



Parent Bulletin

Principal **Dr A T Fowler**

Issue 22: w/c Monday 2 March 2026 – Week 1

Dear Parents and Carers

Over the past two weeks, very many of you have engaged with Mr Cooper and me in consultation around the school's proposal to extend the school day and to shorten the autumn and summer terms. Thank you for your interest, your questions and your points for consideration.

It is always good to engage with you and to listen to your suggestions, views and concerns. We know that few other schools engage with parents and carers in such depth. Mr Cooper and I were also struck by the selfless way in which concerns were frequently expressed on behalf of others – more vulnerable students, and families with children across several different schools, for example.

Over the half term break, we will reflect on this period of consultation. We will produce our analysis of the survey responses and the contributions that have come in via email and through our consultation meetings. This analysis will then go to the senior leadership team and to the governors for further reflection and discussion, leading to a decision. We will communicate the decision with you as soon as possible.

This week has seen the start of both the Christian penitential season of Lent and the Islamic holy month of Ramadan. It is unusual for these two events to coincide – the last time they did so was in 1992 – but the two seasons have a certain amount in common. To take one example, some Christians and many Muslims fast during this time, a physical discipline that forces people to take stock and re-evaluate the gifts they have in the forms of food and drink, as well as our habits of consumption. But this physical discipline links also to spiritual reflection: Lent and Ramadan are times when people look inwards and examine their own lives, their relationships with others, their relationship with the divine, and their purpose in this life.

Students and staff at Lord Lawson will be on our half term break next week. This week gives opportunities for rest and relaxation – which we all need after a busy period – and it also provides a space for reflection, a time to consider our own lives and relationships. And, as signs of spring continue to show in the natural world, let's hope this can be a time of renewal for us all.

We look forward to seeing all our students again on Monday 2 March at the usual time of 08:40.

With all good wishes,

Yours faithfully

Dr Andrew Fowler
Principal

• Trust

• Respect

• Courage

• Ambition



Billy Elliot the Musical: Academy Production Auditions

Congratulations to all of our Billy Elliot male lead role auditionees for completing their final audition workshop on Wednesday.

All students thoroughly prepared for their audition opportunity and brought the characters of Billy, Michael, Jackie and Tony to life with enthusiasm and emotion.

The Performing Arts department were particularly impressed with the quality of Angry Dance performances presented by our potential Billy's; the understanding of the character and passion for the role was clearly evident.

That is now a 'wrap' on our Billy Elliot lead character auditions. We would like to thank all of our auditionees over the past four weeks for their dedication and enthusiasm throughout the process. The Performing Arts Department will now consider and discuss all auditions over the next few weeks and the final casting decisions will be announced in the new half term.

Performer rehearsals will return to normal after half term and restart on Wednesday 4 March, 3.20pm to 5pm. All members of Performers should resume their attendance on Wednesday 4 March and we look forward to seeing everyone then.

If you have any queries about the Academy Production, Billy Elliot the Musical, or Performing Arts at Lord Lawson please contact me via email at sbrown@lordlawson.academy and I will be happy to help.

Wishing you all a restful half term.

Miss S Brown

Subject Leader – Performing Arts



World Book Day

World Book Day is due to take place on Thursday 5 March and we have a number of exciting events planned as part of our week long annual celebrations at Lord Lawson of Beamish Academy.

Week beginning 2 March

- Drop Everything and Read: Listen out for the bell! When it rings, students will stop what they are doing and get stuck into their reading book for 10 minutes.

Monday 2 March

- Mindful Bookmark Making: A calm, creative session where students can colour their own Mindful Bookmark as part of our Positive Mindful Crafting activity.

Tuesday 3 March

- Design a Book Cover: Students can get creative and design a new front cover for their favourite book! Art supplies will be provided, and the best designs will be displayed in the Library.

