



Parent Bulletin

Principal **Dr A T Fowler**

Issue 12: w/c Monday 1 December 2025 – Week 1

Dear Parents and Carers

I am writing to you a day earlier than usual, owing to our school's occasional day tomorrow, Friday 28 November.

The 'occasional day' is a practice that I inherited when I became Principal at Lord Lawson. I have retained it, on the basis that this day breaks up what can otherwise seem a long and dark half term. This year, many students need the longer weekend as a chance to recover from bugs that are circulating. The day now coincides with the phenomenon of 'black Friday', although this is not a deliberate act for us as a school. Black Friday itself, as many will know, comes to us from the United States of America, where it immediately follows the Thanksgiving holiday. And Thanksgiving can trace its roots back to 1621, when the pilgrims from England celebrated their first successful harvest in the new world with the native Wampanoag people.

Why 'black' Friday? Alternative explanations are given: a low mood the day after the Thanksgiving holiday; or more recently the idea that people started their Christmas shopping on this day. Retailers, so the explanation goes, saw their accounts move from being 'in the red' - because they had paid for the goods that customers had not yet bought - 'into the black': in other words, they started to make a profit. There are plenty of online retailers bombarding us just now in the hope of making a profit!

This Sunday also sees the start of the Christian church's season of Advent. This is a season of preparation for the birth of Christ at Christmas. Traditionally, as well as making their physical and material preparations - Christmas puddings and cakes, decorations and gifts - Christians used this time to prepare themselves spiritually, thinking about ways in which they needed to change and amend their lives. When we are in the middle of preparations for the secular side of Christmas, it can be easy to forget the origins of Christmas. It is helpful to take time to think about things we need to change.

As December begins, after the weekend, we will begin thinking about our school partnerships with local and national charities. We will give more details about this in the coming weeks. Students in years 11 and 13 will also begin their trial examinations, helping prepare them for the summer.

Whatever your plans and thoughts, I hope you and your family have a good weekend.

With all good wishes,

Yours faithfully

Dr Andrew Fowler
Principal



Parent Bulletin

Principal **Dr A T Fowler**

Reminders

Lost Property

As we come to the end of the fourth week of this term, we again find ourselves with a large amount of lost property items, including:

- Assorted items of school uniform
- Bags
- Shoes
- Coats
- Glasses
- Pencil Cases

None of the items we have are marked in anyway with a student name, making it impossible for us to return these items to their rightful owners!

Please ensure that your child's personal belongings – where possible and practicable – are identified at least with their first name and the initial of their surname. This gives us a starting point to return lost items.

Any of the items we currently have that are not claimed by Friday 5 December, will be disposed of.

ParentPay

We currently have a large number of students calling to reception daily, asking us to contact home to ensure they have funds added to their ParentPay accounts. Although we will always support our students with requests such as this, they can be time consuming and for some of our students, they find it embarrassing to come to reception to make this request.

Can we please ask parents and carers to regularly check their child's ParentPay account. This will (I hope) reduce these visits and requests to reception.

Mrs S Wakefield
Office Manager

Author and Spoken Word Artist Steven Camden visits Lord Lawson as part of the Northern Children's Book Festival

