



Parent Bulletin

Principal **Dr A T Fowler**

Issue 26: w/c Monday 30 March 2026 – Week 1

Dear Parents and Carers

This week I had the honour of watching nine of our wonderful year 12 students present to a panel of staff on their ideas for student leadership. Each student acquitted themselves very well and really impressed me and our staff. I would not have been able to present to senior leaders in my school when I was in year 12, so well done to all of them. As a result of this process, I am pleased to announce our Head/Deputy Head boy and girl as follows:

Head Girl – Lilly Wilson
Deputy Head Girl – Erin Ward
Head Boy – Thomas Lane
Deputy Head Boy – Gregor Houston

These students already embody our desired character traits of kindness, hard work, curiosity, and a willingness to get involved. I look forward to them being role models to others and leading students across years 7 to 13.

In a further show of great character, over 200 students, including over 80 from year 7, stayed on to represent the school last night at our Year 5 Open Evening. I, along with Mr Cooper and Mrs Jacobsen, had the pleasure of speaking to prospective students and their families, but the real highlight of the night for visitors was the wonderful student guides, student helpers, and staff, who make the evening come alive. Families across the local community were extremely impressed with our school, staff and students. Standout comments heard included:

“These students are a credit to you”
“These guides and your helpers are so brilliant”

Please help us spread the word about how fantastic our students are and what a wonderful place Lord Lawson is to be.

Finally, examination season begins in earnest next week for students in year 11 and 13. Notably, the 10-hour exams in art-based subjects for year 11 start next week, as well as some other smaller cohort exams. We wish our staff and students the best of luck. There is a notice about supporting students with exam stress in this bulletin, which may prove helpful.

With all good wishes,

Yours faithfully

Mr Joe Dicocco
Deputy Principal

• Trust

• Respect

• Courage

• Ambition

Easter HAF Vouchers for Students Eligible for Free School Meals (FSMs)

The Gateshead Council funded Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme is once again running at Easter. If you have not already logged onto their system to claim your vouchers and book slots, please do so a.s.a.p. If you are unsure if your child qualifies for FSMs, you can access the Gateshead Council website via the following link to check eligibility criteria: <https://www.gateshead.gov.uk/article/7433/Free-school-meals>

If you are no table to access online booking, you can visit one of Gateshead Council's drop-in support sessions with the **Brighten the Day**, the details of which are:

Date	Time	Location
Monday 30 March	12:30 to 4pm	Metrocentre Community Hub (green quadrant opposite Next)
Tuesday 7 April	12:30 to 4pm	Metrocentre Community Hub (green quadrant opposite Next)
Monday 13 April	12:30 to 4pm	Metrocentre Community Hub (green quadrant opposite Next)

Alongside the food programme the council support multi-sport activity programmes, one of which is run by All Stars Sport. During the Easter holidays All Stars Sport will run a FREE Multi-Sport Holiday Club at Lord Lawson of Beamish Academy, for students' who are in receipt of Free School Meals (FSM).

The sport club will run daily from Monday 13 to Thursday 16 April 2026, from 9am to 1pm, for children aged **12 to 16**.

- Food: will be provided each day
- Activities: Football, Rugby, Dodgeball, Rounders, plus many more
- Workshops: Healthy eating, hydration and keeping active

To book your place go to <https://app.holidayactivities.com/parent/providers/all-star-sports>

Please note you will need to create an account and provide your FSM voucher code to book onto the club but you can be supported in this also at one of the drop-in sessions above.

If you're having trouble booking the club and need help with your voucher codes, please contact Gateshead HAF team Booking support by clicking on the following link, or by copying and pasting into your internet browser. <https://www.gateshead.gov.uk/article/36563/Brighten-the-Day-Easter-2026#Help>

Alternatively you can email Rhys at All Stars Sport direct at Rhys@allstarssport.co.uk and he will be happy to help.

Mr Ian Cooper
Deputy Principal

Further Sporting Success!

We are very proud to share that our U14 basketball team finished second in the Tyne and Wear School Games Finals.

The whole team were outstanding, outplaying teams from St Cuthberts, Marden High, St Joseph's, St Aidan's and St Thomas Moore, narrowly missing the overall win against Dame Allen, in a thrilling final.

This was an amazing end to a fantastic season for the team, who finished with a record 10 wins and only 1 defeat.

