



HRS Sixth Form Newsletter

Date: 1 October 2026

We hope you have all begun to settle into the new school year and are finding your rhythm with the demands of BTEC and A Level study. By now, you will already be developing a deeper understanding of your chosen subjects, and it's important to continue building on this strong start. Staying focused, motivated, and proactive will make a real difference to your progress and success over the year.

To support you in this, several lunchtime clubs are now up and running. These are designed both to offer extra support where you need it and to provide opportunities for stretch and challenge beyond the classroom.

Getting involved will not only boost your confidence and subject knowledge, but also look fantastic on future CVs and UCAS applications.

We strongly encourage you to go along, take part, and make the most of what's on offer.

For Year 12, enrichment sessions have also begun and take place on Wednesday afternoons. A wide variety of activities are available, including sporting opportunities, mentoring roles, and organisational projects. These sessions give you the chance to develop valuable skills, build experience, and enjoy a different dimension to your Sixth Form life.

And, finally, we are supporting those living in Ukraine by donating items via the *Link to Hope* Shoebox appeal 2026. Details of what to donate to support those living with minimal resources can be found within this newsletter. Together, we can help bring comfort and support to those who are facing challenging circumstances.

The Sixth Form Team

Important Upcoming Dates

Date	Event
1 October	Year 13 Parents' Evening – 4.30 - 7.30pm - school hall
2 October	Year 13 deadline for student UCAS personal statements
8 October	HRS Lower School Open Evening - early closure 12.45pm
Week beginning 12 Oct	Year 13 in-class mock examinations all week
13 October	Deadline for donations for the Link to Hope Shoebox appeal
16 October	Last day of term
2 November	Return to sixth form - 8.40am start





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Extra Curricular Clubs

Once again our extra curricular clubs are up-and-running. Whether you're looking for support for particular subjects or just a comfortable spaces for your to talk and make new friends. There are opportunities for all.

Last year, our Year 12 students started their own lunchtime club that became one of the most successful and longest running meet-ups of the year. They have also been able to use this experience on their University applications to demonstrate their initiative - stating that you were the vice-chairperson of the debate club can wow a university administrator. Why not do the same and start a club with friends? See Mrs Ross for details of how to launch one!

Finally, joining a club is a fantastic way to build confidence, deepen your subject knowledge, and connect with others who share your interests.



Event Details

We are delighted to be taking the Year 12 students to the **UK University & Apprenticeship Search fair** will be taking place at **Chelmsford City Racecourse** on **Thursday, 12th November**. The event is the perfect way for students to learn about universities and apprenticeships for their future.

This exciting and informative event will provide attendees with the opportunity to speak to a multitude of exhibiting universities and apprenticeship providers. These will include: Russell Group, red brick and modern institutions, as well as apprenticeship providers and local colleges.



Year 12 and 13 students will be expected to support the HRS/High Wood Sixth Form Open Evening on Wednesday, 18 November. Students will be required to work as guides and support subjects.



Students will need to arrive at 5pm for a 5.30pm start. The evening ends at 8.00pm.

Student knowledge on the transition from GCSE to A Level, demands of subjects and general experience so far are always valued by prospective students and parents.

We thank you in advance for your professionalism and maturity at this event.



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Shoebox Appeal

Miss Just is looking for support with donations for the *Link to Hope Shoebox Appeal 2026*. This special appeal aims to bring practical help, dignity and hope to families and elderly people living in poverty across Ukraine and Eastern Europe. Unlike many shoebox appeals that focus only on children, Link to Hope provides shoeboxes for entire families and older people, helping to make sure that no one is left out.

When donating a charitable shoebox, use an empty adult shoebox and fill it with all the required blue-list items, plus at least five items from the appropriate red or purple list (see right hand corner of page). Do not include food, biscuits, tea/coffee, out-of-date items, sanitary products, or underwear. Tape the lid securely and wrap the box completely. Take your completed box to Mrs Ross for a label and Miss Just will take it to the collection point.

