



Parent Bulletin

Principal **Dr A T Fowler**

Issue 37: w/c Monday 6 July 2026 – Week 2

Dear Parents and Carers

It has been wonderful to welcome our new students to Lord Lawson on Tuesday and Wednesday this week for our Transition Days. This is another big year group for us, and we were delighted to see so many of them start to get to know one another and to get to know their new school. Our year 8 and year 9 peer mentors accompanied them for the two days, and I want to thank them for the excellent example they have set. On behalf of our new students, I want to thank Mrs Jacobson and Miss Cooper for organising a superb programme for them, and to thank the team of tutors for making such a good start with their new classes.

At the end of their two transition days at Lord Lawson, Mrs Jacobson and I asked our new students what they had enjoyed most about their time. They were keen to tell us that they have enjoyed:

- Making new friends
- Meeting the teachers
- The food!
- The different subjects
- Science!
- How kind everyone is.

What a great start to their school careers at Lord Lawson! Many of these students will be attending a week of summer school here, before they all start with us on 2 September.

I need to remind everyone that school is closed to students this Monday, 6 July. This is not in response to the timing of England's world cup football match (!), but because we have a professional development day for our staff. Mr Dicocco and I will give you further information about what we have discussed and the training we have delivered in next week's bulletin. School is open again as usual on Tuesday 7 July. We are, however, open for the Year 7 Awards Evening on Monday 6 July.

As I write this letter, a substantial number of our year 9 students are enjoying a residential visit to an outdoor education centre in Lockerbie, in southern Scotland. They are due to return later this afternoon. We are grateful to our school staff and the centre staff for giving them such a good experience there, and we look forward to hearing their stories when they return to school on Tuesday.

Finally, we look forward to seeing many of you at our Awards Evenings next week, to celebrate progress and attainment.

With all best wishes,

Dr Andrew Fowler
Principal

Requests for Student Absence During Term Time

I am writing to remind all families of the expectations around school attendance, particularly in relation to requests for leave of absence during term time.

At Lord Lawson of Beamish Academy, we are committed to ensuring that all students attend school regularly so they can achieve their full potential. Regular attendance is essential for academic progress, wellbeing and maintaining positive routines. We are currently receiving a significant number of requests for leave of absence during term time, particularly for holidays. I would like to take this opportunity to clarify the school's position, which is based on national guidance.

The Department for Education's statutory guidance (*Working together to improve school attendance*, August 2024) and current legislation state that:

“Headteachers may not grant leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.”

Furthermore, the guidance is explicit that:

“Generally, the DfE does not consider a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance.”

This means that:

- Leave for the purpose of a holiday will not be authorised
- Requests will only be considered in truly exceptional circumstances
- Any request must be made in advance via our leave of absence form and supported by appropriate evidence

Where leave is not authorised and a student is taken out of school, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. This may result in a referral to the Local Authority and the issuing of a Penalty Notice (fine).

We understand that families value time together and we strongly encourage parents and carers to plan holidays during the published school holiday periods, of which there are 175 days each year outside of term time.

As a school, we will continue to support families where there are genuine and exceptional circumstances affecting attendance. If you believe your situation meets this threshold, please contact us to discuss your circumstances **before** making any arrangements.

Thank you for your continued support in ensuring that all students attend school regularly and make the most of their education.

Mr I Cooper
Deputy Principal

GCSE Geography Fieldtrip – Seaham, 18 September 2026

Our AQA geography specification requires students to collect geographical data as part of students' geography paper 3 in next year's GCSE exam series, which is worth 30% of students' final geography grade.

To facilitate this, all current year 10 geography students will be visiting Seaham on Friday 18 September 2026, to complete their data collection as part of their GCSE geography qualification. Parents and carers of students who are currently studying geography in year 10 have already received information and forms regarding this, via ClassCharts and forms taken home by students. As this visit is a requirement of their GCSE course, there is no cost to students.

Students will collect data on Seaham beach for their physical geography, and then visit Seaham town centre to collect data for their human geography. Students and parents/carers have received a detailed breakdown of all activities that students are undertaking on the day. If you need any further information about this visit, please direct your query to your child's geography teacher.

All students will be in non-uniform for the day, but must wear appropriate clothing for walking on sand, pebbles and footpaths; therefore, no open-toed sandals, Crocs or sliders will be permitted. A full list of clothing and required equipment was included in the forms and ClassCharts message previously sent to parents.

Timings for the normal school-day remain. Students should attend tutor as normal in the morning, and we will return in time for the 3:20pm scholars' bus services. Students must either bring a packed lunch, or money to buy something in Seaham from a local shop/cafe. If students receive free school meals, you will have already made us aware on your reply slip/forms that a packed lunch is required from the school catering team for them.

