

# Parent Bulletin

Week commencing Monday 6 November 2023 – Week 1

Dear Parents and Carers

At the end of a long half term, I want to congratulate you and your children on so many successes. It has not been an easy half term for many of us, with bus strikes and adverse weather, but we have been able to continue with our improvements to the quality of education we offer your child.

This letter will be slightly longer than usual, because there are several topics I want to include.

At the start of the academic year, we introduced three new initiatives, aimed at improving culture and engagement across the academy. Our first change was to ask students to make the transition from one lesson to the next in less time: four minutes maximum. I am pleased to say that the large majority of students are managing this, almost all of the time. The difference this makes, in terms of the settled start to lessons and the amount of gained learning time, is immense. Compared with the previous average transition time of around 8 minutes, to start in well under four minutes means that students have 20 minutes more lesson time each day. Putting it another way, our students have already gained the equivalent of more than 12½ hours of lesson time this academic year – that's equal to 2½ whole school days extra already! Congratulations to all students for helping us to make this significant change and thank you for supporting us with this.

Our second innovation was the introduction of STAR to improve habits of attention. STAR stands for Sit up, Track the speaker, Appreciate what has just been said, and Rephrase. These simple routines help all students to attend more closely to the teaching and instructions they are given, and to engage more thoroughly with their fellow students in discussions and class work. In addition, because all staff are using the same terms, students do not have to think about and 'translate' different teachers' terms for the same instruction. This reduces their cognitive load and enables them to devote more attention to their learning. So far, 'S' and 'T' are working well, and we are further developing the use of 'A' and 'R'. Subject Leaders and Year Leaders are carrying out learning walks across the academy to quality assure the use of STAR and the ways in which it improves students' habits of attention.

Thirdly, where appropriate in lessons, we introduced the expectation of periods of silent working, to enable students to focus on their work without interruptions. Again, this expectation is going well, with larger subjects such as English and Mathematics leading the way. Silent working only works, of course, when students fully understand what they need to do, so we have continued to develop our staff training programme in offering explicit instruction and checking for understanding.

Silent working means that the student is silent and focused on their work. This still applies in practical subjects, where there may be noise from machines, instruments and activities, but levels of student focus are still high.

Through the introduction and embedding of these three initiatives this year, we intend to continue our improvements to teaching and learning at Lord Lawson. Your children are already benefiting greatly from the calmer and more engaged culture in the school.

This half term has featured three particularly high-profile events, showcasing different aspects of the school. Our Open Evening for prospective Year 7 students involved almost a quarter of our current students, presenting to parents/carers and children, acting as guides and working in departments. Attendance at this event was extremely high, and this high level of interest in the school has continued since. The deadline for choosing Year 7 places for entry in September 2024, is Tuesday 31 October 2023.

On Monday this week, we held our charity football match, *United Against Knife Crime*, organised by Mr Cumiskey, Mrs Bell and the friends of the murdered teenager Tomasz Oleszak. The event was held close to what would have been Tomasz's sixteenth birthday. We had an excellent turnout, and £1,300 was raised for the charity Samantha's Legacy, which helps victims of knife crime and their families.

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Before I turn to our final event this half term, a word about buses. We are hugely appreciative of the efforts of Go North East and its drivers to maintain and protect the scholars' bus service during weeks of industrial action. We do understand that bus drivers take industrial action only as a last resort. At times, there have been delays and cancellations to scholars' services, and these have been difficult to manage, but the majority of students who depend on the scholars' services have been able to get to school and back. Those who are dependent on service buses, however, have not been so fortunate. We have used our school minibus to help as many students as possible – and thank you to parents for your emails and letters of appreciation – but I am acutely aware that we have not been able to help everyone.

This week I met with Victoria Cramman, the newly appointed Strategic Lead for Educational Services at Gateshead Council, to tell her about the disruption and difficulty experienced by many of our students and their families because of the bus drivers' strike. I was able to quantify this difficulty in terms of days of learning missed and costs incurred. I was also able to give Victoria first-hand accounts of frustration and difficulty from staff members, students and their parents. We understand that an improved pay offer has been put to union members, and we hope for a swift resolution of this dispute. As I write to you on the afternoon of Friday 27 October, however, I have seen press reports that industrial action has not been called off, and that indefinite strike action by drivers has been threatened. Our information so far is that scholars' bus services will continue to run.