Thursday 5 March

- Staff and sixth form fancy dress.
- Year 7 to 9: Students will listen to clips from a range of recommended audiobooks at the start of lessons.
- Year 7 and 8 homework competition: Prizes will be awarded for the most creative work inspired by students' favourite books.
- Reading Quiz (Years 7 and 8): Teams of no more than four are invited to participate in our World Book Day Quiz. We will play five rounds in total and each round will be based on well-known celebrated books and their authors. We will test your book knowledge to the extreme! **Friday**

Friday 6 March

- **Reading Café:** Students can relax with a book in our cosy Reading Café to end the week. Refreshments will be available but spaces are limited.

We ask that you support our efforts to celebrate World Book Day by ensuring any child who is in year 7, 8 or 9, comes to school prepared with a reading book each day throughout the week commencing Monday 2 March. Students will need a reading book for activities that take place during a number of lessons on each day throughout the week, and for when they are asked to "Drop Everything and Read."

Please continue to encourage your children to read regularly at home. Regular reading, even for short periods of time, helps children to develop their language skills, vocabulary and cognitive abilities, which are essential for effective communication and learning. Regular reading also helps children improve their attention span, which is a crucial life skill for concentration and focus. The format of what they read can vary for each child. It does not have to be a book, it could, for example, be a comic or magazine, or song lyrics and other digital media that are more familiar to their lifestyles.

Mr S Barnes

Teacher of English and Politics | Literacy Lead Across the Curriculum

Year 11 GCSE Drama

The year 11 Drama Component 3 Practical examination will take place on Thursday 5 March. This is worth a total of 20% of their final GCSE grade and is examined by a visiting examiner from AQA.

All students are aware of the exam requirements and have been working on their performances since October Half term.

Students must arrive to the Academy in their full uniform and may need to bring additional costume for the exam. They will then get their marks in tutor before getting changed ahead of Lesson One. Individuals have been asked to bring in clothing and we will support students with all other props in the Academy.

If you have any queries please contact me directly via email at jwilson@lordlawson.academy and I will be happy to help.

Mrs J Wilson
Teacher of Drama



Half Term Fun!

Birtley Community Pool are running a full timetable of activities throughout the February half term week, including two inflatable obstacle courses they will have in the main pool!

For further information and a full list of their activities, please use the following link to access their February newsletter:

[Birtley Community Pool February Newsletter and Timetable](#)

Mrs S Wakefield
Office Manager

Upcoming Parents' and Carers' Evenings: In-person Events

The year 12 parents' and carers' evening takes place in school on Thursday 5 March 2026. Details have been provided to parents and carers and the SchoolCloud system is open for appointments.

The year 10 parents' and carers' evening takes place in school on Thursday 12 March 2026. Details for this evening have now been shared with parents and carers on Class Charts. Please check your announcements on the app.

Mrs S Wakefield
Office Manager

Gateshead Schools Dance Festival: Wednesday 25 March, Evening Performance at The Glasshouse

On Wednesday 25 March, 25 of our students will perform at the annual Gateshead Schools Dance Festival at the Glasshouse (formerly the Sage), Gateshead.

This year the Academy will be represented by Year 12 A Level Dance Students and our first Lord Lawson cohort of Dance Leaders.

The theme for the 2026 Dance Festival is 'inspiration' and the dancers have created three performances exploring who and what inspires them. This has resulted in three creative choreographies: Fame, Angel of our Dreams and People Watching.

As always it is a privilege to work with such dedicated and talented dance students and I look forward to watching our students represent the academy at the event.

If you would like to support our Lord Lawson Dancers at the Dance Festival please scan the barcode below which will take you to the Glasshouse ticket page for the event, or please contact me via email at sbrown@lordlawson.academy and I will be happy to help.

Miss S Brown

Subject Leader – Performing Arts



We are a Nut Free School: Reminder for Parents and Carers

Children who suffer from nut allergies can develop a severe, potentially life-threatening allergic reaction. If someone has a nut allergy it is not just eating nuts that can cause a severe reaction, just being touched on the skin or smelling the breath of someone who has had nuts or a product containing nuts can trigger anaphylactic shock (which can cause breathing and swallowing difficulties). First aid staff in the school are trained to use the Epi-pens (an injection of adrenalin) which is required immediately if this happens.