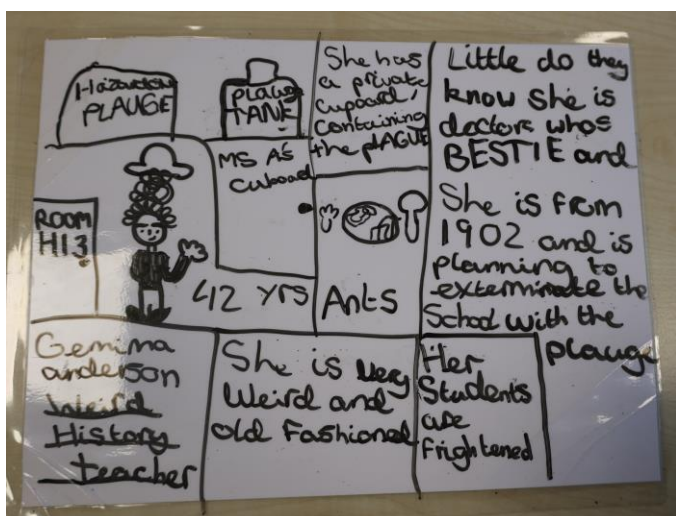
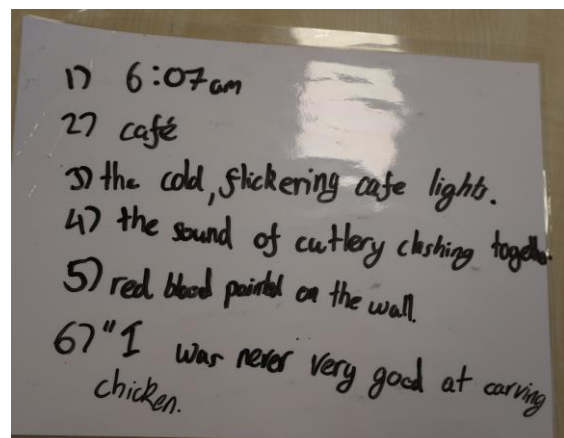
On Wednesday 19 November, we were delighted to welcome Steven Camden, acclaimed author, and spoken word artist, to Lord Lawson of Beamish Academy as part of the Northern Children's Book Festival, supported by Gateshead Libraries.

Year 7 students thoroughly enjoyed an engaging one-hour session in the academy library, where Steven shared his expertise in transforming a single word, in this case *strawberry*, into a fully developed story featuring a cast of unusual characters set against the backdrop of a secondary school with a hidden past.

It was inspiring to see how enthusiastically our students participated, learning creative techniques for storytelling from an author who has written several books for children and young adults. The highlight of the session was listening to Steven read an extract from his book, *Everything All at Once*, a vibrant collection of poems capturing the lives of students during one unforgettable week in a secondary school where 'everything happens all at once.'

A huge thank you to Steven Camden and the Northern Children's Book Festival team for bringing this fantastic opportunity to our academy!

Miss B Dixon
Librarian





Singin' in the Snow Academy Christmas Talent Showcase – Tuesday 16 December, 7pm

Tickets for our 2025 Christmas Talent Showcase, Singin' in the Snow, are now on general sale on a strictly first come, first served basis.

Tickets are £6.00 each (non-refundable) and can be purchased from the academy reception during the hours of 8.30am and 3.30pm. Please ensure you have the correct cash amount as we do not have a facility to provide change.

A reminder that this is a **one evening only** performance event, so purchase your tickets soon to avoid any disappointment of a sell-out show; with over 100 students performing in the showcase, we are expecting tickets to sell out quickly!

If you require any adjustment or assistance for access or seating in the main hall, please contact Miss Brown directly via email at sbrown@lordlawson.academy once tickets have been purchased and I will be happy to discuss your request.

Singin' in the Snow promises to be a joyous and festive evening. Thank you for your continued support towards Performing Arts at Lord Lawson, and we look forward to welcoming our audience on Tuesday 16 December, 7pm.

Miss S Brown
Subject Leader – Performing Arts



Year 13 Assessments

Year 13 students will be sitting A level assessments during the weeks beginning 1 and 8 December. All students have had support via their subject teachers, tutors, and an assembly to ensure that they are well prepared for these assessments and see their value as they prepare for their final examinations in Summer 2026.

For the next two weeks we ask you to help us to support your children by ensuring they are in school in good time to prepare each morning. We offer the Independent Learning Centre (ILC) as a space for quiet revision each morning from 7.30am onwards.

All year 13 students must be at the correct examination room for a prompt start: **8.55am** for a morning exam and for **12.55pm** for the afternoon exams. This enables staff to provide crucial tips before the students enter the exam rooms, ensuring as similar an experience of examinations as they will have in the summer.

Mrs J Laidlaw
Assistant Principal – Head of Sixth Form

Year 11 GCSE Dance, GCSE Drama, and GCSE Music: Friday evening revision and creative rehearsal sessions

The after-school revision and creative rehearsal sessions we offer our year 11 students are an opportunity for the students to develop their performance work and to discuss revision for theory work. The sessions take place in school every Friday, 3.20 to 4.20pm.