Finally, our academy production of *Shrek the Musical, Junior* has been playing these last four nights. This show has been a sensational success. I have been present at three of the performances. It has been good to see so many of you at our sell-out performances, and I know you will join me in applauding the talent and dedication of so many students and staff, who have been involved in putting on this wonderful production. The closing message of *Shrek* is inspiring and inclusive. As the characters celebrate their differences, they sing, "what makes us special makes us strong: we are different – and united." It's a great message for our inclusive school. The *Shrek* cast's message echoes the words of the late Jo Cox MP, who said, "While we celebrate our diversity, what surprises me time and time again is that we are far more united and have far more in common with each other than things that divide us."

These are messages our divided world needs to hear from each of us. When we live out values like this, we believe we can make the world a better place.

With all good wishes for the half term break,

Yours faithfully

***Andrew Fowler***  
***Principal***

### **School Bus Services**

We have heard from Go North East that they expect to run all school bus services after half term. Go North East has told us that "in the event there are any issues we will be in direct contact with the affected school from first thing in the morning." Please assume that all school bus services will run, unless you hear otherwise from us. The fastest way for school to communicate with parents and carers is via the school website: [Homepage - Lord Lawson Academy](#)

***Mr Fowler***  
***Principal***

## **Important Reminders for Return to School: Monday 6 November 2023**

Today is our last day in school before the half term October break, which I am sure we are all looking forward to. I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your support over this half term in relation to uniform, attendance and punctuality.

To ensure we begin the new term on a strong footing, I would like to remind all parents and carers of our expectations of students on their return on Monday 6 November.

### **Attendance and Punctuality**

- Students must be on the school site for 8.45am each morning
- Any absences must be reported directly to the absence line (0191) 4334026; absences must be reported daily. Absences must not be reported to the year base
- Appointments for doctors/dentists etc., should be taken outside of the school day where possible – when an appointment in school time is needed, a letter should be sent in with child to be given to the attendance office. You may also e-mail any appointment slips to our attendance team at: [StudentAbsence@lordlawson.academy](mailto:StudentAbsence@lordlawson.academy)
- Students who are leaving site during the school day must have an exit slip to present to reception, which they will need to collect from the attendance team or their year team, before they are allowed to leave school. Students should keep the exit slip with them during school hours when they have exited the building, to show as proof if they are challenged as to why they are not in school.
- Parents/carers should not arrive in school to collect students for any appointment without first advising the year team or attendance team.

### **Uniform**

Any parent or carer who is unsure of our uniform requirements can visit our Uniform Policy on the school website. We have had an increased number of students forgetting ties this term. You can purchase ties from The School Outfitters. Alternatively you can purchase a tie from school at a cost of £6 each.

### **Jewellery**

On return to school in November, students must remember that any false nails or eyelashes should be removed before their return. If an appointment is needed to affect this, we ask you to ensure it is booked in advance.

With exceptions, students should wear no items of jewellery. The excerpt from our uniform policy below highlights what is allowed:

*“ a watch, and one plain ear stud in each earlobe only. Ear studs should not contain diamonds, crystals, or other types of decorative materials. They should also be round in shape/design. No other facial or body piercings are allowed in school, including eyebrow studs, nose studs and tongue piercings. This is for health and safety reasons. Rings, necklaces, bracelets, anklets, or any other items of jewellery are not permitted. Students will be asked to remove these items or any other type of jewellery, if worn. If students are unable or unwilling to remove the jewellery, they will be taught in the Learning Support Room (LSR) or in isolation, at the direction of senior members of staff.”*

Thank you once again for your continued support. Enjoy your half term.

**Mr I Cooper**  
**Deputy Principal**

## Year 7 to year 11: English Homework

After the half-term break, all English homework for KS3 and KS4 students will be set using the online homework platform, Educake.