For this reason we cannot have nuts in school, in any form, and ask for your support by ensuring your child does not bring any form of food in their lunch boxes, or as a snack, that may contain nut products. For example:

- Peanut butter products
- Chocolate spreads
- Cereal bars
- Some granola bars
- Cakes that contain nuts
- Biscuits / Cookies that contain nuts
- Some Asian food, including satay
- Sauces that contain nuts

This list is not exhaustive, so please check the packaging of products closely. We know you will recognise the importance of our request, and that you will support our whole school community by ensuring we are a 'nut free school,' reassuring any of our students who may be vulnerable to this life-threatening condition.

Thank you as always for your continued support.

Ms L Doran
Business Manager



Northumbria Police: Prevention Through Education

Northumbria Polices' Prevention Through Education Team will be visiting our school on Thursday 5 March 2026, to deliver sessions to year 9 students on the risks and consequences associated with the misuse of potentially harmful substances.

The sessions are age-appropriate and will discuss the different types of drugs (both legal and illegal), the impact of substance misuse personally and on society, the myths surrounding potentially harmful substances, and how to keep each other safe, and where to get support.

Further information can be found in the flyer later in this bulletin.

Miss C Bramley
Teacher of Science and Personal Development Coordinator

Year 11 GCSE Dance NEA Information

Year 11 GCSE Dance students are currently working towards their final NEA date which is:

- Choreography Assessment: Week 1 – Wednesday 18 (Group 1/Solo Choreographies) and Thursday 19 March (Group 2/Group Choreographies)

Students will **only** attend **one** of the above exam days and are aware of their groups for each.

The year 9 dance leaders who have volunteered to dance in Choreography assessments will be off timetable on Thursday 19 March only.

Students will attend tutor period and will then be off timetable to record their exams for the whole day. Once a student has recorded their exam, they may return to their timetabled lessons.

Students must arrive to school with their hair fully tied back and in full academy uniform. They will then be required to change into bright coloured clothing or pre-organised costumes for the exam recordings, as they have done for previous performance exam recordings.

Friday evening preparation rehearsals continue every Friday after school, 3.20 to 4.20pm, to support students in completing their assessment work.

If you have any queries about the GCSE Dance NEA please contact me directly via email at sbrown@lordlawson.academy and I will be happy to support.

Miss S Brown

Subject Leader – Performing Arts

LOOKING FOR PLAYERS



Washington Athletic PSG Under 13s currently have the opportunity for a defensive minded player to join and compliment our current squad. We currently play in Division 8 in the Russell Foster League on a Saturday. Home games played in Washington. We train on a Tuesday night at Washington Hub. Top quality group of lads who have progressed so much in the last 12 months.

Please message the page for more details or whatsapp 07468490324.

Gateshead
Libraries



Gateshead

100 Years ^{NE} Celebration Day

North East
Combined
Authority

Kim McGuinness
North East
Mayor

Gateshead Central Library
Saturday 7 March • 9am-4pm

Join us to celebrate 100 years of Gateshead Central Library with a special day of events and activities.

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| Maker Place activities | 10am - 3.30pm |
| Exploring Your Family History | 10am - 4pm |
| Photomontage Workshop with Tommy Anderson | 10am - 1pm |
| Family Storytelling with Chris Adriaanse* | 10.30am - 11.30am |
| What's Behind the Door? Library tours* | 10.30am and 2pm |
| How to Care for your Family Collections* | 11am - 12pm |
| Book Illustration Workshop with Josie Brookes | 1pm - 4pm |
| Meet Author Peter James* | 2pm - 3pm |
| GemArts Heritage Detectives Workshop | 10am - 12pm |

All events free apart from Peter James (small charge) and those marked with * are pre-bookable in advance.

Discover more at Gateshead Libraries



Gateshead
Council

Drugs

Information for parents and carers



The misuse of drugs not only has negative effects for individuals but also for the community. The buying and selling of drugs often involves serious violence – or the threat of it – along with the exploitation and trafficking of vulnerable people, including children. Money gained can fund organised criminal gangs and contribute to gun and knife crime.

What does the law say?

