

Parent Bulletin

Week commencing Monday 4 March 2024 – Week 1

Dear Parents and Carers

We are looking forward next week to World Book Day on Thursday 7 March – please see the notice from Mr Barnes, who leads literacy across the curriculum. It was wonderful to welcome author Dan Smith to our school this morning. Dan has written a number of books for young readers. Year 7 students enjoyed hearing Dan talk about his books and his own school experiences. It was wonderful to learn that Dan is the great-grandson of Jack Lawson, the Lord Lawson of Beamish after whom our school is named. Speaking to him after his talk, it was good to hear some stories about Jack Lawson, his work in government, and his own educational experiences. I shall be making my own contribution to our celebration of World Book Day, reading a chapter of Tanya Landman's retelling of Mary Shelley's 'Frankenstein' as a form of audio book.

Also in this newsletter is some important safeguarding information for parents and carers. Mr Cooper, Deputy Principal, has included information on Online Safety and on 'County Lines'. For those of you who are not familiar with the term, 'County Lines' refers to highly organised crime gangs who trade drugs across different areas. We know that young people – including those who have no previous involvement in gangs or drugs – are in particular danger of being drawn into County Lines activities. Please read the information in the newsletter and, if you have any concerns at all in relation to your own or other people's children, contact the Police or your child's Year Leader at school.

Mr Cooper is acting as our Designated Safeguarding Lead, coordinating safeguarding across the school in Mr Rayner's absence. Mr Cooper coordinates the work of our Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads, who include all our Year Leaders and a number of Assistant Principals. Please do not hesitate to contact a member of the safeguarding team if you have any concerns or enquiries.

I would like to end with two more celebratory announcements. Following a rigorous selection process, I have appointed Mr Cumiskey in a permanent position as Year Leader (currently Year 8 Leader). Mr Cumiskey was initially appointed on a temporary basis last June. Since then, he has developed strong relationships with parents and students, and with Miss Harrison (Deputy Year 8 Leader) he has overseen considerable improvements in the behaviour, attendance and achievement of students in Year 8. I congratulate Mr Cumiskey on his appointment, and I know that he will continue to work hard to develop relationships with parents and carers.

Our advertisement for a permanent year leader attracted a substantial amount of interest: more than 20 prospective applicants were shown around the school, 37 applications were received, and five candidates were interviewed. This continued high level of interest in careers at Lord Lawson shows the esteem with which the school is now held locally.

The other cause for celebration is the announcement of our next Academy Production. We are delighted to have secured the rights to perform *The Wizard of Oz*, the stage version of the classic film musical. Our own version will offer some updated elements, but the basic storyline is a very suitable one for our students: each of the main characters is on a journey of self-discovery and transformation, and the expected source of help (the Wizard) turns out to be less significant than the changes and support the characters have experienced for themselves along the way. In educational terms, this story resonates with us: the value of education is in the relationships, the knowledge and understanding, and the skills our students develop every day at school. Although education is certainly 'for the future', I strongly believe that its value is also to be found in the present as well.

With all good wishes,

Yours faithfully

Dr Andrew Fowler
Principal

Year 10 and 12: Spring Assessments

A note for parents and carers of students in years 10 and 12, that Spring Assessments will begin week commencing Monday 11 March, and will run for a two week period, ending Friday 22 March.

Mr D Cave
Assistant Principal

World Book Day (WBD)

World Book Day will take place next week on Thursday 7 March and we have a number of exciting events planned as part of our annual celebrations at Lord Lawson of Beamish Academy. Please see the poster below for further details.

Today we commenced our celebrations early with a visit from Dan Smith, an award-winning author of books for young readers, who spoke with the whole of year 7 during period 2 and delivered a workshop to students who participate in the Reading Partners scheme during period 3. I am sure that hearing from Dan will have inspired lots of students to read some of his brilliant books!

Please continue to encourage students to read regularly at home and please also support our efforts to celebrate World Book Day by making sure students in years 7 to 9 are equipped with a reading book – they will need these with them during a number of lessons next week as they are asked to Drop Everything and Read.

Mr S Barnes
Teacher of English and Politics | Literacy Lead Across the Curriculum

World Book Day celebrations

Throughout the week

- Drop Everything and Read – listen out for the bell! When it rings, you will need to stop what you are doing and get stuck into your reading book for 10 minutes.
- Tutors will be sharing some featured authors – these are recommended writers who have been handpicked by our reading ambassadors!