The platform is designed to promote independent learning through structured quizzes that test students recall of prior learning and consolidate skills taught in class, and can be accessed via the following link:

<https://www.educake.co.uk/>

All students have had an email to their school email address with details of how to access Educake. Student logins and passwords have been set so that they are the same login and password details that students use to login to the computers in school. All homework will be recorded on ClassCharts as normal.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me on [cbeck@lordlawson.academy](mailto:cbeck@lordlawson.academy) and I will be happy to help.

**Ms C Beck**

**Associate Senior Leader – English and Literacy**

## Anti-Bullying Week

This year, Lord Lawson of Beamish Academy will once again support national Anti-Bullying Week. There will be a number of events throughout the week to raise awareness about bullying and opportunities for students to make voluntary donations, which will go to The Anti-Bullying Alliance.

Anti-Bullying Week will commence on Monday 13 November and will begin with Odd Socks Day, which is an opportunity for students to have a bit of fun and celebrate the idea that we are all unique individuals. A timetable for the week of activities can be found below.

Please encourage your child to participate as we celebrate together as a community.

Thank you

**Miss K Barron**

**Teacher of English and Anti-bullying Lead**



## Anti-bullying week timeline 13th-17th November

There are many ways that you can get involved with anti-bullying week

MONDAY 13th NOVEMBER	TUESDAY 14 <sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER	WEDNESDAY 15 <sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER	THURSDAY 16 <sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER	FRIDAY 17 <sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER
Make a noise about bullying				
	Pay it forwards	Craft fair and cake sale	Tutor reading- Famous authors making a noise about bullying	 How would you make a noise about bullying?

### **School Photograph Orders**

A reminder for any parent or carer who wishes to purchase their child's school photographs, to qualify for the discount and free delivery to school on your order, these must be submitted to Focal Point by no later than Sunday 5 November 2023.

Any orders received by Focal Point after this date will be charged at full price and will incur postage fees.

If you require your child's access code, please email [admin@lordlawson.academy](mailto:admin@lordlawson.academy) by no later than Wednesday 1 November 2023.

*Mrs S Spraggon*  
*PA to SLT*

### **Year 7 Success**

One of our year 7 students, Bridget Edworthy, competed in the British Championships 2023 (Blackpool Sequence Festival), last weekend, against the best dancers from across the country.

Bridget danced in four sections and reached the finals in all areas, securing a 2<sup>nd</sup> place in the juvenile solo 2 dance event, two 3<sup>rd</sup> place and one 6<sup>th</sup> place result in the remaining 3.

These results are the outcome of hard work and dedication by Bridget, and we are so proud of her achievement.

Well done, Bridget!

*Mrs L Whitehead*  
*Tutor – 7LWD*

### **Ski Trip 2024**

We will be holding a ski trip information evening on Thursday 9 November 2023, for parents of students who are joining us on the trip in 2024. The event will take place in the main hall of the school and will start promptly at 5.30pm.

As well as finding out further details about 'Ski 2024' and being able to ask any questions you may have, there will be an opportunity to meet staff who will be accompanying the students on the trip. We do not anticipate that the meeting will last longer than an hour. However, it is important that all parents, and students if they wish, attend this meeting, as there will be paperwork to check and sign.

*Mrs S Hulme*  
*Trip Leader*

### **Year 7 Bookbuzz**

Bookbuzz has been a great asset to year 7 students here at Lord Lawson Academy for a number of years now, and this year we have once again invested in the programme led by the Book Trust, the UK's largest Reading Charity, sharing in their ethos of inspiring a love of reading for pleasure in children and teens.

Students in year 7 have been provided with a free book from a selection of 16 titles especially selected by The Book Trust. This book is theirs to enjoy and to keep. Students were helped in making their selection by watching the 'Bookbuzz Film', and, after a short wait, the eagerly anticipated books have arrived in the academy and are now being distributed to classes.

We will always purchase enough books for every student in year 7, including those who have been absent. If your child has not yet received a book, please ask them to speak with Miss Dixon in the Library.