Please note that the final Friday evening session dates for this term are as follows:

Friday 5 December – GCSE Music

Friday 12 December – GCSE Dance and GCSE Drama

There will be no sessions running on the last day of term, Friday 19 December.

If you have any questions regarding Performing Arts at Lord Lawson, please contact me via email at sbrown@lordlawson.academy and I will be more than happy to assist you.

Miss S Brown
Subject Leader – Performing Arts



Young Innovators Council

Is your child aged 14–19 and passionate about shaping a fairer, greener future? Northern Gas Network's Young Innovators Council is recruiting for new young voices to join them in 2026.

This is a chance for young people to:

- Inform and influence the agenda and decisions of a major utility company.
- Expand their network and develop skills such as teamwork, leadership, creativity, and communication.
- Co-create ideas with Northern Gas Networks around environmental issues, approaches to sustainability, innovation, and net zero programmes, social strategy and supporting customers in vulnerable situations.
- Increase their knowledge about UK energy infrastructure.

Sessions take place online and outside of school/college hours.

Apply here: [Application Form](#)

Deadline: Wednesday 14 January 2026

Questions? Email: youthinsights@solutionsfortheplanet.co.uk or call: 07900 064532

Mrs C Braban

Careers Coordinator



The poster is a recruitment flyer for the Young Innovators Council. It features a yellow and orange color scheme. At the top, there are logos for 'Solutions for the Planet', 'Young Youth Innovators', 'Young innovators council', and 'Northern Gas Networks'. The main title 'YOUNG INNOVATORS COUNCIL' is in large, bold, blue letters, with the subtitle 'The voice of young people at Northern Gas Networks' below it. A paragraph describes the council as an award-winning opportunity for young people to share their perspectives on Northern Gas Networks' (NGN) projects and plans. A call to action states they are recruiting 'new young voices' for 2026, attending 5 sessions between February and October. A list of benefits for joining is provided. A circular photo shows a group of young people waving. A QR code is located on the right side. At the bottom, there is a list of criteria for applicants, a call to action to complete the application form or scan the QR code, and contact information. A 'Stand out from the crowd and make a difference!' badge is also present. The Skills Builder Partnership logo is at the bottom left.

YOUNG INNOVATORS COUNCIL
The voice of young people at Northern Gas Networks

The award-winning Young Innovators Council (YIC) gives young people the opportunity to share their perspectives on Northern Gas Networks' (NGN) projects and plans, and NGN ensures that these thoughts and opinions are put at the heart of the business' decision making.

We are recruiting new young voices into the panel for 2026, attending 5 sessions between February and October, both online and in person.

By joining the Young Innovators Council, you will:

- inform and influence the agenda and decisions of a major utility company.
- expand your network and develop skills such as teamwork, leadership, communication.
- co-create ideas with Northern Gas Networks around environmental issues, approaches to sustainability, innovation and net zero programmes, social strategy and supporting customers in vulnerable situations.
- increase your knowledge about UK energy infrastructure.

ARE YOU...

- 14 - 19 years old?
- an innovative trailblazer?
- naturally curious?
- passionate about our collective future?
- interested in STEM*, society, innovation and future energy solutions?

(*Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths)

If so, complete the application form [HERE](#) or by scanning the QR code above!

Stand out from the crowd and make a difference!

For more info:
email: youthinsights@solutionsfortheplanet.co.uk
tel: 07900 064532