Thursday 7 March

- Tutor group quiz: designed by our reading ambassadors with a prize for the winning tutor group.
- Staff and sixth form fancy dress: visit to the library to vote on the best staff costume!
- Years 7 to 9: you will read taster samples and listen to audiobooks from a range of recommended books at the start of lessons.
- Years 7 and 8 homework competition: visit the library to vote on the most creative work inspired by your favourite books.
- Readathon launch – set yourself a target to read a range of books and raise money for charity. Visit the library to find out more.



RESPECT • TRUST • COURAGE • AMBITION

WORLD
BOOK
DAY
7 MARCH 2024

Upcoming GCSE Drama Exam

Year 11 drama students will undertake their GCSE Drama, Component 2, exam on Wednesday 13 March. Students will be off timetable all day to prepare and perform their exam pieces in front of a visiting examiner from AQA.

Students have been working towards this practical exam, which is 20% of their overall exam grade since October 2023. Students may need to bring in additional props and costumes, which we have discussed in lessons, but these will be minimal.

For further information about the exam, please contact at jrace@lordlawson.academy and I will be happy to help.

Miss J Race
Teacher of Drama

Online Safety

The internet and mobile technology, for all its glory and opportunities, does unfortunately feature threats and challenges. These may involve online abuse, bullying, threats, impersonation, grooming, harassment or exposure to offensive and/or violent content.

All of these are harms we all have a duty to protect young people from – and we shouldn't underestimate its seriousness. If young people are exposed to – or perpetrate – these behaviours, they can be life-altering.

For further information and advice, please refer to the Online Safety Newsletter in the following pages.

You will also find information that we are sharing on behalf of Northumbria Police, for parents and carers of children aged 11+, to raise awareness about the issue of County Lines and how it can affect young people and their families.

Mr I Cooper
Deputy Principal

Online Safety Newsletter

March 2024

Managing Screen time from Internet Matters

Are you worried your child has too much screentime or would like more advice on how to support your child in managing their screen time? Internet Matters have a wealth of information on their website to help support you.

This first link discusses how to get the most out of screen time and how to talk to your child about screen time based on their age:

- <https://www.internetmatters.org/issues/screen-time/protect-your-child>

This second link provides advice on how to tackle too much screen time and what the signs of too much screen time might be:

- <https://www.internetmatters.org/issues/screen-time/deal-with-it/>

This final link provides a guide on how to balance screen time:

- <https://www.internetmatters.org/resources/creating-a-balanced-digital-diet-with-screen-time-tips/>



Video Chatting

Does your child use a web cam or a device to video chat?

Video calls are a very popular way in which people connect with each other, this could be using Facetime on an iPhone, video calling in WhatsApp or perhaps livestreaming on social media as an example.

You should talk to your child about who they chat with and what they are sharing when they do. As with all apps and websites that your child accesses, make sure they know how to use any reporting tools and they know how to block other users if necessary.

It is important that your child is aware that what they say and do whilst video chatting can be recorded and shared later without their knowledge. Additionally, ensure your child understands that they must say no if they are asked to do anything that makes them feel uncomfortable and they should speak to a trusted adult when they have any concerns.

Childnet have written this blog to help you learn more about video chat and webcams. It also contains tips on how to manage risks whilst online: <https://www.childnet.com/help-and-advice/video-chat-and-webcams-parents/>



Report Remove

Childline work with the Internet Watch Foundation (IWF) and Yoti to help a child remove any sexual image or video of them that is online.

This service will help them to have an image **removed** that is public or available to anyone on the internet. Find more here:

<https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abuse-safety/online-mobile-safety/report-remove/>

Users of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is entered into.
Current as of the date released 01.03.24.

Instagram

You will probably know that Instagram is used to post photos and videos, but did you know that it can also be used to message, voice/video call and send disappearing messages? Users can also upload to 'Stories' (which disappear after 24 hours), broadcast live and upload reels (short videos).