For more information on Bookbuzz and some great ideas for reading for pleasure, please visit:

<https://www.booktrust.org.uk/what-we-do/programmes-and-campaigns/bookbuzz/>

Happy reading, year 7!

*Miss B Dixon*  
*Librarian*

### **After School Library Opening Times**

Our library is open after school to facilitate independent learning and homework. Students are welcome to join us at the following times:

Monday to Thursday: 3:20pm – 4:15pm

Friday: 3:20pm – 4:00pm

*Miss B Dixon*  
*Librarian*

### **Road Safety**

On our return in November, any parent/carer or visitor to school travelling by car, will notice the addition of speed bumps.

We have added these traffic calming measures to three areas of our roadways, where the number of pedestrians (staff, students, etc.) can be high.

*Mr D Willis*  
*Site Manager*

## **Personal Development**

It is my pleasure to be able to share our Personal Development curriculum with you.

At Lord Lawson of Beamish Academy, we are extremely proud of our Personal Development curriculum. All lessons are fully aligned with Department For Education (DFE) statutory guidance as well as having a clear focus and link to local needs. I would like to encourage you to have conversations with your child around the topics delivered in Personal Development, it is important that all students are fully aware of their upcoming lesson due to the sensitive nature of some topics.

Personal Development is taught once a fortnight in KS3 and KS4. Students study five themes in Personal Development and I have attached an image of the curriculum later in this bulletin for your reference.

Please contact me on [lcumiskey@lordlawson.academy](mailto:lcumiskey@lordlawson.academy) if you have any Personal Development related questions.

**Mr L Cumiskey**  
**Personal Development Coordinator**

## **Book of Remembrance**

Our Book of Remembrance will be displayed in school from next Monday. This is a place for anyone within the school community to have someone remembered at our Service or Remembrance on Friday 10 November.

Students are welcome to write in the book which will be placed in the Atrium outside the main hall. Alternatively, you can email details to me at [jkemp@lordlawson.academy](mailto:jkemp@lordlawson.academy) and I will update the book on your behalf. Please include as much information as possible, including name, rank, service number, information about their service (such as where and when they died if they were killed in action, campaigns they were involved in, heroic actions or other notable details).

With thanks

***Mrs J Kemp***  
***Remembrance Coordinator***





## Shrek Performance

Once upon a time at Lord Lawson of Beamish Academy, 65 fairy tale students performed Shrek The Musical Junior to four sold out audiences, and as an Academy we could not be more proud. Congratulations to all of the cast who worked tirelessly to create a magical and heart-warming show.

Thank you to the Performing Arts team, especially Martin Warden and Gray Saunders from Hi-lights for the dedication and passion which made our show so professional and with such attention to detail.

Thank you to staff who supported the event, to parents and carers for their encouragement towards rehearsals and show week, and to our wonderful audiences; you created an electric atmosphere making us excited and proud to perform for you all.

A huge team effort all round, I hope that everyone is proud of the achievements that prove, *'together we grow, learn and succeed'*.

You have all been SHREKTACULAR!

Wishing you a restful half term. Performers, we will see you on Wednesday 8 November, 3.20 – 5pm, for a Shrek celebration and to launch our Christmas show.

Thank you

**Miss S Brown**

**Subject Leader – Performing Arts**





## Upcoming School Events

At the beginning of every term, we will publish a list of upcoming school events in this bulletin. Communication of some events, such as Parents' Evenings, will also be communicated separately via email, so please ensure you look out for these.

