

Parent Bulletin

Week commencing Monday 15 January 2024 – Week 1

Dear Parents and Carers

Happy New Year to you all! I hope you enjoyed a good time with your families and friends over the Christmas and New Year period. I know that many of you will have been working for at least some of the time that your children were off school - thank you for keeping our local businesses, healthcare and support services going during this important time.

It has been good to see our students make such a good start to the new year and new term. This is an important term for all students. For those in years 11 and 13, there will be the Spring Assessments later in the term. Some of our students in year 13 will also take exams over the next few weeks that are part of their final assessments. We continue to support these students with our wraparound care for examinations, including additional sessions close to the examination, breakfast on the day of the exam, and guidance from their subject teachers.

For students in other year groups, this term offers the opportunity to build on the knowledge and understanding they gained last term and to make real strides forwards in their confidence as they apply their learning to new contexts. The lengthening hours of daylight offer the opportunity to play after-school sporting fixtures outdoors once more.

I now need to mention a less pleasant topic. The large majority of our parents and carers treat school staff with respect and courtesy, and I thank you for this. In common with many other professions and public services, however, we are facing an increase in aggressive and unacceptable behaviour towards staff. We understand that sometimes parents and carers can be frustrated – by the behaviour of their children, for example, or when it is initially difficult to get immediate answers to enquiries. However, it is never acceptable for parents and carers to become aggressive or disrespectful towards members of school staff. Such behaviour cannot be tolerated. Respect is one of our school's core values, and I must insist that our staff are treated with respect. The school is bringing together an Acceptable Behaviour Policy, which I will distribute in due course.

Please note the following points:

- We welcome parents and carers to our school, and we very much enjoy meeting you. Our partnership is essential to the education of your child. However, because we are a large and busy school, **it is not possible to offer appointments to parents and carers on demand**. If you come to the school reception without making an appointment or without an invitation, it is highly likely that you will not be able to speak to a particular member of staff.
- **Please speak in a calm and respectful manner to any member of staff**, whether in person or on the phone. Any difficulties can be resolved with patience. If parents and carers do not conduct themselves in this way, I have instructed my staff to close the conversation.
- Our staff deserve to work in safety. **Physical violence and threatening behaviour will not be tolerated**. I have already had to ban one parent this academic year from visiting the school, owing to their unacceptable behaviour. Threatening and aggressive behaviour will be reported to the Police.

I know that many of you will be shocked that I have to give this advice, because you always give and receive high levels of courtesy. You know how hard our staff work, and how willing they are to resolve any problems that are brought to them. Sadly, this is not the case at all times for everyone. We expect our children to behave with trust and respect, and I know you will support me in modelling these values to all our children. Let us make this new year's resolution together – to treat one another with kindness and consideration, even (especially) when times are difficult.

With all good wishes,

Yours faithfully

Dr Andrew Fowler
Principal

Dr Andrew Fowler

As Deputy Principals, we are delighted to recognise the achievement of our Principal, Andrew Fowler, who has recently been awarded the degree of Doctor of Philosophy by Durham University. At the start of this term, Mr Fowler has therefore become Dr Fowler. This change is reflected on the signs at the school entrance and on our new letterhead.

As you might expect, Dr Fowler's research has been in education, specifically in finding out from students what makes examination questions in mathematics difficult for them. While there has been a substantial amount of research previously into difficulty in examination questions, almost all of this has been from the viewpoint of examiners: very few studies have sought out and analysed students' views, and none have given students' own words the prominence that Dr Fowler has.

Hearing the voices of students is vital for improving our understanding of teaching and learning. It is also a matter of fairness and social justice, values that have informed our Principal's whole approach to education here at Lord Lawson. His insights into student voice and into teaching and learning have already helped to inform staff training and transform the education of children at this school. To have achieved such a high level of academic scholarship whilst also improving a large secondary school and steering our community through COVID shows impressive resilience! We are proud to recognise the example of hard work and scholarship that Dr Fowler has set us all.

Joe Dicocco and Ian Cooper, Deputy Principals

Reminders

In our first parent bulletin of the New Year, I would like to take this opportunity to remind you of a number of items.

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, extension 359; absences must be reported daily. Absences may also be emailed to: studentabsence@lordlawson.academy, but our preference is that you ring in the first instance. 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 your child to be given to the attendance office. You may also e-mail any appointment slips or texts to our attendance team at: 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.

Health Unit

Paracetamol – We do not hold stock of paracetamol (or any pain relief medication) in school. Any parent or carer who is happy for us to hold a stock for their child is able to leave this at main reception in an unopened box, with their child's name and year group clearly marked. This will be stored in the Health Unit for their use.

Thank you as always for your understanding and support; it is greatly appreciated.