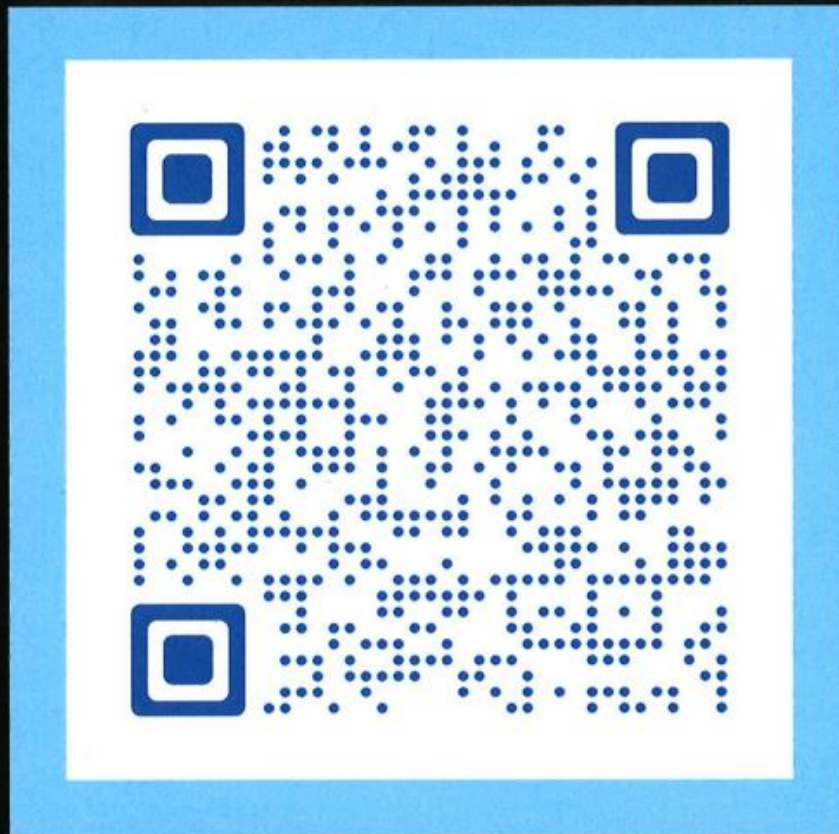
Member of Skills Builder PARTNERSHIP



Lord Lawson
SIXTH FORM

APPLY NOW!

Scan the QR code below:



WE GROW WE LEARN WE SUCCEED

TOGETHER.

Online Safety Newsletter

Nov 2025

CapCut

CapCut is a video editing app. Their services are intended for those over the age of 13 (those under the age of 18 must have consent from their parent/legal guardian). It is rated as 13+ on the App store.

What can I do on CapCut?

CapCut is used as a video and image editing tool allowing users to edit their videos/ images as well as add music, sound effects, text and stickers.

What should I be aware of?

- The templates are user generated, therefore they may not always be appropriate for your child to view, for example may contain adult themes.
- CapCut includes access to a library of music that can be used within videos that may include explicit lyrics.
- Premium content – CapCut does include in-app purchases/monthly subscriptions to allow users access to premium content.

Further information

Internet Matters have created this useful guide:

<https://www.internetmatters.org/advice/apps-and-platforms/skills-building/capcut/>

Would you like to read this newsletter in a different language? You can use the translate tool on our web version: <https://www.knowsleyclcs.org.uk/november-2025-secondary>

WhatsApp Channels

Users should be at least 13 years old to use

WhatsApp. If your child is using WhatsApp, then you should be aware of WhatsApp Channels.

Channels are a one-way broadcast tool used by companies and individuals to send updates to followers. WhatsApp Channels can be found on the Updates tab. From here you can view a whole host of channels, including channels that will not be age appropriate and may include adult content.



You cannot switch off access to channels and there is no age rating associated with the channels so you would have to access them to know what the content truly is. Klicksafe highlight what you should be aware of: <https://www.klicksafe.eu/en/news/was-sind-whatsapp-kanale-und-was-muessen-eltern-beachten>

Find out more about WhatsApp channels in general here:

<https://faq.whatsapp.com/549900560675125>

AI chatbots and companions

A simple search of "AI Chat" within the App store highlights the number of AI apps already available, many are rated as 18+ so it is important to speak to our children about them and the risks associated with them. Examples of AI chatbots that your child may have heard of are Character.AI (18+) and My AI from Snapchat (13+).

What are the risks?

- Over reliance on AI companions, for example they may replace 'real life' friendships or reliance on using them for homework or problem solving.
- Exposure to inappropriate content.
- Privacy/data risks.
- Misinformation as not all information shared is correct and can be biased.

