

# Parent Bulletin

Week commencing Monday 11 March 2024 – Week 2

Dear Parents and Carers

I wonder if you were watching/listening to the Budget on Wednesday, wondering what the Chancellor's plans held for you and for your concerns? I caught up with the headlines for education as soon as I could – and the news is that... there is no news. Not for us, at any rate. 20 new free schools are to be created, offering much-needed **alternative provision** in areas across the country. Two are to be in the northeast, but these are in Redcar and Stockton, so they are not accessible to our students. Alternative provision is a real issue: our curriculum is appropriate for the large majority of our students, but not for all, and the other options are very limited. Last week we hosted a working party meeting for headteachers, college leaders and others within Gateshead who are looking to put together a package of vocational learning alongside teaching in English and mathematics.

Schools received their **funding statements** this week, telling us how much income we will have next year. I have seen it reported that education funding is 'at a record high.' Last time I went shopping, I saw that prices were at a record high too and had increased at a faster rate than anyone's income! Our funding has not kept pace with rising costs and wage increases and, as a result, the school is less well funded than at the same point last year. We are fortunate that the finances of Lord Lawson of Beamish Academy are stable and well managed, but we still have to make tough decisions and focus our funds solely on improving the quality of learning that we offer.

On a more positive note, 1 March was **National Offer Day**, when children in Year 6 and their families found out at which secondary school they have been allocated a place for September 2024. We were **oversubscribed this year**, and we have been able to offer a few more places, but we have not been able to satisfy every request for a place. Including first, second and third choices, 399 sets of parents/carers expressed a preference for Lord Lawson. Children with an Educational Health Care Plan and children who are in the care of the local authority receive priority, under the school's oversubscription criteria. This is in line with our vision to make sure we offer a great education to those who need it most. Overall, **we have offered 245 places** for Year 7 in September. I am sorry that we have not been able to meet the aspirations of everyone who wants to come to Lord Lawson. I have already written to parents and carers of the 245 students who have places, and we look forward to welcoming them into our community for transition days and our summer schools.

Looking ahead even further, we have our **Open Evening for children currently in Year 5** and their parents/carers on **Thursday 21 March, starting at 4:30pm**. This is a lovely opportunity for younger children and their families to find out more about our school. Please do **spread the word** to your friends and neighbours. In the most recent survey of parents and carers, a large majority said they would recommend this school to other parents, and we hope that you will feel able to recommend your school warmly to those whom you know with children at primary school.

Responding to feedback from parents and carers, Mr Cave is looking to organise an event soon for **parents and carers of students in Year 11**, to help you understand great ways in which you can **support your child as they prepare for their GCSE and vocational examinations**. A number of teachers have already volunteered to run workshops as part of this evening, and we look forward to inviting you to this event. More details will be available soon.

With all good wishes,

Yours faithfully

*Dr Andrew Fowler*  
*Principal*

## World Book Day (WBD)

We have enjoyed celebrating World Book Day across the academy over the past week. We were very lucky to host award-winning author Dan Smith to kickstart our celebrations last week and it has been lovely to hear of students enjoying our many other celebrations:

- Students across years 7 to 9 have taken part in "Drop Everything and Read," enjoying their own private reading books at different times.
- Our Reading Ambassadors designed a range of activities to take place across the academy.
- Sixth form students joined staff in dressing up as characters from their favourite books.
- Students enjoyed listening to samples of audiobooks from a range of different texts.
- Students in years 7 and 8 were invited to attend an online event with Joseph Coelho, the Waterstones Childrens Laureate.

Thank you all for your efforts to support students in engaging with our celebrations over the last week. Please encourage students to make use of the book tokens provided by tutors, which can be used to purchase a selected range of books from high street book shops for the price of £1, and to continue reading – whatever it is they enjoy.

**Mr S Barnes**

***Teacher of English and Politics / Literacy Lead Across the Curriculum***



### **Advance Notice: Year 7 Subject Parents' Evening**

The year 7 subject parents' evening is scheduled to take place on **Thursday 2 May 2024**, 3.45 – 6.45pm.

The evening will be online using the School Cloud platform. Further information will appear in future parent bulletins.

*Mrs S J Wakefield*  
*PA to SLT*

### **Year 11 and Year 13 Reports**

Reports for students in year 11 and 13 will be available on My Child At School (MCAS), week commencing Monday 11 March.

If you have forgotten your MCAS login details, please email [lordlawson@lordlawson.academy](mailto:lordlawson@lordlawson.academy), quoting your child's name and year group.

*Mrs S J Wakefield*  
*PA to SLT*

### **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*

### **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](mailto:jrace@lordlawson.academy) and I will be happy to help.

*Miss J Race*  
*Teacher of Drama*

## **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.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>
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.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Grades 7 - 9</b>	<b>Grades 5 - 6</b>	<b>Grades 4 - 5</b>	<b>Grades 3 - 4</b>
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](mailto:cbeck@lordlawson.academy) and I will be happy to help.

***Ms C Beck***  
***Subject Leader – English***

## 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:

<b>Date</b>	<b>Event</b>
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.