Nuttall. Notes from this phone call are recorded in writing. Once the staff member returns to work, absence records are checked to assess whether the colleague has met one of the formal absence triggers.

Information on the precise triggers can be found in the Sickness Absence Policy, linked here: [Sickness Absence Policy.pdf](#)

The impact of our work in this area can be clearly seen in the staff absence data below.

National data available for absence is currently available for 2023/2024 academic year. This data is based on teacher only. Like for like comparisons are shown below.

	National 2023-2024	Neston High School 2023 - 2024	Neston High School 2024-2025	Neston High School 2025-2026 (to date)
Average days per teacher	8.3 days	8.04 days	7.05 days	2.68 days
% of teachers who took sickness absence	65.7%	72%	71%	52%

STEM

PATRICK LINK

STEM engagement at Neston High School continues to grow, with more students participating in high-quality enrichment opportunities and achieving strong outcomes in regional competitions.

This year, we entered four teams (4 students) in the Annual Rotary Technology Tournament 2025, competing against 18 teams from local secondary schools. Our KS 4 Year 11 team achieved exceptional success, winning both the Intermediate category and the Overall Competition. The event provided a full day of practical engineering challenges, enabling students to apply problem-solving, teamwork and design skills in a competitive STEM

environment.

Career awareness and industry engagement have also been strengthened. 36 Year 8 students took part in DiscoverChemEng LIVE, an event designed to introduce chemical engineering, the skills required within the profession and the career pathways available. Delivered in partnership with All About Futures/STEM, the programme gave students valuable exposure to real-world STEM careers.

Our Year 9 students are currently in the final stages of the Unilever Bright Future competition, where they have been developing innovative product ideas and pitching them to professional judges from the STEM industry. The programme has allowed students to experience the full design and innovation process while competing with schools from across the North West.

Sustainability and innovation remain key themes within our STEM provision. The CAD/CAM club has been experimenting with converting recycled plastic bottles into usable 3D-printing filament, while the Makerspace programme has seen record levels of student participation across KS3 and 4.

Students will also represent the school at Wirral Makefest, delivering a workshop where visitors will learn to create wallets from recycled plastic bags, further promoting sustainability and community engagement.

Looking ahead, Year 7 students will participate in a dedicated STEM event in July, and additional workshops with Dyson are in the planning stages following Mr Link receiving the James Dyson Foundation Excellence Award 2025, which recognises outstanding teaching in Design and Technology.

Overall, STEM provision continues to expand in both scale and impact, allowing more students to engage with engineering, design, sustainability and industry-linked learning experiences.

LITERACY

STUART SMITH

This report highlights the continued success of literacy and reading initiatives at Neston High School. These initiatives continue to contribute to fostering a strong reading culture within the school. Please do visit our 'Reading Nook' display at the front of school which perfectly captures the work we are doing to promote reading.

Library Life

Over the past year, the library has continued to grow as a vibrant reading community. We launched a new parent book club, strengthening connections between school and home, and have hosted four successful author events to inspire students and bring literature to life. To encourage regular reading, we introduced a library loyalty programme, and we were delighted to secure a local charity donation to help support the costs of future author visits. Students have continued to take part in the Carnegie Shadowing Programme, while new book clubs for Year 9 have expanded opportunities for older students to engage in reading for pleasure. The library has also remained actively involved with the Cheshire Schools Library Service and the Cheshire Book Award, further connecting our students with the wider reading community. This month, two teams will represent the school in the National Reading Champions competition. Alongside these initiatives, we have continued to carefully curate the library collection to support a wide range of reading abilities while promoting the values of diversity and inclusion.

Weekly Literacy Intervention for 6th Form and Year 7 Students:

Our literacy intervention programme continues to be highly successful, with nearly 100 6th Form and Year 7 students attending once a week. This initiative has been a crucial support mechanism for students, providing targeted assistance to those who need it most. Feedback from both students and teachers indicates that the intervention is highly valued, with many students reporting increased confidence and improved reading and writing skills as a result.

World Book Day – 6th March 2025:

World Book Day 2026 was a resounding success, with numerous events designed to promote reading for pleasure and engage both staff and students in a fun and meaningful way. The events provided a fantastic platform for the school community to come together and celebrate the joy of reading. As part of the National Year of Reading, staff made an extra effort and dressed as famous literary characters. The response from staff and students was brilliant, in addition to the positive engagement from the community on social media.

Staff Training/CPD Opportunities:

Stuart Smith continues to lead CPD literacy training for all staff focusing on reading ages and the tracking and monitoring of students' reading abilities, along with classroom strategies to secure foundational knowledge and skills. The CPD focusing on Reading ages was an opportunity to ensure all staff have a thorough understanding of how to effectively track and support students' literacy progress. Stuart utilised internal data systems, specifically Go4Schools, to provide all staff with up-to-date reading data. This data is crucial for informing teaching, learning, and interventions. This session has empowered staff to tailor their teaching methods to better meet the literacy needs of our students and provide targeted interventions where necessary.

Department for Education – Reading Review: January 2026

Stuart Smith organised a DfE review of reading which was carried out by our local English Hub and enabled external auditors to evaluate the reading provision which is in place across the school. The report was extremely positive and complimentary of the work we are doing. The report also secured funding to purchase a multi-year subscription for a phonics-based intervention program (Little Wandle designed by FFT). This will be an excellent addition to the resources and interventions we have in place and will enable us to have a strategic approach to the teaching of systematic synthetic phonics.

Literacy Intervention

Sue Amato, the school's Literacy Specialist, has implemented a comprehensive programme of literacy interventions to support pupils' reading development and language acquisition. She designed an Extended Literacy Gold PowerPoint to embed the prefixes, suffixes, irregular spelling patterns and root words that appear on the Literacy Gold reading test and has overseen testing for 232 pupils while maintaining data records for 606 students. She identified six pupils who still require phonics support and following attendance at a phonics CPD course, created her own Phase 2 and Phase 3 PowerPoints to replicate the teaching of Letters and Sounds in preparation for the forthcoming introduction of Little Wandle.

All pupils attending the Literacy Gold intervention have made progress except for one, who will now receive intensive phonics support during English lessons. Sue has also attended CPD courses on Writing for Purpose and Reading for Purpose and established a literacy hub in her classroom which is open to pupils during break and lunchtimes. She has monitored all 40 EAL pupils in the school, identifying six who require additional support; these

pupils have made between 12 and 80 months of progress over a six-month period, supported through bespoke resources and dual-language glossaries tailored to individual needs. In addition, she introduced a PAT therapy dog, Bailey, who is highly valued by pupils and frequently visited by older students for wellbeing support. Sue has also produced a detailed Literacy Gold tracking spreadsheet which incorporates all SEN, EAL and disadvantaged pupils and includes measures of grapheme–phoneme correspondences (GPCs), fluency and prosody in line with the framework. Having read the Reading Framework (2023), she is also incorporating strategies such as modelling fluency and echo reading within her work with students.

DEPARTMENTAL REVIEWS

Since the previous Trustee meeting in February there have been some further departmental review meeting reports received. These are attached as appendices to this report.

Appendix 1	English development review
Appendix 2	Humanities development review
Appendix 3	PE development review
Appendix 4	Performing Arts development review

Kirsty Cunningham
March 2026