The PE department are incredibly proud of the team: Wilf Bester, Mathew Graham, Harrison Hardy, Finlay Harmer-Hall, Lewis Kelley, Elliott le Pag, Isaak Musham, and Joe Weatherspoon. Here's to continued success next year!

Mr D Wyllie
Teacher of PE



Ski Trip: Friday 26 March to Friday 2 April 2027

Following the successful ski trip this year, we are organising the ski trip for the next academic year, which will take place during the **Easter holidays 2027**. We will be returning to Radstadt, in the vast ski area of the Sportwelt Amadé, Austria. This trip will be offered to students who are **currently in years 7 to 12**. There are limited places available.

The cost of the trip will be £1239. Bursaries are available for this trip.

For further information, students should request an information letter from Mrs Hulme. If, following receipt of this letter a parent or carer wishes to register their child's interest in participating in this trip, they will need to complete, sign and return the expression of interest slip that will accompany the letter by Friday 24 April 2026.

If your child is successful in securing a place on the trip and you feel that you would benefit from some financial support, you should submit a request to: finance@lordlawson.academy; you will be provided with the necessary forms and information. All applications are dealt with in the strictest of confidence.

Mrs S Hulme
Teacher of Mathematics and Ski Trip Coordinator

Birtley Community Centre this Easter

Birtley Community Centre resides within the heart of the Birtley Community between Elisabethville and Station Lane. They cater from birth to senior age delivering a variety of activities.

As well as their dedicated team of staff, the centre's activities, clubs and events are assisted by volunteers who work around the clock to help support the welfare and benefit of the people of Birtley.

With the cost-of-living crisis, many people are making very tough choices. Birtley Community Centre is ready and equipped to assist where possible. Their main focuses are:

- Food Poverty
- Hygiene Poverty
- Signposting the right help to those who seek it
- Providing activities for younger people
- Tackling stigmas around 'mental health', 'being too proud to ask for help', whilst also stepping up our game even more to ensure that everyone who turns to us feels safe, included and heard.

Their office is open Monday to Friday, 9am to 3pm.

During the Easter period, the centre is also hosting a number of **free** and **low-cost** events for the community, beginning with a Spring Fayre this Sunday and an Easter Party on Sunday 5 April. Further details can be found in the flyers below.

Additionally, the centre is also part of the HAF programme and you can sign-up for a variety of activities during Easter including drama, football, sports, and sessions that are co-ordinated by Buzz Dance Company.

For further information about their Easter activities programme, or what the centre offers in general, please visit their website by clicking on the following link, or copying the link address into your internet browser.
<https://www.birtleycommunitycentre.co.uk/>

Mrs S Wakefield
Office Manager



Dance Festival – 2026

On Wednesday evening, 25 Lord Lawson dance students represented the academy at the annual Gateshead Schools Dance Festival.

Year 12 A Level Dance Students and our first cohort of Dance Leaders, performed three original works (People Watching, Fame and Angel of our dreams) at the Glasshouse (formerly The Sage). All dance pieces were created specifically for the Dance Festival by the students and explored this year's theme of inspiration.

Academy days are extremely busy (especially in the Performing Arts Department) and so moments of collaboration are extra special. Watching our Dance Leaders join their Year 12 peers during their performance of 'People Watching' was a joyous moment, and reminded me of the inclusive, positive and nurturing environment that dance creates and of the value these creative opportunities provide for our young people.

I am so proud of all of our dancers for their team spirit, enthusiasm and professionalism in both preparation and during the event. I am already looking forward to next year's performances and watching our dancers shine on the Glasshouse stage once again.

For further information about Dance at Lord Lawson please email me at sbrown@lordlawson.academy and I will be happy to help.

Miss S Brown
Subject Leader – Performing Arts





Inspiring and transforming lives through boxing

Continued Sporting Success for Lord Lawson Boxing Stars

Last weekend, two of our students participated in the National Junior Boxing Championships at Arena Sports, Kettering.

Year 9 student, Madeline Laverick-Arnott boxing for Washington Boxing Club, competed in the U42kg category. Maddie's opponent was a girl a year her senior and she boxed her in Open Class and became the 4x National Champion.