Link to Hope is a small but well-established UK charity that works through trusted relationships with partners across Eastern Europe. These partners carefully deliver the shoeboxes, while the charity also carries out spot-checks to help ensure that donations reach the people they are intended for. **We would love students in Year 12 and 13 to support this year's appeal, please speak to Mrs Ross about making a donation. Just one item in the year group shoebox can make a big difference to someone else. The deadline for donations is 13 October 2026,** so every contribution can help make a difference.



THE STUDY BREAK



Introducing our newest student section of the newsletter.
All articles under The Study Break are written by students for students. Enjoy!

Read all about it!

Welcome to The Study Break - the section of the sixth form newsletter written by students, for students. Whether you want to break down a heated debate from your BTEC or A-Level subjects, share an exclusive interview with a teacher, or offer your best tried-and-tested exam revision tips, this is your platform to explore your potential through the written word. It's a chance to dive into the topics you care about, sharpen your voice, and share your perspective with the rest of the school community.

Beyond being a creative outlet, getting involved is a major boost for your future. Being able to state that you've had your writing officially published looks fantastic on your UCAS personal statement, university applications, or future CVs - it shows admissions tutors and potential employers that you have strong communication skills, initiative, and drive.

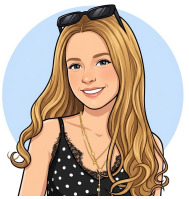
If you're interested in submitting an article, drop by the sixth form office for a chat with Mrs Ross. She can provide you with monthly submission deadlines, help brainstorm article ideas, and guide you on getting started.

To see what's possible, check out this month's featured article written by Olivia in Year 13 (originally published in July 2026), alongside our brand-new careers section, where you can read about a future profession directly from someone working in the field.

Enjoy the issue, and we look forward to reading your contributions!