Drugs – or controlled substances – are classified by type according to their relative harms and maximum penalties that can be imposed by a court. The consequences vary for producing, possessing, and supplying them. Class A drugs are considered to be the most harmful and carry the most severe penalty, followed by B then C.

Class A

e.g. cocaine, heroin, crack, LSD, MDMA (referred to as ecstasy), psilocybin (magic mushrooms)

Class B

e.g. cannabis, amphetamine, ketamine, codeine

Class C

e.g. some drugs without a valid prescription such as steroids, diazepam (brand name, valium), pregabalin; some new psychoactive substances (NPS)

It's illegal to do the following without legal reason. A legal reason could, for example, be a doctor who has in their possession a drug for the treatment of patients:

POSSESS

To have the drug 'in your control', meaning for example on your person, in your car, or in your house, even if you're not aware that it's a controlled substance.

SUPPLY

To give the drug to someone else, whether or not payment is made.

PRODUCE

To make a drug, or allow someone else to produce a drug in a property where you live or that you manage. The crime of growing cannabis plants is known as 'cultivation'.

What are the consequences of breaking the law?

Courts can decide whether to give a prison sentence as well as, or instead of, a fine:

Consequence Class A:

Possess: 7 years

Supply: Life

Produce: Life

Consequence Class B:

Possess: 5 years

Supply: 14 years

Produce: 14 years

Consequence Class C:

Possess: 2 years

Supply: 14 years

Produce: 14 years

Help, advice and how to keep safe

Have a conversation with your child about how they can keep themselves safe. You can find some tips here:

[Children and drugs - NSPCC](#)

Speak to them about what to do if they feel pressured into taking drugs:

- If they're offered or given any type of drug, then don't take it
- Encourage any friends or other young people not to take the drug
- Tell a trusted adult that someone has offered them drugs
- If they or another person takes a drug and they feel unwell, seek urgent medical advice

Find out more by visiting the following websites

[What are the UK drug laws? – DrugWise](#)

[Honest information about drugs - talktofrank.com](#)

[Drink and Drugs - Facts & Information - The Mix](#)



Online Safety Newsletter

February 2026

Screen time and resilience: A psychologist's guide

The BBC have published an article with an expert in parenting and child development, Dr Martha Deiros Collado. It includes tips and advice to help you in supporting your child online.

The article explores nine ways in which you can help your child to develop their media literacy skills, for example how to encourage your child to challenge what they see online and how to start conversations using real life examples, as well as how to develop healthy screen time habits.

At the end of the article, there are links to further articles that may be of interest to you, such as how to manage your child's online world without clashing.

You can find out more here:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/zwb3tcw>

Would you like to read this newsletter in a different language? You can use the translate tool on our web version: <https://www.knowsleycitylearningcentres.org.uk/february-2026-secondary/>

Using AI to alter images

AI image generator and moderator tools are widely available and often used by children. Whilst these tools can be used for creative purposes, we need to ensure our children are aware of the appropriate way in which to use them and the circumstances when they should not be used, even if harm is not intended.

What are AI image generator and moderator tools?

It is when Artificial Intelligence is used to create or modify images, for example it could be used to swap faces, change expressions or for more sinister reasons, such as to remove clothes. These images are often very realistic and therefore difficult to see that they are fake.

Privacy concerns and consent

If your child is using these tools, they need to be aware of potential loss of privacy and the importance of consent. They should know that they should only use images of other people with consent.

What does my child need to know about using these tools?

- Children shouldn't use AI tools to manipulate images of school staff. Even if the child's intention is not malicious, children should not use AI tools to create or edit photos of teachers under any circumstances.
- Manipulation of images of friends or other children – if you are using images of other people, then consent **must** always be sought.
- The tools should not be used to create images that can embarrass or hurt others - this is a form of online bullying.
- Copyright issues – who owns the copyright? These images could be reused by others, which can affect their own digital footprint.

What should I do?