Year 10 student, Teigan King boxing for Felling Boxing Club, competed in the U50kg category and became the 4x National Champion in her category.

England Boxing has invited both girls to be part of their performance pathway.

Well done girls, we are extremely proud of you.....Olympics in a few years?

Year 9 and Year 10 Pastoral Teams



Supporting Year 11 with Exam Stress

As we move closer to the GCSE exam period, many young people begin to feel increased pressure or anxiety. This is completely normal, but we want to ensure all students feel supported both in school and at home.

This week, tutors will be sharing resources with Year 11 to help them manage exam stress, including a “**5 Tips for Managing Anxiety**” poster, which will also be displayed in tutor rooms. Students will have access to digital links through their school email, and we’d like to share these with parents and carers as well.

Below are a range of trusted websites offering guidance, strategies, and support for exam-related stress and wellbeing:

Useful Support Resources

- **Mind – Exam Stress Advice**

Practical tips for managing stress and understanding how it affects young people.

<https://www.mind.org.uk/for-young-people/feelings-and-experiences/exam-stress/>

- **YoungMinds – Coping With Exam Stress**

Clear advice and coping strategies designed specifically for young people.

<https://www.youngminds.org.uk/young-person/coping-with-life/exam-stress/>

- **Barnardo’s – Anxiety, Stress and Worry Support**

Guidance to help young people manage pressure and stay mentally healthy.

<https://www.barnardos.org.uk/get-support/support-for-young-people/mental-health/anxiety-stress-worry/exam-stress>

- **NHS – Help Your Child Beat Exam Stress**

Support and advice for parents to help their child during exam season.

<https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/children-and-young-adults/advice-for-parents/help-your-child-beat-exam-stress/>

- **KOOTH – Digital Exam Tips Brochure**

A helpful downloadable guide with exam-time wellbeing advice.

https://www.kirkleessafeguardingchildren.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/KOOTH_Exam_Tips_Digital_Brochure.pdf

How You Can Support at Home

Encouraging healthy routines, regular breaks, and open conversations about how your child is feeling can make a significant difference during this period.

Further advice and tips can be found in flyers later in this bulletin.

If you have any concerns about your child’s wellbeing, please contact the year team or their tutor.

Mr Cave
Acting Year 11 Leader

Mrs Clarke
Deputy Year Leader

Year 8 Parents' and Carers' Evening: Thursday 23 April 2026

The year 8 parents' and carers' evening will be an in-person event and will take place in school on **Thursday 23 April 2026**. Staff will be based in the sports and the gym.

Although the evening will be in-person, appointments will be booked by parents/carers online, via **SchoolCloud**. Further information will be sent to you next week via Class Charts.

Please ensure that you regularly check for messages on Class Charts as there is still a nationwide issue with message alerts. Announcements are still being sent daily to parents and carers from staff about a variety of items, but you need to check your Class Charts app.

If you do not currently have the Class Charts app it can be downloaded for free from the App store.



Want the **FREE** parent APP?

Download from the Apple App Store or Google Play

Mrs S Wakefield
Office Manager

Attendance and Penalty Notices

Good attendance is essential to your child's wellbeing, progress, and long-term success. We ask for your continued support in ensuring your child attends school every day unless absence is absolutely unavoidable.

I wish to remind parents and carers that under the National Framework for School Attendance in England, which came into effect on 19 August 2024, the local authority can issue a penalty notice (fine) when a child has 10 or more sessions of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10-school-week period. Each school day contains two sessions, the morning and afternoon. This threshold applies whether the absences occur consecutively or are spread across the 10-week period, and they may include unauthorised late marks where the register has closed

We are committed to working with families and offering support where needed, but consistent attendance remains a legal responsibility. Please contact us as early as possible if you are experiencing any difficulties that may affect your child's attendance.

Thank you for your cooperation and ongoing support.

Mr I Cooper
Deputy Principal

5 tips

for managing test anxiety



Just like learning any skill, we can learn new ways of reducing stress. These methods take practice – the more we do them, the more effective they will be!



1

Calm your body

Try these methods to help calm your body and mind.

Practice deep breathing

Take breaks often and go outside if you can

Squeeze a stress ball or use a fidget toy

2

Practise self-care

Spend some time doing an activity you enjoy, even if you don't feel like it. Having fun helps reduce stress. It also helps keep the exam in perspective and remind us there's more to life.