Gender Crime Gap

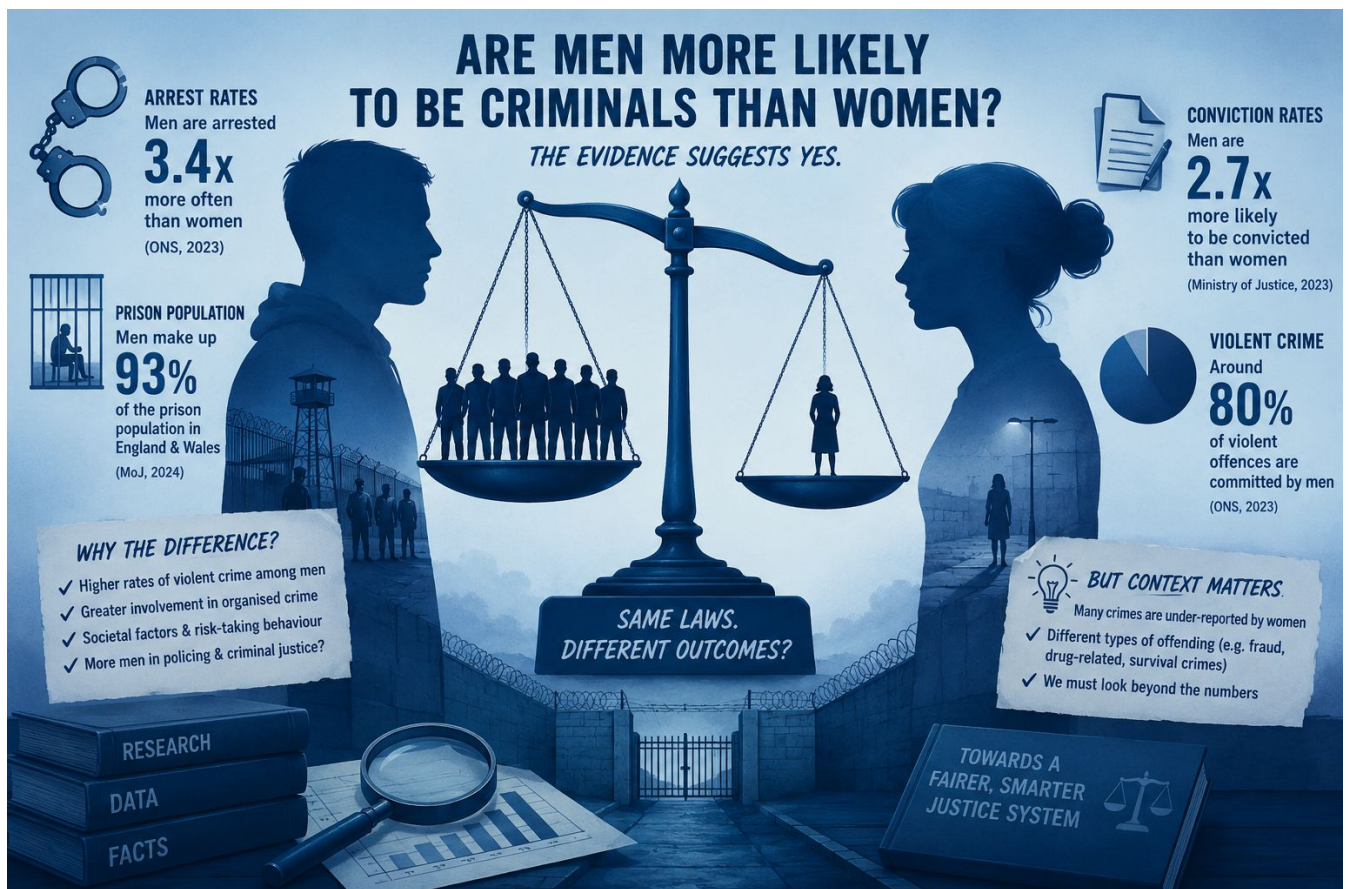


Olivia Reeve explores the questions around crime and gender and why women are less likely to commit crime.

Psychologists, sociologists and criminologists have long wondered why men make up around 96% of the prison population. So, why is it that women are significantly less likely to be criminal? Is it genetics? Personality? How women are raised?

Perhaps the answer is biological differences.

The male hormone testosterone, which is high among men is linked to physical aggression alongside impulsivity. This is because testosterone heightens your sensitivity to threats, motivates the drive for dominance and amplifies emotional reactivity. This is seen within prisons, where studies have found that men who committed violent crimes like assault had higher testosterone levels. Additionally, women's brain structure has much higher activity in the prefrontal cortex (which is especially responsible for regulating emotions and considering long term consequences of actions).





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Research suggests women, on average, show greater impulse control, whereas men often act upon these criminal impulses. However, criminologists emphasise that biology isn't your destiny and these traits are also influenced by environmental and sociological factors.

A differing factor meaning women are less likely to commit crime is due to early childhood socialisation, as girls and boys are taught different behavioural norms from a young age. Girls are taught to be nurturing and empathetic, and this is enforced by stricter parental supervision, for example, girls are encouraged to spend more time at home, which reduces exposure to high-risk street situations. This in turn leads to stronger emotional bonds within the family. The criminological theory 'Control theory', explains this by suggesting women are more sensitive to parental opinions. This discourages girls from offending due to the risk of stigma and family disappointment. It may even be argued that women's behaviour is under higher family scrutiny due to the entrenched gender norms, where women are viewed as primary caregivers, limiting their ability to become a serious criminal. This is further explored by many sociologists and criminologists who study the gender gaps through socialisation frameworks. For example, feminist theories argue that girls internalise the 'expressive role', linked to caregiving empathies. This in turn makes women view crime as distorting from their expected social role.

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Women are less likely to commit crime due to early childhood socialisation, as girls and boys are taught different behavioural norms from a young age.