You must be over 13 years of age to set up an account. To create an account, you must enter a date of birth (but it is not verified). *When you set up an account for users under 16 years old, the account is set to Private. This is the recommended setting so that your child approves who follows them and sees their content.* Even if your child's profile is private, their bio (at the top of their profile) can still be seen by **everyone**. Check they have not included personal information here e.g. they should not be wearing their school uniform in their photo.

Instagram includes several privacy settings, so go through these with your child and ensure they are set appropriately. Settings include:

- Messages/Group chats – set who can message you/add you to groups.
- Story replies – you can turn this off or choose who can message you.
- Hidden words – turn this option on to hide comments/messages that may be offensive. You can also add your own custom words or emojis.

Make sure your child understands that there is a risk that content they upload can be shared with others without their permission as other users can screenshot it.

Supervision

You can set up supervision on your child's (aged 13-17) Instagram account. This gives you access to a set of tools including the ability to see who they follow/who follows them, how much time they are spending on Instagram, set a time limit and view accounts your child has blocked. Your child can also share when they have reported anything to Instagram with you. Learn more here: <https://help.instagram.com/658522825492278>

Safety Features

Ensure your child knows how to report posts and people, how to unfollow and block people, delete and turn off comments. View here: <https://help.instagram.com/269765046710559>

Quiet mode

Your child can activate quiet mode, so they do not receive notifications (to provide less distraction whilst studying and at night time).

How can I keep my child safe on Instagram?

The NSPCC have published a blog with everything that you need to know: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/online-safety-blog/keeping-children-safe-on-instagram/>

More information

- Visit the family centre to learn more about the features available: <https://familycenter.instagram.com/>
- Download a parent's guide to Instagram: <https://help.instagram.com/299484113584685>

Do you need help managing your child's device?

You can use Google Family Link or Apple Family Sharing to help you depending on your child's device.

Google Family Link

This is a parental control app from Google that lets you:

- See activity reports showing how long they spend on each app.
- Approve or block new app downloads.
- Set screen time limits.
- Find their location (using their device).

You will need to download an app and then decide appropriate settings.

<https://families.google.com/familylink>

Apple Family Sharing

You can set up Family Sharing in the settings of your device. Family Sharing allows you to:

- Share Apple subscriptions.
- Share purchases from the App Store.
- Approve what children purchase/download.
- Limit screen time.
- Share locations and find devices.

<https://www.apple.com/uk/family-sharing/>

Monitoring Apps (paid for)

In addition, there are apps that you can pay for that you may find provides a better solution for you. Whilst we cannot recommend a specific product, these are some examples that you could review and test using a free trial:

- Norton Family: <https://uk.norton.com/products/norton-family>
- Qustodio: <https://www.qustodio.com/en/>
- Family Time: <https://familytime.io/>

County Lines

Information for parents and carers of children aged 11+

What is County Lines?

County Lines is a form of criminal exploitation involving the transport and sale of drugs. It can involve moving drugs and money from one street to the next, or from one end of the country to the other, and the people who do the 'running' are often children who have been targeted and groomed into doing so by criminal gangs. Drugs are advertised by text message on dedicated 'deal lines' and on social media. Some of the platforms used are lesser known: Signal and Kick are two examples.

How do criminals exploit children?

TARGET

Criminals will watch an area - e.g. children coming and going from school or hanging around a park - to see if they can spot a particularly vulnerable child. They will then strike up a friendship and get to know them before moving to the 'test' stage.

TEST

The criminal will offer gifts such as money, expensive trainers, a phone, and will aim to make the child feel special and part of the gang. They will then test the child's loyalty by asking them to run small errands or hold onto items for them, whilst rewarding this loyalty with more gifts.

TRAP

The criminal will now control the child by isolating them from their friends and family, making threats against them if the child tells anyone about what the gang does. They will demand payback for all the gifts previously given, which could include moving and selling drugs, and sexual exploitation. The child will now feel indebted and trapped.

[This video illustrates the process.](#)

How do I protect my child, and what are the signs that a child could be being criminally exploited?

Be curious about their friendship groups and where they are when they're not at school or at home. Make sure they know they can come to you if they are approached by new 'friends' when they are out and about, especially older people. Remind them about [Childline](#) as a source of support, too. If you have concerns, share them with family members and the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) at your child's school.