Thank you, and please join me in hoping for good weather on the day.

Mr M Surtees
Subject Leader - Geography

Lost Property

On Friday 17 July, school will close to students at 3.20pm and, with the exception of results days, will not be open to students again until Wednesday 2 September 2026.

Any lost property items not collected by Friday 17 July will be disposed of on the first Monday of the holidays i.e. 20 July 2026.

Mrs S Wakefield
Office Manager

A Level and GCSE Results Days – 2026

Year 13: Thursday 13 August 2026 – results will be available for students to collect in the main hall from **8:30am**. Staff will be on hand to celebrate the hard work of our students, and to give advice and support around destinations for higher education and life beyond Lord Lawson.

Year 11: Thursday 20 August 2026 – results will be available in the main hall from **9am**. Staff will be on hand to celebrate the hard work of our year 11 students.

Sixth Form staff will be available to enrol year 11 students into Lord Lawson sixth form. Staff from our Careers Team will also be on hand to offer advice beyond life at Lord Lawson.

Mrs J Laidlaw
Assistant Principal – Head of Sixth Form

Dr. Bike

Next week, on Thursday 9 of July, we will be hosting representatives in-school from Dr. Bike and Walk Wheel Cycle Trust, who will be providing a free health assessment on the bikes of year 7 and 8 students, who have previously advised us they wish to benefit from this free service.

Where possible, the team will also perform minor repairs on the bikes – again this service is being provided for free.

Students involved are required to bring their bikes to school on the morning of 9 July. Students will be advised as to where they should leave their bikes and where they can collect them at the end of the day.

The list of students who have expressed an interest in taking advantage of this offer can be found below. Any parent/carer who does NOT want their child to bring their bike into school on the day and participate in this service, please advise me by Wednesday 8 July via email at: cbramley@lordlawsonacademy

If your child's names is not on the list below but you feel this is something you (and they) would be interested in, please advise me by email and I will ensure they are added to a list for any such future opportunities.

Miss C Bramley

Subject Leader – Personal Development

Forename	Surname	Tutor Group	Year Group
James	Ashett	7SFR	7
George	Beattie	7SFR	7
Will	Brooks	7JBA	7
West	Chloe	7DM	7
Zak	Dunning	7JSL	7
Ayaan	Hussain	7FR	7
Connor	Johnson	7CCM	7
Archer	McGill	7JSL	7
Jotham	Muguti	7SFR	7
Mason	Snowball	7JBA	7
Jack	Tiffen	7JBA	7
Alfie	Topp	7SFR	7
Will	Sybenga	7DM	7
Leila	Witherspoon	7FR	7
Land	Ahmad	8JDN	8
Josh	Bainbridge	8CDI	8
Robin	Brandes	8MS	8
Dean	Dimmick	8JDN	8
Bentley	Fletcher	8LR	8
Harry	Forsyth	8MS	8
Charlie	Glister	8ACN	8
Jayden	Kane	8MS	8
Jay	Kirsopp	8MS	8
Charlie	Mckenzie	8LR	8
Elliott	Smith	8MS	8
Archie	Stewart	8JDN	8

Year 10: Attendance World Cup!

As our year 10 students come to the end of their mock examinations and ready themselves for the start of their year 11 journey, it is a good time to remind everyone of the importance of attendance to school and lessons.

Tutor groups are competing daily to achieve the best attendance for their year group, with points being awarded for the tutor group with the highest weekly attendance, and the tutor group with the most improved attendance from the previous week.

The league table (see below) is updated weekly over the final weeks of the academic year. The winning tutor group will be awarded the prestigious 'Attendance World Cup' trophy, along with some incredibly impressive prizes!

For any attendance or pastoral support in Year 10, please contact Year Leader Mr Cumiskey at lcumiskey@lordlawson.academy or Deputy Year Leader Miss Harrison at aharrison@lordlawson.academy.

As always, thank you to all parents and carers for their continued support.

Mr L Cumiskey
Year Leader

YEAR 10 ATTENDANCE WORLD CUP		
BE IN TO WIN!		
MATCH WEEK 4 OF 7		
1	10SMS	7
2	10ACL	7
3	10ARE	7
4	10JBM	3
5	10BC	3
6	10LCR	3
7	10SHE	2
8	10PWE	2
BEST WEEKLY ATTENDANCE = 3 POINTS . IMPROVED WEEKLY ATTENDANCE = 1 POINT		



Online Safety Newsletter

July 2026

Social media to be banned for under-16s

The government has announced that social media platforms will be blocked from offering services to under-16s from next Spring. The ban will include platforms like Snapchat, TikTok, YouTube, Instagram, Facebook and X.