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Also, criminologist Frances Heidensohn believes that the patriarchal society we live in, means women are afraid to commit crime due to informal social control ever since they were young girls. This is seen when girls are constrained by their fathers, brothers, and later in life, husbands, so women have less opportunity to be deviant due to these restrictive environments. An alternative perspective of socialisation, making women less likely to commit crime is from the sociologist, Pat Carlen, whose ideas of the 'Gender deal' arose in 1988, where she believed women conform to traditional patriarchal family roles in exchange for emotional and financial security provided by the man, making women law abiding to maintain this reward. She believed women only turned to crime when this deal was shattered, like being victims of domestic abuse, which can be seen today where 60% of women in prison are survivors of domestic violence. This suggests some women turn to crime as a response to difficult circumstances, particularly after experiencing victimisation. Her ideas may be seen to be outdated as nowadays women have much more individual agency, with less pressure from society to become a traditional housewife, so maybe biology is the reason women don't commit crime rather than from societal pressure.

However, not all women are less likely to commit crime as there are many perspectives that challenge this idea. For example, it is noted that female offending is highly underreported. This is because women may be able to avoid detection, can hide crimes like fraud and may even stage crimes as 'accidents' to act innocent and vulnerable. It may also be argued that there is a societal bias to the crime definition, as the criminal definition is male dominated to violent and petty crimes but perhaps if psychological warfare or covert bullying (subtle emotional abuse) was categorised equally then the gender gap may be non-existent.



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The justice system may also be seen to be lenient toward to women, especially as women are less likely to be stopped by police or prosecuted, so official statistics may be skewed. But this is only a minority of women, and the statistic still stands that men account for 84% of arrests.

An additional factor that means women are less likely to commit crime is the differing coping mechanisms between genders. Women are known to internalise their psychological distress rather than expressing it through physical anger, instead, they experience extreme stress and trauma that is linked to mental disorders like anxiety and depression. Whereas men take these strong feelings and turn them into antisocial behaviour, crime and violence.

There also are differences in how men and women handle stress. Women often cope emotionally with stress, while men are more likely to externalise distress through risk taking and antisocial behaviour.

Sociologists argue that women are raised to prioritise cooperation, empathy and to resolve conflicts, meaning women may be less likely to engage in serious violent offending because they are often socialised to value these emotions. In contrast, men are socialised to be dominant and aggressive, so they may later take part in violent crimes. So, this differential socialisation may also be another factor as to why women commit less crimes than men as they are conditioned and raised differently from birth to act different in society.

In conclusion, women are less likely to commit crime due to women's lower impulsivity (due to lower testosterone), stricter upbringing, internal coping mechanisms, childhood socialisation into empathetic, caring people and internal biological differences making majority of women the law-abiding citizens they are. Men are clearly, the more likely offenders, whether this is due to biology or the environment is up to interpretation, but what is clear is that men have accounted for 90% of homicides, 85% of serious assaults and overall men account for 78% of all individuals dealt with in the justice system, showing that men are substantially overrepresented in official crime statistics.



FACTS

Women make up only around 4% of the prison population in England and Wales, meaning approximately 96% of prisoners are male.

Around 81% of women in prison are serving sentences for non-violent offences, indicating that women are much less likely than men to be imprisoned for violent crime.



Careers Section

Date: 1 October 2026

In our experience...

We're excited to introduce a new feature on **careers** called 'In Our Experience'. Each month, a professional from a particular field will share an insight into their motivations, their proudest moments and why their profession is a good career choice, giving you a first-hand look at what their work really involves.

Whether you're exploring future career options or simply curious about different professions, 'In Our Experience' will help you gain a better understanding of the roles, responsibilities and realities of a wide range of careers.



Dr Kathleen Guise Educational Psychologist

So, what is an Educational Psychologist?

An educational psychologist is essentially a learning specialist who helps students figure out how their brains process information best. If you're dealing with burnout, test anxiety, neurodivergent conditions like ADHD or autism, or just feeling completely overwhelmed by school, they step in to figure out what's actually going on behind the scenes.