Signs could include changes in behaviour, being particularly active on and defensive about their phone, staying up late, and acquiring new clothes and jewellery: there are many more. Visit this [NSPCC weblink](#) for more information.

Report

You can report any information to the police: 999 in an emergency, or otherwise via 101 or [our website](#).

Visit [Crimestoppers](#) for advice on how to report County Lines-related information anonymously.

[Fearless](#) (part of Crimestoppers) is available for young people to make anonymous reports.

Crimestoppers.



Support

[Unseen's County Lines campaign](#)

- Request an information guide to learn more about County Lines.

Unseen also runs a [free helpline](#) offering advice and support.

[SafeCall - Missing People](#)

- A free and confidential anonymous helpline for children and their families affected by County Lines.

[NSPCC Helpline](#)

- Help and advice if you have concerns about a child's welfare.



missing people NSPCC

Lord Lawson of Beamish Academy Production 2024 announcement

We are extremely excited to announce that we will be following the yellow brick road, somewhere over the rainbow, to the Emerald City for our new Academy Production...

THE WIZARD OF OZ (Youth Edition)

Join us this October, as we discover Dorothy and Toto, on their journey to meet the great and powerful Wizard of Oz. We are thrilled with this opportunity to realise our Lord Lawson interpretation of this much-loved musical, filled with heart, courage, friendship, and self-discovery.

2024 is the perfect year for us to stage this classic story, as in November, just after our show run, the highly anticipated movie musical, *Wicked*, starring Cynthia Erivo and Ariana Grande will be released. *Wicked* is a prequel story to *The Wizard of Oz*, exploring the origins of lead character Elphaba, who later becomes known as Oz's, Wicked Witch of the West. Making 2024 an intriguing time to revisit the original heroine, Dorothy and her Oz adventure, perhaps with some creative *Wicked* inspired moments.

Last year *The Wizard of Oz* was re-imaged for a summer run at the London Palladium. With modern interpretations of famous Oz characters, starring comedian Jason Manford as the Cowardly Lion and Diversity Star, Ashley Banjo as the Tin Man. This updated production has inspired Team PA to further explore our retelling of the *Wizard of Oz* in a unique way for our Lord Lawson audiences.

We had an incredible reaction from our Performers this week, launching rehearsals with excitement, enthusiasm, and a wonderful rendition of *Somewhere Over The Rainbow*.

And so, the audition process now begins. Any student interested in joining Performers and participating in *The Wizard of Oz* are encouraged to speak to Miss Brown as soon as possible, as we are almost at capacity for student participation. *Wizard of Oz* rehearsals will continue every Wednesday after school, 3.30pm to 5pm. Performers will receive an information letter before the end of the term, confirming show dates and details.

Now that we have shared our exciting announcement with you, we can officially say that... "*we're off to see the Wizard*" and look forward to sharing our journey to Oz with you all.

For Further information regarding *The Wizard of Oz (Youth Edition)* please contact me via email at sbrown@lordlawson.academy and I will be happy to help.

Miss S Brown

Subject Leader – Performing Arts



Ski Trip 2024

Over February half term, 66 of our students and 8 members of staff travelled to Radstadt, in the Sportwelt Amadé, Austria, for our annual ski trip. We have all had an amazing time and have returned thoroughly exhausted.

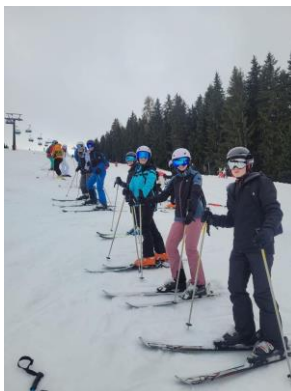
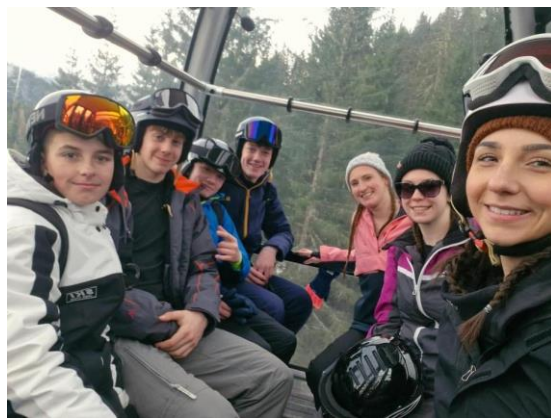
It was a pleasure to accompany our students. The success of the trip is due in part to our students' positive attitude and behaviour. Throughout the trip they showed thoughtfulness, kindness, politeness, respect and resilience. Their maturity, responsibility, enthusiasm and especially their determination was appreciated by all the staff and contributed to a fun and positive atmosphere.

