



Parent Bulletin

Principal **Dr A T Fowler**

Issue 29: w/c Monday 4 May 2026 – Week 2

Dear Parents and Carers

I hope you enjoy the weather this weekend, for as long as it holds. It has been a lovely day as I write, and I am looking forward to watching my son play cricket this evening, it seems as good a way as any to start the bank holiday weekend.

At school, formal examination season for students in year 11 and 13 has officially begun, with our first hall-based examination this afternoon. Our arrangements are in place as usual to support students with well-structured routines and revision sessions, designed to enable our students to do their absolute best in each exam. You can all help with this, regardless of which year group your child is in. Please remind them of the need to cross the atrium on all three floors in silence whilst the exam banners are out and staff are on the corridors. This means an exam is running, and we are silent to enable our peers in exams to focus on doing their absolute best. It was an excellent start today, but some students did need reminders, so your support with this is appreciated, as always.

Also, this week, the Junior Mathematics Challenge was held, with budding mathematicians selected from years 7 and 8 to take part. We hope the children enjoyed the challenge provided, some of the problems are exceptionally difficult, challenging even our most able teachers, so well done to all students involved – we look forward to sharing their successes with you when we receive their results.

On the theme of celebrating success, we congratulate our colleagues and children at Birtley Easy Primary School, who are celebrating their centenary today. For a school to run for 100 years is a remarkable achievement; what an impact they will have had on our local community. Lord Lawson was founded in 1970, as an amalgamation of three schools. I wonder where we will be in 2070. I hope and trust that we will have continued our journey of transforming the lives, of students, staff, and the local community.

Finally, there is a wonderful message later in this bulletin, concerning the actions of an inspirational student of ours in year 10. I had the pleasure of talking to Ellis this week. Please do read about his campaign and fundraising in this bulletin, and if you are in a position to do so, consider donating to support his efforts.

With all good wishes,

Yours faithfully

Mr Joe Dicocco
Deputy Principal

• Trust

• Respect

• Courage

• Ambition

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 11 Updates

Hoodies

Year 11 students who submitted an order for a leavers hoody have received them earlier this week. Students are allowed to wear their leavers hoody in school **in place of their blazer only**. All other aspects of the school uniform still apply, i.e. shirt, tie, school trousers (leggings are **not** permitted) or school skirt, uniform approved shoes.

If there are any students who would still like to purchase a hoody, parents and carers can contact the supplier, Little Gems and The School Outfit Store, using the details below:

11 Brockwell Road,
Crowther Industrial Estate,
Washington,
NE38 0AF

Opening Hours: Monday - Saturday 9am-5pm
Closed on Sundays
Tel: [0191 416 8889](tel:01914168889)

Prom: Friday 10 July 2026

Year 11 students who have qualified for prom have received a letter this week containing details about the prom and payment information. Communication has also been sent to parents/carers via Class Charts so please check your messages.

Students who have not yet qualified to attend prom have an additional target to achieve over the next four weeks.

Year 11 Prom is an excellent way to celebrate and recognise the contribution students have made to the school over the last five years.

Mrs J Clarke
Year 11 Deputy Leader

Important Reminder Re' Allergies – We are a Nut Free School

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. **We cannot have nuts in school, in any form.**

So please, can we ask that you have **no nut products** in your child's lunch box, or in anything that they may bring into school as a snack. 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 appreciate that this is an additional thing to check, and we know that you recognise how important it is, but we must ensure the safety of all children and staff in school, so we must insist that you support this request.

We know that if it were your child who was potentially affected by this life-threatening allergy to nut products, that you would expect all of the help we could give.

Thank you all for your understanding and for your continued support.

Ms L Doran
Business Manager



Year 7 Leadership

As some parents may already be aware, when year 7 students move up to year 8, they will get a new leadership team who should remain with them on their journey through our school up to the end of year 11.

As part of this process I am pleased to announce that Mr Rayner (Year Leader) and Mrs Clarke (Deputy Year Leader) will begin working with our current year 7 students from Friday 1 May, alongside Mrs Jacobson and Miss Cooper. There will be a transition period until the end of this academic year, to allow students and parents/carers to build new relationships. The students have been informed of this in assembly today and assured that for now it is 'business as usual' in regard to their day-to-day school experience.