Try writing down your own examples of positive self-talk. Don't focus on the worst that could happen. Instead, spend time imagining yourself acing the test.



"I am struggling with this topic right now, but my test score does not define who I am."

"I've got this! I've studied and I know what to do."

3

Use positive self-talk

This is when you say or think things to help improve your mood. Practise being kind to yourself with your thoughts, as though you are supporting a friend.

"My life outside of exams is important too."

"I don't have to get a perfect score, I just have to try my best."

4

Look after your physical health

Your body and mind are connected. Try to eat nutritious food, move your body every day, and spend time outside (even five minutes helps).



5

Ask for support

When anxiety gets too much, don't keep it to yourself. Try talking to:

A relative or carer, like a parent, older sibling, or aunt/uncle



A counsellor at school or a teacher you trust



You can get help online at [themix.org.uk](https://www.themix.org.uk)

Navigating exam season

Supporting your child to beat exam stress

Exams can be a challenging time for young people, and many young people can feel worried and stressed in the lead up to exams. As parents and carers, it can be difficult to know what we can do to support them. We've shared some tips on supporting your child if they're feeling stressed about exams.



Look for signs of stress

Stress can present differently in everyone. Signs of stress could include not sleeping or sleeping more than usual, losing interest in food or eating more than usual, being irritable, having headaches or stomach aches, being negative, feeling hopeless, or not enjoying activities they previously enjoyed.

If you notice your child is struggling, ask them what you can do to help them.



Talk about stress and nerves

Remind your child that it's perfectly normal to feel worried or stressed about their exams. The key is to put these nerves to positive use.

Talk openly about how you cope with your own stressful situations, so your child has a positive role model for managing their emotions and time.

Practice relaxation techniques with your child, we love [these ideas from from NHS Scotland](#).



Support your child to create a routine

Routines and rituals can help your child keep healthy habits, and can help you ensure your child is getting enough sleep and eating well.

If they haven't already, encourage your child to create a revision plan or timetable, splitting their day up into chunks. Encourage them to take regular breaks - which they could use to have a meal, get some exercise or unwind - and try to discourage them from staying up late revising.

Navigating exam season

Supporting your child to beat exam stress



Try not to add to the pressure

Many young people feel pressure to do well in their exams to make their teachers, or families proud. Try not to add to this pressure. Be reassuring, positive, and help put things into perspective. Remind them that there is more to life than their grades, and their results don't define who they are. Reassure them you will be proud of them 'no matter what'.



Make yourself available to listen

Sometimes your child may not want to talk, and it's important we don't force them to have a conversation they don't want to have. Make yourself available but don't pressure them to talk.

You may find that your child opens up in situations where they feel less pressure – for example when you're in the car on the way home from school, or during a walk





Help them unwind after exams

Find ways to help your child unwind after each exam, so they don't dwell on things they could have done better or differently. After each exam, you and your child could watch a film or enjoy your favourite meal together, before they start revising for the next test.



Seek additional support

If you're concerned about your child's stress, or find they don't want to talk to you, encourage them to seek support elsewhere. This could be someone at their school, or an organisation such as Shout or Childline.

- Text CONNECT to 85258 for free to speak to Shout
- Call 0800 1111 to speak to Childline, or visit [childline.org.uk](https://www.childline.org.uk)  for their free online chat
- Visit [place2be.org.uk/help](https://www.place2be.org.uk/help)  for more advice

COM Groups/Networks

COM Groups are online communities or group chats where harmful and deeply disturbing behaviour can take place. This could be via mainstream messaging apps, gaming platforms or through social media. It is important to be aware that such networks exist and understand the risks they may pose to our children.

The Molly Rose Foundation has issued an alert highlighting the scale and nature of COM Networks, including how they target vulnerable young people:

<https://mollyrosefoundation.org/molly-rose-foundation-issues-public-warning-into-prevalence-of-online-groups-targeting-children-for-self-harm-suicide-and-abuse/>

The Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Partnership provide further information including who may be at risk, the type of offender involved, potential warning signs and what you can do such as show interest in your child's online life:

<https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/gscp/professional-resources/sadistic-online-exploitation/>

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

Age ratings in games

Age ratings exist to help protect your child as they show whether content is suitable for your child's age. Make sure you check the age rating of any game your child is playing.