We have received many compliments from the ski instructors, the coach drivers, the ski-reps and Werner and Sabine who run the hotel. They were all delighted with our group and are looking forward to welcoming us in the future.

On behalf of myself and the other members of staff who accompanied the trip: Mr White, Miss Seddon, Mr Earle, Miss Frater, Miss Rees, Mr Barnes, Miss Golby, we would like to say a well done to everyone and thank you for making half term both memorable and enjoyable.

Mrs S Hulme

Teacher of Mathematics and Trip Leader



Sustainable Prom Shop – Whickham School

Whickham School has launched a sustainable prom shop for prom clothing, which will be open during the February half term holidays. The aim is to make prom accessible to all students. All dresses and suits are FREE TO BORROW.

Any year 11 or year 13 student from any Gateshead secondary school is invited to contact the school for an appointment. All appointments must be pre-booked and are private.

Please view the details on the information flyer in this bulletin for contact details.

*Mr A Hodgson
Year 11 Leader*

Year 8 Subject Parents' Evening

The year 8 subject parents' evening is scheduled to take place on **Thursday 7 March 2024**, 3.45 – 6.45pm.

The evening will once again be online using the School Cloud platform. The appointment system is now open to all parents and carers. Should you have any issues accessing School Cloud, please email:

lordlawson@lordlawson.academy.

*Mrs S J Wakefield
PA to SLT*



**WHICKHAM
SCHOOL**

Sustainable Prom Shop



OPENING SOON!

Making plans for your Y11 or Y13 Prom?

Worried about the cost?

Want to make a sustainable fashion choice?

Our Prom Shop is for you!

Monday 19th - Friday 23rd February

10am - 4pm

All dresses and suits are FREE to borrow!

Private Appointments

Booking essential: 0191 4960026

Year 11: After School English Revision Sessions

After school revision sessions for English Language and English Literature have begun for year 11 students. These will continue until the Easter Holidays. Further revision updates will be sent nearer the time; please look out for these in future parent bulletins.

For the revision schedules, please see below.

English Literature: Will run on a Monday from 3.30 to 4.15pm in EN10, with Ms Beck.

Date	Topic
4 March	Kamikaze
11 March	Storm on the Island
18 March	Exposure
25 March	The Prelude

Each of the above sessions will be repeated the next day (Tuesday) during lunch time, 12.30 to 1.00pm, and will again be hosted by Ms Beck in EN10. Students should collect a pass from Ms Beck to attend a lunchtime session.

English Language: Will run on a Wednesday from 3.30 to 4.15pm. Students should speak to their English teacher about the sessions they should attend.

The focus of each session will be on tackling Question 4 of the Paper 1 and Paper 2 English Language exams.

Date	Grades 7 - 9	Grades 5 - 6	Grades 4 - 5	Grades 3 - 4
6 March	EN10	EN11	EN15	EN111
13 March	EN10	EN11	EN15	EN111
20 March	EN10	EN11	EN15	EN111
27 March	EN10	EN11	EN15	EN111

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me on cbeck@lordlawson.academy and I will be happy to help.

Ms C Beck
Subject Leader – English

Year 11: After School Maths Revision Sessions

Your child has completed a mini review in their maths lesson, which has been used to identify which topics they need to complete further work on to embed their knowledge. To support our students in this, we are continuing to host a number of revision sessions which have been listed for you below.

Monday 4 March: Higher, Topic 8 (Volume of cones/pyramids) in Ma28

Tuesday 5 March: Foundation A, Topic 8 (Relative frequency) in Ma22
Foundation B, Topic 8 (2D shapes) in Ma26

Students know which sessions are relevant to them and should attend those.

We will be running a further series of sessions, details of which will be provided in future parent bulletins.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me on djackson@lordlawson.academy and I will be happy to help.

Mrs D Jackson

Subject Leader – Mathematics

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
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.