Instead of judging or grading you, they use cognitive assessments and one-on-one chats to map out your specific learning style and mental health needs. From there, they collaborate with your teachers and parents to create personalised accommodations - like extra time on exams, modified workloads, or better study strategies - so you can actually thrive in school without burning out.

What motivated you to choose this career path?

I became interested in studying **psychology** at school when I completed work experience in a local special needs school. I enjoyed spending time with the children, as well as understanding the different ways in which they were supported to learn and develop life skills in school. As I found out more about the different branches of psychology and the different ways in which psychologists can work, I decided that educational psychology would be a good option for me because we work mostly in schools, both with individual children and supporting teachers and families to understand their needs.



Careers Section

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Can you describe your career trajectory?

As soon as I decided to become an educational psychologist, I set about gaining as much work experience as possible. Like all branches of psychology, educational psychology training is very competitive and my careers teacher explained that any experience that demonstrates commitment and an ability to apply psychology is helpful.

When studying psychology at university, I made sure that I took relevant modules such as cognitive neuropsychology and developmental psychology. In my university holidays, I worked on summer schemes with children with additional needs and when I graduated I spent a year working as an assistant psychologist with adults with learning disabilities.

I then trained to be a teacher and specialised in early years education, which was a great opportunity to apply the skills and knowledge from my psychology degree in working with children and their families.

I was fortunate to get onto the **educational psychologist postgraduate training course at Birmingham University**. Studying and gaining experience in a large, diverse city prepared me well for working as an educational psychologist.

Since then, I've worked as an educational psychologist in Norfolk, Inner London and now Essex. As I've progressed, I have gained more skills and have developed specialist areas of working, such as family work, dyslexia and autism.

As an educational psychologist, learning never ends and I still regularly attend conferences and courses to keep up with developments in the profession and sometimes even to deliver presentations myself.

Why is it a good career choice?

Educational Psychology is a fantastic career for anyone who is interested in supporting young people to fulfil their potential. We work with a wide range of people from toddlers to teenagers, to parents, to teachers and no two days are the same. It is truly fulfilling to be able to apply my knowledge of psychology in a way that changes people's lives for the better and to work with people from diverse backgrounds. While the training course is very competitive, there are many jobs available for qualified educational psychologists, and while most of us work in schools, I also have colleagues working in hospitals, charities and universities. There are many opportunities for flexible and part-time working, allowing time off to explore other avenues, take on further study or even to consider working overseas.





Careers Section

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Can you describe either a moment of great pride or difficulty?

Educational psychology is a very rewarding profession, and it is a privilege to do this work. However, it can be demanding, and it is very important to consider this before starting out on the career path. There can be a high workload, and reports need to be completed on time and to a high standard.

The job can also be emotionally demanding, especially working with families experiencing marginalisation, poverty or illness.

“ One of my proudest moments was also one of my hardest; working alongside a school to understand the needs of a young person joining their school who had been a child soldier in Africa. Some of his teachers were concerned they might not have the skills to manage his trauma or might say or do the wrong thing, but together we explored how they could support him, and he enjoyed three very happy and successful years at his school. ”

Can you suggest ways to get into your profession?

There are some requirements for becoming an educational psychologist and it is important that you ensure that you meet these on your career path. Psychologists must have an undergraduate degree in psychology and this needs to be a degree that is accredited by the British Psychological Society.

Psychology is a popular degree choice, and **A levels such as maths and biology** can be helpful in strengthening your application.

Another important step is to gain as much relevant work experience as you can. This can be paid or voluntary, you just need to be able to show that you have developed skills and most importantly applied psychology in your work. Good first steps would be volunteering in a school, in Scouting or Guiding or at a sports club supporting children or disabled people.

After your degree you will need to show two years relevant work experience and popular choices include working as a teaching assistant in a special school, training as a teacher or working as an assistant psychologist.

The next step is to apply to a training course. This is a doctoral level course which takes three years, but don't worry – your fees and living costs will be covered. It is a long and challenging route to training to be an educational psychologist, but it is worth it in the end!