If parents have any questions or wish to get in touch about this change, Mr Rayner and Mrs Clarke can be contacted via the email addresses listed below:

arayner@lordlawson.academy

Jclarke1@lordlawson.academy

Mrs A Jacobson
Year 7 Leader

Mr A Rayner
Year 8 Leader (for current year 7)

Anti-Bullying Lead

As Miss Walker (Anti-Bullying Lead) leaves Lord Lawson to begin a new chapter in her teaching career, I would like to introduce myself to you as the new Anti-Bullying Lead for Lord Lawson of Beamish Academy.

I was fortunate to join Lord Lawson in September 2025, as a member of the Cover Team. In previous roles I have been a Head of Year and Pastoral Curriculum Leader, so I have a great deal of pastoral experience to bring to this new role.

If your child requires any support or you would like advice or the opportunity to see how you can also support your children at home, please contact me via the dedicated, confidential email account:

antibullying@lordlawson.academy. Alternatively you can always contact your child's year team.

Ms Houghton
Cover Supervisor and Anti-Bullying Lead

Year 10: Inspirational Student

Year 10 student Ellis is participating in the national OCD 1.2 Challenge and this week; he took the opportunity to speak to his year 10 peers in assembly.

OCD 1.2 is a fitness challenge and campaign, which asks participants to walk an extra 1.2 miles daily for 30 days (equivalent to 36 miles in total), representing the 1.2% of the UK population affected by OCD. Participants raise funds for [OCD-UK](https://www.ocduk.org) to support mental health services.

Ellis spoke passionately in front of his peers and teachers which received a well-deserved round of applause and many lovely comments of support. Ellis said:

“OCD has impacted ME for as long as I can remember, not only as someone diagnosed with the disorder, but also as someone who has to spend day-to-day life living with the constant misuse of the term OCD.

Obsessive Compulsive Disorder isn't just a quirk; it is a seriously misunderstood Mental Health Condition. This is why I demand change, by raising money for OCD-UK. Not only do I get to support a charity that helps people like me, but I also get to help to educate people about my condition which allows me to help prevent misunderstanding.”

To find out more about the campaign and to get involved visit <https://www.ocduk.org/get-involved/fundraising/walking/1point2challenge/>

We are so proud of how our students continue to go above and beyond, by using their powerful voices to support those around them.

Well done Ellis!

Mr L Cumiskey
Year 10 Leader

Miss A Harrison
Year 10 Deputy Leader



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 thing 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.knowsleycitylearningcentres.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.

LORD LAWSON OF BEAMISH ACADEMY

Academic Year 2026 - 2027 Calendar

Autumn Term Begins	Tuesday 1 September 2026	Staff PD Day - Academy closed to all students
	Wednesday 2 September 2026	Academy opens for staff and ALL students
	Friday 23 October 2026	Last day of term - staff and students finish at 3.20 pm
Autumn Half Term	Saturday 24 October 2026 to Sunday 1 November 2026 inclusive	
Autumn Term Ends	Monday 2 November 2026	Academy opens for staff and all students
	Friday 18 December 2026	Last day of term - staff and students finish at 3.20 pm
Christmas Holidays	Saturday 19 December 2026 to Sunday 3 January 2027 inclusive	
	Monday 4 January 2027	Staff PD Day - Academy closed to all students
Spring Term Begins	Tuesday 5 January 2027	Academy opens for staff and all students
	Friday 12 February 2027	Last day of term - staff and students finish at 3.20 pm
Spring Half Term	Saturday 13 February 2027 to Sunday 21 February 2027 inclusive	
Spring Term Ends	Monday 22 February 2027	Academy opens for staff and all students
	Thursday 25 March 2027	Last day of term - staff and students finish at 3.20 pm
Easter Holidays	Saturday 27 March 2027 to Sunday 11 April 2027 inclusive	
Summer Term Begins	Monday 12 April 2027	Academy opens for staff and all students
Early May Bank Holiday	Monday 3 May 2027	Academy closed for staff and students
	Friday 28 May 2027	Last day of term - staff and students finish at 3.20 pm
Summer Half Term	Saturday 29 May 2027 to Sunday 6 June 2027 inclusive	
Summer Term Ends	Monday 7 June 2027	Academy opens for staff and all students
	Friday 16 July 2027	Last day of term - staff and students finish at 3.20 pm
Summer Holidays		
	* Good Friday 26 March 2027	** Return to school date Monday 6 September 2027 tbc