Mr I Cooper
Deputy Principal

Year 11: Prospective Sixth Form Applicants

Applications to join our sixth form in September 2024 close at 6pm today, Friday 12 January 2024.

If you are still unsure as to your future post-16 pathway, please look at the information on our website for further information on our sixth form and the application process, using the following link.

[Lord Lawson of Beamish Academy: Sixth Form](#)

Mrs K Kendall
Assistant Principal

Breakfast Fitness Club

From Monday 22 January, the PE department will be introducing a morning fitness club that will take place before school on Monday and Wednesday mornings, from 8.00 to 8.30am.

The sessions will be supervised by and open to the following:

Monday: All year groups – supervised by Mr Wyllie
Wednesday: Year 10 and 11 girls only – supervised by Miss Golby

This is a new initiative to provide students with the opportunity to use our new fitness equipment. We anticipate interest to be high and spaces are limited. Any student wishing to attend these sessions must sign up with the supervising member of staff as soon as possible.

Thank you.

Mr D Wyllie
Subject Leader – PE

Young Carers: Drop In Sessions

If you have a child who helps to look after someone in their family, and you would like them to receive extra support, please inform their year leader or myself and we can refer them to The Carers Trust.

Charlotte Osgerby and Christine Tindale from The Carers Trust host monthly drop-in sessions for our young carers in school, all of which are supported by me.

All the sessions are held on a Wednesday in the small conference room next to the atrium at lunchtime on each of the dates below:

31/01/24

28/02/24

27/03/24

24/04/24

26/06/24

Students must have a pass to attend which they can collect from me and must have this with them to show to staff to access the sessions.

On all other Wednesdays I am available for additional support; I will be based at the far end of the school library.

If you have any questions or would like further information, please do not hesitate to contact me at: mglass@lordlawson.academy and I will be happy to help.

Mrs M Glass

Young Carers Support

Year 8: Homework Support

Completion of homework is important for all students, as it is a way to embed classroom learning to show teachers any gaps they may have about the content they have covered in the class.

To support our year 8 students, we are running a homework support club in the year base on a Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, during morning break.

We encourage any year 8 student to attend to ensure all homework is completed, but any year 8 student who regularly misses homework deadlines is instructed to attend and receive support. Everyone who regularly attends these sessions will be rewarded with a P2 and will have the opportunity to win Amazon vouchers.

Please encourage your child to attend these homework support sessions, especially if they are struggling, to ensure all homework is completed. Students who continue to miss homework deadlines will soon be placed on homework report and parents/carers will be invited to attend a supportive meeting in school.

If you require Class Chart login details, please contact me at lcumiskey@lordlawson.academy and I will be happy to help.

The poster below is displayed in the year 8 base and in year 8 tutor rooms to promote these sessions to our students.

As always, thank you for helping us to support your children.

Mr Cumiskey
Year 8 Leader

Miss Harrison
Year 8 Deputy Leader

YEAR 8

HOMEWORK SUPPORT

Every Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday during break time!

ClassCharts

Would you like support with your homework?

Have you received homework consequences in year 8?

Are you finding it difficult to login to systems such as ClassCharts?

Would you like a warm and comfortable place to complete homework during school hours?

Mr Cumiskey and Miss Harrison are here to help!

P2

amazon giftcard

All attendees will enter a draw to win an Amazon voucher!

ALL YEAR 8 STUDENTS ARE INVITED

Go straight to the year 8 base after period 1

Everyone is supported. Nobody should miss a homework deadline

Upcoming School Events for the Spring Term

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

For your advance notice, the events for the Spring Term are listed below:

Date	Event
Thursday 18 January:	Year 11 Parents' Evening, 3.45 – 6.45pm. Appointments will be online.
Wednesday 31 January:	Intermediate Maths Challenge Year 11 Blood Brothers Trip
Thursday 1 February:	Year 9 Parents' and Options Evening, 3.45 – 6.45pm. Appointments will be online.
Monday 12 to Friday 16 February:	National Apprenticeship Week – all year groups.
Friday 16 to Friday 23 February:	Ski Trip.
Friday 16 February:	Last day of school for staff and students – Half term holidays begin Saturday 17 February. School reopens for all students on Monday 26 February.
Wednesday 28 February To Saturday 2 March:	Berlin Trip.
Monday 4 to Friday 8 March:	National Careers Week – all year groups.
Thursday 7 March:	Year 8 Parents' Evening, 3.45 – 6.45pm. Appointments will be online. World Book Day.
Thursday 21 March:	Year 5 Open Evening, 4.30 – 6.30pm., for students who will be joining secondary school in September 2025.
Thursday 28 March:	Last day of school for staff and students – Easter holidays begin Friday 29 March (Good Friday). School reopens for all students on Monday 15 April.
Tuesday 2 to Saturday 6 April:	Lloret de Mar Sports Trip.