Why should I check?

Not all games will be appropriate for your child. Some may appear child friendly due to fun or cartoon style graphics but still include unsuitable content. Age ratings consider factors such as violence, frightening content, bad language and/or in app purchases.



How can I check?

Most games are rated by PEGI (Pan European Game Information), who not only state the age you should be to play the game but also provide further content descriptors to give you an indication of the type of content that your child might encounter. Apps are rated by the App store/Google Play.

How can I stop my child from accessing a game they are not old enough to play?

You can set up **parental controls** to restrict access to games or apps that your child is not old enough to play and set restrictions so any downloads/purchases must be approved by you. For example:

- Nintendo – restrict software by age so if you restrict to 10+, games with that rating or above cannot be played by your child.
- Xbox / PlayStation – set an age limit so anything that exceeds that age rating must be approved.
- Apple / Google (Family Link) – restrict your child from installing apps, allowing you to review before approving all purchases.

What else do I need to do?

- Review any additional content descriptors, read reviews and check if the game includes any form of communication or in app purchases. This will help inform your decision as to whether the game is suitable for your child.
- For any game your child plays, set up appropriate parental controls.
- If you decide a game is not appropriate, explain to your child why. We know your child might feel peer pressure to play certain games, but explaining your reasoning will help them understand your decision.

Further information

- <https://www.ceopeducation.co.uk/parents/articles/gaming/>

Fake or Real? Know the Deal

Essex Police have launched a groundbreaking AI Safety Campaign in partnership with BT and EE to tackle the growing risks posed by artificial intelligence (AI) misuse and deepfake technology. This is the first time a UK police force is working directly with a global technology firm to provide practical advice to parents, guardians and young people.

AI technology offers incredible opportunities, but it also introduces serious risks when misused. Deepfake content – highly convincing, fabricated images or videos – can be used to exploit young people, sometimes without their knowledge. Artificially generated Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM) is one of the fastest-emerging crimes Essex Police is actively investigating.

The campaign is designed to help you understand:

- What deepfakes are and why they matter
- How to protect children from online harm
- What to do if an image is misused

Further information

Find out more here, including advice on how to protect your child:

<https://eephonesmart.co.uk/fake-or-real>

What is the Manosphere?

Have you seen the new Netflix documentary 'Louis Theroux: Inside the Manosphere' in which Louis Theroux interviews several 'influencers' that promote extreme / disturbing ideologies online. It is a shocking watch but prompts the importance of ensuring our children are protected from this content. In essence, the manosphere is against the empowerment of women and certain people promote these views and other harmful misinformation online via social media etc.

What should I do?

We need to develop critical thinking in our children and have age-appropriate conversations with them as explained in these two articles:

- <https://parents.actionforchildren.org.uk/feelings-behaviour/talking-about-feelings/talk-to-your-child-gender-equality/>
- <https://www.brook.org.uk/blog/4-ways-to-tackle-misogyny-among-young-people/>

Further information

- <https://www.unwomen.org/en/articles/explainer/what-is-the-manosphere-and-why-should-we-care>

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How to set up parental controls on ChatGPT

Internet Matters have published an article detailing how you can link your own account to your child's account (they must be logged in) to set parental controls on ChatGPT.

You can read the article here:

<https://www.internetmatters.org/parental-controls/entertainment-search-engines/chatgpt-parental-controls/>

WhatsApp update: Parent-Managed Accounts

WhatsApp have announced that they are rolling out the option of Parent-Managed accounts for those under the age of 13. The settings will include allowing you to choose who can contact your child and ensuring only you can add them to groups. Find out more here:

<https://faq.whatsapp.com/894871699629864>

Whilst, these features could be useful, it is important to emphasise that just because the option now exists, WhatsApp may still not be an appropriate platform for your child to be on. We often receive reports of issues, particularly with group chats on WhatsApp. Wayne Denner (online safety trainer) explains more here: <https://www.waynedenner.com/whatsapp-parent-managed-accounts-what-parents-need-to-know/>

AI and homework

AI can be a useful tool for helping children with homework both in understanding a topic and for research. However, please remember that it should not be used to complete tasks as this would constitute plagiarism.

Calendar Dates and Upcoming Events for the Spring Term

Date

Event

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