Furthermore, there will also be blocks on live streaming and communication with strangers (these restrictions will also apply to 16 and 17-year-olds) and the government will also be looking at overnight curfews and breaks in infinite scrolling.

You can read the Government's press release here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/social-media-to-be-banned-for-under-16s-in-landmark-government-move-to-givekids-their-childhood-back>

In addition, you can find some FAQs here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fact-sheet-new-rules-to-protect-children-online/fact-sheet-new-rules-to-protect-children-online>

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

WhatsApp

We frequently receive reports of children using WhatsApp inappropriately, such as sharing images to embarrass others, sending hurtful messages, spreading rumours, or excluding people from group chats to make them feel left out. It is important to think about whether WhatsApp is the right platform for your child. For example, you should consider if your child has the critical thinking skills to recognise bullying and can they manage peer pressure and refrain from joining in on hurtful behaviour?

Users should be at least 13 years old to use WhatsApp. 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>

What should I be aware of if my child is using WhatsApp?

- **Group chats:** Everyone within a group, even if they are not one of your child's contacts, can see all messages within that group.
- **Inappropriate content:** users can be exposed to content that is not suitable for their age.
- **Location sharing:** talk to your child about the potential danger of sharing their location.
- **Chat lock/secret code:** users can lock chats as well as apply a secret code setting, so a chat does not appear in the main chat.
- **Screentime due to addictive nature**
- **AI:** WhatsApp includes Meta AI including Incognito Chat with Meta AI so nobody (including Meta) can read your conversations.

What can I do?

- Check privacy settings e.g. who can add them to groups.
- Ensure your child understands that they can leave a chat at any time. Find out more here: <https://faq.whatsapp.com/424124173736394>
- Show your child how to block and report other users. Find out how here: <https://faq.whatsapp.com/1142481766359885/>
- Set up appropriate parental controls.
- Talk about who they are chatting with, encourage them to think carefully about the messages they send and how they might be received.
- Chat to your child about the groups that they belong to.

Further information

- <https://parentzone.org.uk/article/whatsapp>
- <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/social-media/chat-apps/>

Livestreaming

What is livestreaming?

Livestreaming is when an individual broadcasts video live over the internet. People can watch livestreams from any device that is connected to the internet.

What are the risks?

There are risks associated with watching livestreams that you should be aware of. The main risk being that your child may see or hear something inappropriate as your child may come across themes or content that is not suitable for them. It is difficult to moderate live content as it is happening in real time.

How can I help my child?

- All online platforms have an age rating, ensure your child only accesses platforms that are appropriate to their age. For example, TikTok has an age rating of 13.
- For any platforms that your child uses, ensure appropriate parental controls and privacy settings are applied.
- Take an interest in what your child is doing online and on a regular basis, ask your child to show you what they are accessing.
- Ensure your child knows how to use any reporting/blocking tools on the app that they are using and as always please ensure that your child knows to talk to a trusted adult if they see anything that concerns them online.

Further information

- <https://www.childnet.com/help-and-advice/livestreaming-parents/>
- <https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/articles/what-is-live-streaming/>



Zangi Private Messenger

Although we always recommend checking age ratings, it is important to remember that a low app-store rating does not mean it is risk free for your child to use. Zangi has a low age rating, but because it is a private, messaging app, you should be aware of the potential safeguarding concerns.

Zangi allows users to send messages and make calls without using their personal phone number or inputting any other information on registration. Instead, on sign up, users are given a Zangi number, which they must share with others before they can be contacted. The app also uses end-to-end encryption, meaning messages are private.

These privacy features can make it harder for you to know who your child is communicating with. A particular concern would be if a child is encouraged to move a conversation from another app, game or social media platform onto Zangi, especially if that person is a stranger.

The usual risks with messaging apps also exist as outlined in our WhatsApp article overleaf.

Zangi also has a premium service available at £5.49 per month, which offers features such as PIN protected, hidden chats.

We would recommend having clear rules in place if you are allowing the use of messaging apps. Consider creating a family agreement as outlined here: <https://www.internetmatters.org/resources/digital-family-agreement-template/>

Instagram: New supervision tool

You must be over 13 years of age to set up an account. Instagram is used to post photos and videos as well as send direct messages, make voice/video calls, and send disappearing messages.

Instagram have introduced a new supervision tool allowing parents/carers to view the general topics their child is engaging in. Find out more here: <https://about.fb.com/news/2026/05/new-supervision-tools-parents-insights-teens-algorithm/>

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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

Calendar Dates and Upcoming Events for the Summer Term

Date	Event
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 (Please note this is a training Day for staff and students will NOT be in school during the day. They must attend the evening in full uniform)
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
Thursday 13 August	A level Results day (further information will be provided nearer the time)
Thursday 20 August	GCSE Results day (further information will be provided nearer the time)
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