The events for this term are:

**Saturday 28 October to  
Sunday 5 November:**

**Half Term – School closed for staff and students.**

**Monday 6 November:**

**School reopens for staff and students – students to be in school for 8.40am.**

**Monday 6 to Friday 17  
November:**

**Autumn Assessments for years 11 and 13.**

**Thursday 16 November:**

**Year 12 Parents' Evening, 3.45 – 6.15pm – Appointments will be online.**

**Friday 24 November:**

**Occasional Day – School closed for staff and students. School will reopen for staff and students Monday 27 November.**

**Tuesday 28 November:**

**Careers Fair (all year groups) throughout the school day.**

**Tuesday 5 December:**

**Flu Vaccinations for years 7 to 11.**

**Thursday 7 December:**

**Sixth Form Open Evening, 5.00 to 7.00pm – for students considering their post-16 options and future academic pathways.**

**Thursday 14 December:**

**Year 7 – Pantomime at Theatre Royal Newcastle: Pinocchio.**

**Year 13 Parents' Evening, 3.45 – 6.15pm – Appointments will be online.**

**Friday 22 December:**

**Last day of school for staff and students – Christmas holidays begin Saturday 23 December. School reopens for all students on Monday 8 January 2024.**



# Personal Development Curriculum 2023 - 2024



Please speak to your PD teacher if you have any questions about your upcoming lessons

Lesson	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11
1	(A) The Importance of Laws and Rules	(A) Understanding Good Behaviour	(A) Tackling SEND Discrimination	(A) Local Elections	(A) My Powerful Voice (Voting and General Elections and Sexual Pressure)
2	Taking Pride in My Work	We Say No to Racism	We Say No to Prejudism	Tackling Hate Crime	(A) British Values - Culture and Identity
3	How to Use My Powerful Voice	Sexual Orientation	Celebrating Pride	(A) British Values - Culture and Identity	(A) Volunteering
4	The Equality Act 2010	Gender Identity	(A) British Values - Culture and Identity	The Equality Act 2010 and Employability	Further Education
5	Stereotyping, Discrimination and Prejudice	Why Can't Some People Access Education?	(A) Future Finances	Career Interests and Job Ideas	Revision Skills
6	(A) British Values - Culture and Identity	(A) British Values - Culture and Identity	GCSE Options	Revision Skills	(A) Interview Preparation
7	(A) Anti-Bullying	(A) Sexual Abuse and Harassment	(A) Future Careers	Further Education	(A) Grief and Bereavement
8	Peer Pressure and Influence	Dealing with Conflict	(A) Online Grooming and Bullying	(A) Managing Stress of School and Exams	Self-Harm Prevention
9	(A) Staying Safe Online	(A) Causes and Effects of Cybercrime	Body Image	Eating Disorders	Suicide Prevention
10	(A) Self Belief	(A) My Life Ambitions	County Lines - The Law	Managing Social Anxiety	(A) Cancer and Self-Examination
11	(A) Careers and My Future	How Can I Become An Entrepreneur?	Extremist Groups	(A) Basic First Aid	(A) Peer Pressure (Drugs, Smoking and Alcohol)
12	(A) Family Relationships	(A) Saving and Managing My Money	(A) Sharing Sexual Images and Pornography	Anti-Social Behaviour	(A) The Dark Web (Including Gambling and Pornography)
13	Healthy Relationships	(A) Healthy Relationships (on and offline)	(A) What is Love?	Knife Crime and Gangs	(A) Intimate and Sexual Relationships
14	(A) FGM (Female Genital Mutilation)	Managing Broken Relationships	My Body, My Choice	(A) My Digital Footprint and Online Safety	Consent, Rape and Sexual Harassment L1
15	(A) Understanding Puberty	(A) What is Contraception?	Teamwork and Communication Skills	(A) Consent	(A) Consent, Rape and Sexual Harassment L2
16	Healthy Diet	(A) Periods and Menstrual Cycle	(A) Understanding Safe Sex	Religion and Marriage	
17	Active Lifestyle	Drugs - The Law	(A) The Dangers of Drugs	Toxic Relationships	
18	Mental Health	Smoking and Alcohol	Mental Health (How can I help someone?)	Domestic Abuse	
19	Understanding My Emotions	Mental Health - Anxiety and Depression	Understanding Self-harm	Understanding STIs	
20	(A) Hygiene and Germs - Including Vaccination and Dental Care	(A) What is 'Self Love'?	(A) Positive Thinking	(A) Parenthood	

(A) = Assessment

= Values

= Staying Safe

= Careers and My Future

= Relationships and Sex Education

= Health and Wellbeing