

Parent Bulletin

Week commencing Monday 6 May 2024 – Week 2

Dear Parents and Carers

This week, I have been talking about our Vision with students in their year group assemblies. We are at an exciting point in the life of our school, where we are looking forward to another extended period of sustained growth and improvement. Over the past five years, since I arrived at Lord Lawson in June 2019, we have overcome many challenges and we have become stronger as a result. Our overall mission remains unchanged, to offer the very best education we can to our students. Clear vision and strong values created the strategies that brought us through the COVID years and that delivered the excellent improvements we have achieved together. Senior leaders and governors are aware, however, that we now need a new set of strategies to take us forward.

Over the coming weeks, until the end of the summer term, I shall consult with students, parents and carers, staff, and governors to communicate our mission and vision, and to seek your ideas and feedback around our strategic priorities and goals. I will offer different ways for you to engage with our vision and strategies, and I encourage you to become involved if you are interested in the future development of our school.

This past week was the last ‘normal’ week of teaching for our students in years 11 and 13. Formal examinations have already begun. Congratulations to our students who have taken their practical examinations in art, technology and performing arts. The mood among most of our students in years 11 and 13 is that they are ready for these examinations: they have worked hard, they know how to revise, and they are ready for them to begin. The whole school community supports them at this important time.

The programme of wrap-around support we offer for students undertaking examinations is impressive. It includes revision sessions at lunchtime and after school, breakfast, pre-examination briefings and pastoral support. We encourage our students to engage with this support as fully as they can.

In this bulletin you will find some important notices and information about online safety. Please read this carefully. We encourage parents and carers to have regular conversations with their children – of all ages – around their online activity and e-safety. We often find that parents and carers are not aware of their children’s online habits, and that straightforward restrictions and filters are not used within their homes and on children’s phones and devices. If you would benefit from more help and advice, please follow the links on this newsletter or contact your child’s year leader at school.

You will also find a copy of the Gateshead SEND Network News attached. I found it interesting to read about the different initiatives that are in place across our local authority area, with links to sources of information and support. I hope you will find this useful too.

Finally, I hope you and your families enjoy the long weekend. School is not open on bank holiday Monday, 6 May. We open as usual on Tuesday 7 May.

With all good wishes,

Yours faithfully

Dr A Fowler
Principal

Smartphone Free Childhood

Smartphone Free Childhood is a parent-led movement whose mission is to protect children from the dangers of using smartphones too young.

The premise behind this movement is that all parents/carers of a class all agree not to give their children smartphones (therefore the level of peer pressure is reduced) for a set time or until a specific age. Are you ready to join? Find out more here: <https://smartphonefreechildhood.co.uk>

You may feel your child does need a phone, particularly if they are walking home by themselves but there are alternatives to the smartphone, including a watch, which are listed here: <https://smartphonefreechildhood.co.uk/alternatives>

If your child already has a smartphone then Internet Matters have a section on their website with advice on smartphone safety: <https://www.internetmatters.org/set-upsafe/>



Is being online affecting our child's mental health?

There are many positives to being online, but we do need to be aware of the negative aspects including those that may impact our child's mental health and wellbeing, for example:

- **Social media** (spending too much time on social media, comparing ourselves to others, filtered images and desire to achieve likes).
- **Cyberbullying**
- **Seeing inappropriate content**
- **Constantly connected/information overload**
- **Excessive screentime**
- **Negative impact on our sleep**



Further information

- Childnet discusses digital wellbeing in more detail and includes top tips and conversation starters: <https://www.childnet.com/help-and-advice/digital-wellbeing/>
- The NSPCC provides further information about mental health including signs to look out for and how to get further support: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/childrens-mental-health/depression-anxiety-mental-health/>

WhatsApp Group warning

Whilst WhatsApp has an age rating of 13+ (recently lowered from 16), a BBC investigation has found that children as young as nine have been added to WhatsApp groups and seen inappropriate content. If your child is using WhatsApp, check their group settings as by default, group privacy settings are set to 'everyone,' which means anybody can add your child to a group without their approval. You can change this setting to 'My Contacts' so only contacts can add them to groups without their approval and if somebody who is not a contact wants to add them to a group then they will need to send them an invite.

You should talk to your child about the risks of joining groups and show them how to use the reporting/blocking tools. You can find out more about the BBC investigation here: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cy0l4z8n1p9o>

Digital Addiction

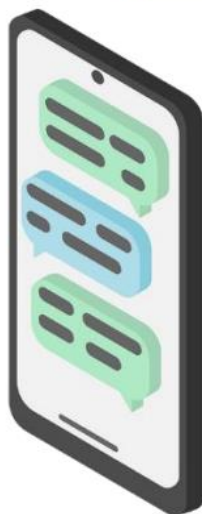
Are you worried that your child is addicted to being online/on their device? Recent research from Ofcom reported that "34% of parents of children aged 3-4 said it was hard to control it, rising to half (49%) of parents of children aged 16-17."* Bark have produced a blog which discusses what addiction is, how to recognise the signs and examples of what digital addiction can look like.

You can find the blog here:

<https://www.bark.us/blog/digital-addictions/>

[*source:

<https://www.ofcom.org.uk/research-and-data/media-literacy-research/childrens/children-and-parents-media-use-and-attitudes-report-2024> accessed 24.4.24]



Online Gaming Safety Tips: For parents/carers of neurodivergent young people

Internet Matters have published guidance outlining the benefits and risks of online gaming and how you can support your neurodivergent child. You can read the guide here:

<https://www.flipsnack.com/internetmattersorg/guidance-for-parents-of-neurodivergent-gamers-internet-matters/full-view.html>

Encountering violent online content starts at primary school.