How can I protect my child?

- Check age ratings of any apps or websites that your child accesses.
- Discuss the risks of AI chatbots with them and have open conversations about why they may be using them.
- Set up appropriate parental controls on their devices/ broadband.
- Chat to your child regularly and ensure your child knows that they should talk to you or another trusted adult if anything concerns them.

Further information

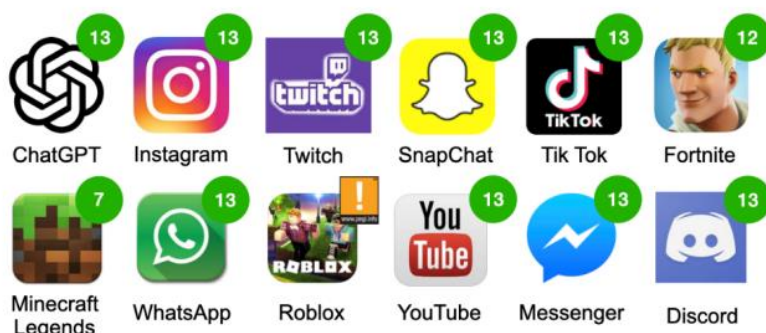
<https://www.esafety.gov.au/newsroom/blogs/ai-chatbots-and-companions-risks-to-children-and-young-people>

Age Ratings

Age ratings exist to help protect your child by showing whether content is suitable for your child's age. Whether your child is viewing films, accessing apps, playing games online or using social media— make sure you check the age rating first to see if your child is old enough.

Popular apps and their age ratings

Here are the age ratings of some of the more popular apps that young people are currently accessing.



For users under 18, a parent or legal guardian's permission may be required to use the service

In addition to checking the age rating, the likes of PEGI (Pan European Game Information) provide further content descriptors, which will give you an indication of the type of content that your child might encounter e.g. violence or bad language within a game.

What else should I review?

It is important to note that whilst age ratings do allow you to see if something may be appropriate for your child, **it is also vital to review the content yourself**. This will allow you to make an informed decision as to whether it is suitable for your child to access and if it is necessary to apply further parental controls. For example, does it include the ability to communicate with others and are in game/app purchases available?

What else can I do?

- Explain the importance of age ratings to your child and how they protect them.
- Go online together to see what your child is accessing.
- Set up parental controls on your broadband, devices and on any individual apps that your child is using. This will reduce the chances of them accessing or viewing anything unsuitable.
- Chat to your child regularly about what they are doing online and remind your child that if anything is worrying them then they should talk to you or another trusted adult.

Further information

You can find out more here:

<https://parentzone.org.uk/article/age-ratings>

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What You Need to Know about Instagram Map

Instagram has released a new feature that allows you to share your location with friends. This feature is off by default, but if your child is using Instagram then this is a useful article to find out more about it:

<https://connectsafely.org/what-you-need-to-know-about-instagram-map/>

Online Roasting

Have you heard of this term? It has been around a while now, but Online Roasting refers to a form of cyberbullying. Roasting typically involves making fun and insulting somebody, sometimes with their consent and other times not.

What can I do?

- Talk to your child about what online roasting is, ask them if they have ever experienced it and what they think about it.
- If this has negatively impacted your child then save any evidence and involve the school (if appropriate). Childline also offer further advice and support in relation to cyberbullying.

Further information

Find out more here:

<https://www.bark.us/blog/online-roasting-signs-cyberbullying/>

What to do when...from CEOP

CEOP Education have published this poster directing you to the relevant information around six different situations, such as what to do to protect your child from online blackmail. You can access it here:

<https://www.ceopeducation.co.uk/globalassets/professional/resources/wtdw-round-up.pdf>

Calendar Dates and Upcoming Events for the Autumn Term

Date	Event
Friday 28 November	Occasional day – Academy closed to staff and students
Thursday 11 December	Year 7 Pantomime trip – timings tbc
Friday 19 December	Last day of term for staff and students – school finishes as normal at 3.20pm
Monday 5 January 2026	Staff and students return to school at 8.40am