



Parent Bulletin

Principal **Dr A T Fowler**

Issue 13: w/c Monday 8 December 2025 – Week 2

Dear Parents and Carers

December got off to an unexpected start! I received the notification call from one of His Majesty's Inspectors at 09:30 on Monday morning. I knew straight away that we were going to receive a full two-day inspection on Tuesday and Wednesday.

You may remember the tragic circumstances of Ruth Perry, the headteacher of a primary school in Reading. Since then, there has been a change of Chief Inspector of Schools, Ofsted's 'Big Listen,' and a new inspection framework has been created and launched. Apart from a few volunteer pilot schools, our school was one of the first in the country to be inspected under the new framework. We are used to being pioneers at Lord Lawson...

The new grade descriptions are not yet well understood, even within the educational establishment. Ofsted, in my view, has not yet done enough to communicate and explain them. There are five grades, the central one of which is 'Expected Standard.' Ofsted intends to help raise standards in schools, so the Expected Standard is deliberately a high bar. Above the Expected Standard is the Strong Standard. There is another top grade, Exceptional, which is to be rare. Below the Expected Standard is Needs Attention, which is intended to be a slightly milder form of the old Requires Improvement. The lowest grade is Urgent Improvement.

Eight different areas of school life are judged: Safeguarding (which is either 'met' or 'not met'), Inclusion, Curriculum and teaching, Achievement, Attendance and behaviour, Personal development and wellbeing, Post-16, and Leadership and governance.

Following an inspection, the draft report is written and checked. This can take around 18 working days – so we can expect to receive our draft report in the first couple of weeks of January. I am invited to give feedback and correct any factual inaccuracies, and then, assuming there are no problems with the draft, the final report will be published within 30 working days. That will take us well into the spring term. It's a long time to wait!

In the meantime, I am not permitted to tell you what the judgements are. However, I can share a broad message about how well we got on. Many of you will remember that our school was judged to be Good in all areas in November 2022; you also know how much the school has improved since then. Inspectors validated and agreed with our self-evaluation in every one of the eight areas of the new framework. The 'next steps' they gave us were already in our school development plan.



Parent Bulletin

Principal **Dr A T Fowler**

Inspectors noted that leaders are well aware of the complex and sometimes challenging nature of our neighbourhood. They found our school to be really inclusive: the lead inspector commented to governors that there was “a thread of inclusivity running through the school.” Inspectors noted that pupils generally achieve well. They saw routines that work well and are consistently applied by teachers and support staff. They did not see a single incident of poor behaviour during their time in our school. They described our school as being a “harmonious place” and that students have really positive attitudes towards learning, with access to a broad and engaging curriculum. This is a great achievement!

We feel we’ve all earned a rest this weekend. Thank you for your support, particularly in completing the Ofsted Parentview survey. Parents' and Carers' views reported there were very positive, and you can see these online. Staff and students' feedback was positive too. I will communicate more as soon as I can.

With all good wishes,

Yours faithfully

Dr Andrew Fowler
Principal

Singin' in the Snow: Academy Christmas Talent Showcase

Tuesday 16 December 2025, 7pm.

There are limited tickets remaining for our 2025 Christmas Talent Showcase, Singin' in the Snow. Tickets are £6.00 each (non-refundable) and can be purchased from the academy reception during the hours off 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 Miss Brown will aim to support 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.

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

The after-school, Friday evening revision and creative rehearsal sessions we offer our year 11 students, are an opportunity for students to further develop their performance work and to discuss revision for theory work. The sessions run from 3.20 to 4.20pm.

Please note 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 after-school sessions on the last day of this term, Friday 19 December.

If you have any queries 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

Lord Lawson Shoebox Appeal – in partnership with the Trussell Trust

This year, Lord Lawson of Beamish Academy will be collecting non-perishable items to create shoeboxes for the Gateshead Foodbank, in partnership with the Trussell Trust.

This project is a huge opportunity to help the communities of Birtley and Gateshead at Christmas, to support families who struggle to put food on the table across the Christmas period. Any support we give to the foodbank will be greatly appreciated.

For this project we are asking staff and students to donate items that the foodbank often ask for.

Food items foodbanks need most

Tinned and Canned Foods

- Vegetables: Carrots, peas, sweetcorn, and tomatoes.
- Fruits: Peaches, pears, and pineapple in juice.
- Beans and Pulses: Baked beans, kidney beans, and chickpeas.
- Fish: Tuna, sardines, and mackerel.
- Meat: Tinned chicken, corned beef, and stews.
- Soup: Canned or packet soups that are quick and easy to prepare.

Pasta and Rice

- Essential staples like dried pasta, spaghetti, and rice are always in high demand.

Cereals

- Breakfast cereals, especially those that are plain and nutritious, like porridge oats.

Sauces and Cooking Essentials

- Pasta sauces, curry sauces, and cooking oils are important for preparing meals.