Year 13 (and 12) Summer Exam Series: Revision and Exam Schedule

Timings	Monday 4 May (Bank Holiday)	Tuesday 5 May	Wednesday 6 May	Thursday 7 May	Friday 8 May
08:00-08:40 Independent revision	N/A	N/A	Computing (Y12)	N/A	N/A
08:40-08:55 Guided revision					
Pre-exam routine	08:55-09:00 Line up outside exam 09:00-09:02 Exam tips talk 09:02-09:05 Enter exam hall 09:05-09:10 Exam talk by invigilator				
09:10 - Exam start	N/A	N/A	Computing (135min)		
10:10-10:30 - Break					
11:30-12:15 Revision session (changes to P3)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
12:15-12:57 Lunch					
Pre-exam routine	13:00-13:05 Line up outside exam 13:05-13:07 Exam tips talk 13:07-13:10 Enter exam hall 13:10-13:20 Exam invigilator talk				
13:10 - Exam start	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Revision after school - Subject teachers will advise timings	NA	Computing - Speak to subject teachers			English language - Speak to subject teachers

Year 11 Summer Exam Series: Revision and Exam Schedule

Timings	Monday 4 May	Tuesday 5 May	Wednesday 6 May	Thursday 7 May	Friday 8 May
08:00-08:40 Independent revision	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
08:40-08:55 Guided revision					
Pre-exam routine	08:55-09:00 Line up outside exam 09:00-09:02 Exam tips talk 09:02-09:05 Enter exam hall 09:05-09:10 Exam talk by invigilator				
09:10 - Exam start	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
10:10-10:30 - Morning Break					
Arrangements after exam	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
11:30-12:15 Revision session (changes to P3)	N/A	N/A	N/A	German MFL30 - Mrs Morton	Drama PA11 - Mrs Wilson
12:15-12:57 Lunch					
Pre-exam routine	13:00-13:05 Line up outside exam 13:05-13:07 Exam tips talk 13:07-13:10 Enter exam hall 13:10-13:20 Exam invigilator talk				
13:10 - Exam start	N/A	N/A	N/A	German Listening/Reading (Foundation) - 80 mins German Listening/Reading (Higher) - 105 mins	Drama (written) - 105/132 mins
Arrangements after exam		N/A	N/A	80 mins - To go to the remainder of P5 105 mins - To go to the year base for the remainder of P5	105 mins - To go to the year base for the remainder of P5 132 mins - To go to English revision
15:20-16:20	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	English Literature Paper 1 - Students to go to their assigned English class

Calendar Dates and Upcoming Events for the Summer Term

Date	Event
Thursday 30 April	Year 12 UCAS launch event for year 12 students, parents and carers. 5pm – 6.45pm (in-person event)
Monday 4 April	Bank Holiday Monday – School closed to staff and students
Friday 1 May to Wednesday 24 June	GCSE and A Level external exams
Friday 22 May	Last day of term for staff and students – school finishes as normal at 3.20pm for May half term holiday week
Monday 1 June	Staff and students return to school at 8.40am
Thursday 25 June	New Intake Parents Evening for students joining us in year 7 in September 2026
Saturday 27 June	Year 13 Prom – Copthorne Hotel, Newcastle
Tuesday 30 June to Wednesday 1 July	Transition days for students joining us in year 7 in September
Wednesday 1 to Friday 3 July	Year 9 – Lockerbie Educational Visit
Monday 6 to Friday 10 July	Year 12 Work Experience
Monday 6 July	Staff professional development day – academy open to staff only
Monday 6 July	Year 7 Awards Evening – 5.30 to 6.30pm
Tuesday 7 July	Year 8 Awards Evening – 5.30 to 6.30pm
Wednesday 8 July	Year 9 Awards Evening – 5.30 to 6.30pm
Thursday 9 July	Year 10 Awards Evening – 5.30 to 6.30pm
Friday 10 July	Year 11 Prom - Ramside Hall, Durham
Monday 13 July	Year 12 Awards Evening – 5.30 to 6.30pm
Tuesday 14 to Wednesday 15 July	London Theatre Educational Visit
Wednesday 15 July	Sports Day – Whole school
Friday 17 July	Last day of term for staff and students – school finishes as normal at 3.20pm for summer holidays
Tuesday 1 September 2026	Staff professional development day – academy open to staff only
Wednesday 2 September 2026	Staff and students return to school at 8.40am