- Chat to your child if they are using these tools and ascertain the reason why. Ask them to show you the images that they have created.
- Check the age ratings of any apps/websites that your child is using and set up appropriate parental controls.
- Develop your child's digital literacy by teaching them to recognise online risks and to behave responsibly online

Further information

- <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/talking-to-children-about-ai>
- <https://oursaferschools.co.uk/2025/02/18/understanding-image-consent-at-schools/>

TikTok

You must be over 13 years of age to use TikTok. TikTok is a social media platform for sharing and watching short video clips. If your child is using TikTok then make sure appropriate security / privacy settings are applied.

Account set up

It is important that your child enters their real date of birth as accounts are tailored by age e.g., Direct Messaging is disabled for accounts aged 13-15. In addition, advertisements are tailored by age. By default, accounts for people under 16 are set to private. You can read more about the other settings available, such as switching off comments and restricted mode here:

<https://support.tiktok.com/en/account-and-privacy/account-privacy-settings/privacy-and-safety-settings-for-users-under-age-18>

Family Pairing

Family Pairing allows you to link your own account to your child's account. You can then set controls such as restricted mode or tailor your child's 'For You' feed by selecting keywords that TikTok will use to filter out posts. You can find out more here: <https://support.tiktok.com/en/safety-hc/account-and-user-safety/family-pairing>

What do I need to be aware of?

- **Inappropriate content and themes:** whilst against guidelines, explicit and inappropriate content can be found on this platform, for example nudity/sexual content and hate speech. Some of the songs available to lip sync to may contain inappropriate lyrics/themes.
- **Challenges:** We often see viral challenges on social media, some of which can be **risky/dangerous**. Sadly, there are reports that children have died whilst attempting online challenges. Children may not yet have developed the skills and ability to critically analyse that what they see online is not always safe for them to replicate.
- **Stranger contact:** chat to your child about how people may not be who they say they are when online.

Refresh your feed

You can refresh your "For You" feed to update the content recommended: <https://support.tiktok.com/en/account-and-privacy/account-privacy-settings/refresh-your-for-you-feed>

Blocking and Reporting

Show your child how to use the safety features available.

Further information

- <https://parentzone.org.uk/article/tiktok>
- <https://www.tiktok.com/safety/en/guardians-guide>

Users of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is entered into. Current as of the date released 01.07.20. The inclusion of any links does not imply any affiliation with or endorsement of the linked website.



Balance screen time tips

Internet Matters have created simple tips to help you develop healthy online habits for your child. They also answer key questions such as "how much screentime is too much" and "is gaming bad for children." Access this information here:

<https://www.internetmatters.org/resources/creating-a-balanced-digital-diet-with-screen-time-tips>

7 Steps to Good Digital Parenting

The Family Online Safety Institute have created seven steps to assist you as a digital parent. Find out more here:

<https://fosi.org/program/7-steps-to-good-digital-parenting/>

Children's Commissioner launches new guide for parents and carers

The Children's Commissioner has released a new guide to help you in managing your child's digital life. The guide was written with direct involvement from children.

It includes advice on setting boundaries such as no devices in the bedroom and how to chat to your child. You can find the guide here:

<https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/blog/what-i-wish-my-parents-or-carers-knew-childrens-commissioner-launches-guide-for-parents-and-carers-on-managing-childrens-digital-lives/>

Calendar Dates and Upcoming Events for the Autumn Term

| Date | Event |
|-------------------------|---|
| Friday 20 February 2026 | Ski Trip |
| Friday 20 February 2026 | Last day of term for staff and students – school finishes as normal at 3.20pm |
| Monday 2 March 2026 | Staff and students return to school at 8.40am |
| Thursday 5 March 2026 | Year 12 Parents Evening 3.45 – 6.45pm (in-person event) |
| Thursday 12 March 2026 | Year 10 Parents Evening 3.45 – 6.45pm (in-person event) |
| Thursday 26 March 2026 | Year 5 Open Evening 4.30 – 6.30pm |
| Thursday 2 April 2026 | Last day of term for staff and students – school finishes as normal at 3.20pm |
| Tuesday 14 April 2026 | Naples Trip |
| Monday 20 April 2026 | Staff and students return to school at 8.40am |