Beverage Items

- Milk: Long-life UHT milk or powdered milk, which have a long shelf life and are versatile.
- Tea and Coffee: Small packs of tea bags and jars of instant coffee.
- Sugar: Small bags of sugar for beverages or for cooking.
- Small packs of tea bags and jars of instant coffee.
- Snacks and Treats: Biscuits, chocolate, and crisps for a morale boost.

Baby Food

- Jars of baby food, formula milk, and baby cereals are crucial for families with infants.

Non-Food Items Foodbanks Need Most

Toiletries

- Soap
- Shampoo and Conditioner
- Toothpaste and Toothbrushes
- Deodorant
- Sanitary Products: Tampons and sanitary pads.

Items to Avoid Donating

While foodbanks appreciate all donations, some items are less suitable:

Fresh or Perishable Foods

- Some foodbanks cannot store fresh produce like fruit, vegetables, or dairy products due to **storage limitations**.

Homemade Items

- Foodbanks cannot accept homemade food due to food safety regulations.

Large or Bulk Items

- Large sacks of rice or oversized items may be impractical for distribution (and we are trying to fit items into a shoebox).

Out-of-Date Products

- Always check expiration dates before donating to ensure items are safe and usable.

We also need donations of shoeboxes to place all donations into.

We are not asking anyone to donate full shopping bags of items. However, if you could donate even a couple of the items suggested above, that would be a huge help.

All donations can be left at school reception but must be with us next week by the morning of Thursday 11 December 2025, to ensure the boxes are with the foodbank well before the Christmas break.

Mrs J Laidlaw
Assistant Principal – Head of Sixth Form

Thomas Lane
Year 12 Student and In-school Project Coordinator



Year 11: Subject Parents' Evening

The year 11 subject parents' evening will take place on Thursday 22 January 2026.

As in previous years, appointments will be made by parents/carers using the SchoolCloud platform.

Further information about the evening will be sent to parents and carers within the next week – this will come via ClassCharts.

In advance of this information, please advise the admin team if you think you may have changed your email address since the last time you used SchoolCloud. This is important, as the details we hold for you on our systems are the details you will need to login to SchoolCloud. Any changes can be sent to: lordlawson@lordlawson.academy – please ensure you quote your child's name and tutor group in the subject header.

Mrs S Wakefield
Office Manager



Lord Lawson of Beamish Academy
Presents

SINGIN' IN THE SNOW



CHRISTMAS WITH A SWING.

TUESDAY 16 DECEMBER 2025
7PM START - MAIN HALL



TICKETS £6.00

(Non-refundable) Available from Academy reception

Should you require any adjustment or assistance for access to seating please contact sbrown@lordlawson.academy on purchase of tickets. Late arrivals will not be permitted into the hall until the interval to maintain health and safety of all during the performance.

• Trust

• Respect

• Courage

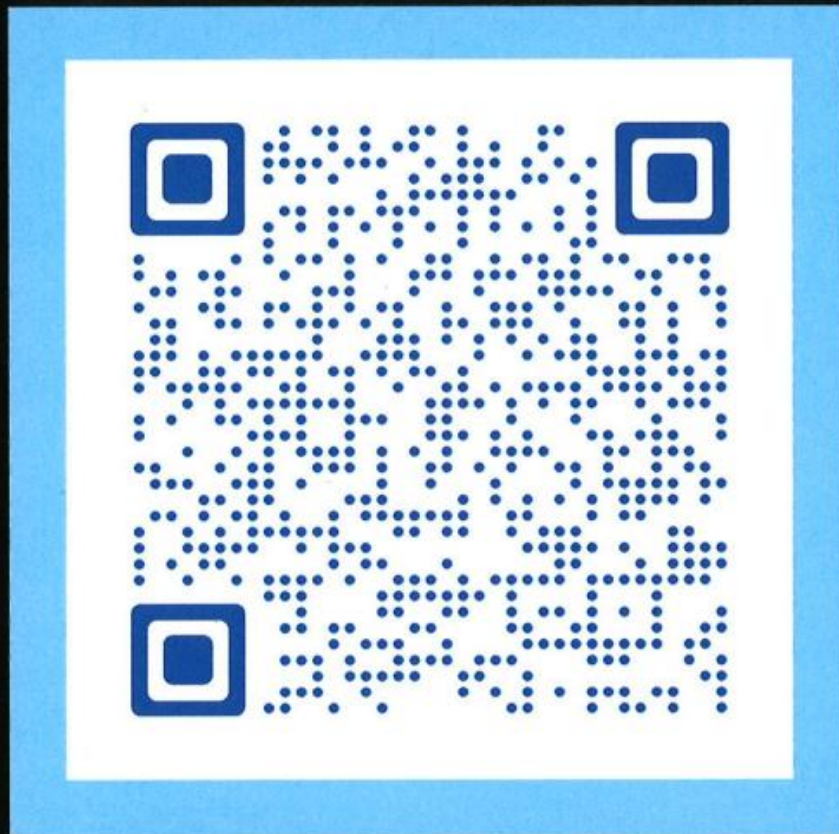
• Ambition



Lord Lawson
SIXTH FORM

APPLY NOW!

Scan the QR code below:



WE GROW WE LEARN WE SUCCEED

TOGETHER.

Online Safety Newsletter

December 2025

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 over 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>

New Technology

As some children may be receiving new technology or related games at Christmas, here is a quick reminder of the importance of setting up appropriate parental controls.



Games/Consoles

- Check age ratings: look at the PEGI rating of any new games. *Remember, PEGI rates the gameplay so whilst it is important to review age ratings, you must also check to see if it has any communication elements.*
- If a game does allow your child to communicate with others, then adjust or disable the settings as appropriate to your child.
- On the device itself, set up applicable controls such as restricting spending limits. Follow the links below to find out how to set up Parental Controls for popular devices here:

Xbox: <https://www.xbox.com/en-GB/family-hub>

PS5: <https://www.playstation.com/en-gb/support/account/ps5-parental-controls-spending-limits/>

Nintendo Switch: <https://www.nintendo.com/en-gb/Hardware/Nintendo-Switch-Parental-Controls/Nintendo-Switch-2-Nintendo-Switch-Parental-Controls-2873385.html>

Tablets/Smart phones

Set up parental controls on the device to prevent purchases, restrict content viewed and adjust privacy settings. Furthermore, remember to check any apps your child requests to check that they are suitable for their age. Follow the links below to find out more:

iPhones/iPad: <https://support.apple.com/en-gb/105121>

Android Device: <https://support.google.com/googleplay/answer/1075738>

Further information

<https://www.internetmatters.org/parental-controls/>

The Safety-First Smartphone

The Other phone is a new smartphone, which includes "SafetyMode" software. The software automatically blocks nudity, profanity, and bullying language in real time. You can find out more here: <https://otherphone.co.uk/>.

Smart Phone Free Childhood also list some alternatives that you could consider here: <https://www.smartphonefreechildhood.org/alternatives>.

Please note, that the inclusion of these models does not constitute an endorsement or recommendation. While these devices may provide a 'safer' alternative to traditional smartphones, there are still potential risks associated with children using any type of phone.

Online Grooming

What is Online Grooming?

Online Grooming is when an adult builds a relationship online to manipulate or exploit a child.

How does Grooming take place

Groomers may use fake profiles to pretend they are someone they are not, for example younger than they really are or pretend to be a person of influence. They will use flattery to bond and build a friendship with your child. They may use online games or social media to initiate contact but then encourage your child to switch to a different app to chat privately, usually on an app that doesn't offer parental controls.

What should I do?

- Use appropriate parental controls.
- Set privacy settings.
- Chat to your child regularly about what they do online and who they speak to. Talk to them about how people may not be who they say they are and show them how to use any blocking or reporting tools on the apps/websites that they use.

What should I do if my child is being groomed?

- If you think your child is in danger, then contact the police immediately.
- Save any evidence that you may have.
- If you are worried about online abuse or the way somebody has been communicating with your child online, then you can contact CEOP (<https://www.ceop.police.uk>). Once a report has been placed, a Child Protection Advisor will get in touch to help you.

Further information

There is a lot of information available online. The following links provide a comprehensive overview of this subject, as well as the details of who you can contact for further advice and support:

- <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/types-of-abuse/grooming/>
- <https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abuse-safety/online-mobile-safety/online-grooming/>

Signal Private Messenger

Signal is rated as 13+ on the App store. It is a messaging app, where users can text, send voice messages and photos plus participate in group chats and calls. There are no parental controls currently available. As with all messaging apps, the risks can include bullying and viewing inappropriate content. Find out more here: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/social-media/chat-apps/>

Users of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is entered into. Current as of the date released 01.12.25. The inclusion of any links does not imply any affiliation with or endorsement of the linked websites, documents, or videos, nor are we claiming any ownership

Nudify Apps

Have you heard of Nudify apps? Users upload a picture or video to a Nudify app and AI creates the nude image. This is obviously horrifying. Bark provides further information as well as what to do if this should happen to your child.

Find out more here:

<https://www.bark.us/blog/nudify-ai-apps/>

How to deal with online scams

Parent Zone have published an article on how to deal with online scams as well as how to prevent them from happening. You can read the article here:

<https://parentzone.org.uk/article/how-deal-online-scams-parent-guide>

Calm Zone

Childline have an area on their website full of activities, tools and videos to help you let go of stress. It includes yoga videos, breathing exercises, calming videos and games. It also includes information on how to get further support should you need it. Find out more here:

<https://www.childline.org.uk/toolbox/calm-zone/>

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/deceember-2025-secondary>

Calendar Dates and Upcoming Events for the Autumn Term

Date	Event
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