New research commissioned by Ofcom reported that "all children who took part in the research came across violent content online, mostly via social media, video-sharing and messaging sites and apps. Many tell us this is before they have reached the minimum age requirement to use these services."

You can read more about Ofcom's findings here:

<https://www.ofcom.org.uk/news-centre/2024/encountering-violent-online-content-starts-at-primary-school>

Talking about online toxicity

Vodafone have published an article highlighting research which shows that "69% of preadolescent boys have encountered misogynistic content online". This article discusses how to approach this issue with your child and what to do if they start repeating negative views seen online.

<https://www.vodafone.co.uk/newscentre/smart-living/digital-parenting/how-to-talk-to-your-teenage-sons-about-online-toxicity/>

Misinformation online

There is a lot of information online that is incorrect/fake or misleading and it can sometimes be difficult for adults to distinguish between what is true and what is fake, never mind for younger people. We need to develop digital literacy skills in our children by encouraging them to think critically about what they read online and to fact check. Both the BBC and Channel 4 have fact checking areas on their websites:

- https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/reality_check
- <https://www.channel4.com/news/factcheck/>

One way to start the conversation would be to play a game such as 'Can you spot the signs of fake news?' from the BBC:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/zwfm8hv>

Further information

- <https://saferinternet.org.uk/online-issue/misinformation>



Maths Revision Sessions

Due to the bank holiday next Monday, we will be holding the previously planned after school revision session for that day on Thursday 9 May.

Revision sessions will then recommence as usual on a Monday and Tuesday for both foundation and higher students.

Mrs D Jackson
Subject Leader – Mathematics

Gateshead SEND Network News

Gateshead
**LOCAL
OFFER**

Issue 15 | April 2024

Hello!

In Gateshead we believe that the voice, opinions and experiences of children and young people with SEND and their families should be at the heart of everything we do. For more information go to www.gateshead-localoffer.org, follow the Gateshead SEND Local Offer [Facebook page](#) or visit the [Gateshead Local Offer YouTube channel](#).

A simplified version of this newsletter can be found at <https://gateshead-localoffer.org/gateshead-send-network-newsletter/>

Harry's New Role!

Hi, my name's Harry. Since December 2022 I've worked as the SEND Youth Ambassador for Gateshead Council and the NHS North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board. I've recently moved onto a new role as a Sales and Digital Marketing Advisor in the council's Learning and Skills team, which was only possible due to the skills and experience I gained in my SEND Youth Ambassador role.

I grew up in Gateshead and have experienced the SEND system first hand as a young person with an EHCP, which is one of the reasons I was considered for the job. I thought, how interesting it would be to see behind the scenes and be actively involved in the processes I was on the other side of as a child.

One of my aims was to use my lived experience to identify areas for improvement and enact change within the SEND system. Having now seen the SEND Strategic Priority Action Plan implemented with its vision correlating with my own ideas for development, I am pleased to think that my work



has had a positive impact for people with SEND in Gateshead.

I have really enjoyed working as part of the SEND Team and the SEND Youth Forum. I'm on my way into a new job which I'm really looking forward to.

"We're all extremely proud of Harry and the work he's done as Gateshead's SEND Youth Ambassador," says Alex Thompson, Gateshead Council's SEND Involvement Worker. "He has channelled the opinions and experiences of young people with SEND in Gateshead and made a real positive difference. I'm sure he'll be a great success in his new role."

For more information about SEND Participation and Involvement work in Gateshead, visit <https://gateshead-localoffer.org/participation-and-involvement-work/>

Eslington School Red Cheek Day

Congratulations to the students and staff from Eslington Primary School, who held their 'Red Cheek Day' event in aid of Comic Relief on 15 March. Their aim was to raise money for the charity by having at least one person bouncing on a trampette for the whole of the school day across both of their school sites.

Miss Richter and Miss Flamson organised the event in conjunction with their school's Student Council. "Our target of 20,000 jumps on the trampette was exceeded", says Miss Richter. "Across the whole day, we managed to get a total of 22,920 bounces across our Hazel Road and Rose Street sites. The children all came dressed



in red and we raised over £160 in donations which all have gone to red nose day. It was a huge success and the children were on the trampette from eight-forty until ten past three on Friday!"

Well done to everyone for their fantastic achievement!

Eslington Primary School is a special school for children

between 5-11 years of age with Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs.

For more information visit

<https://eslingtonschool.uk/eslington/> or email eslingtonprimaryschool@gateshead.gov.uk

Travel Care Team Update



Hi, my name is Jocelyn Arnell and I'm the new Independent Travel Trainer within the Travel Care Team. I previously worked within Road Safety for over eight years as a Pedestrian Trainer and then as the Pedestrian Training Coordinator, providing Pedestrian Training for primary schools throughout Northumberland and Tyne and Wear.

I joined the Travel Care Team in February and I am looking forward to training young people this important life skill to enable them to become more independent.

If you would like more information about Travel Training please do not hesitate to contact me at jocelynarnell@gateshead.gov.uk

SEND Swimming Sessions

Go Gateshead are offering weekly SEND-specific swimming sessions at local Leisure Centres:

- **Dunston Leisure Centre:** Saturday 6pm – 7pm
- **Blaydon Leisure Centre:** Sunday 8am – 9am
- **Heworth Leisure Centre:** Sunday 3pm – 4pm

This session is intended to be a quieter session aimed at families who have children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). Although SEND swimmers are welcome at all swimming sessions, this dedicated session will give an opportunity for the whole family to swim in a friendly, non-judgmental environment. **Proof of disability status is not required to attend these sessions.**



More information can be found at [Swim session types - GO Gateshead](#)

Gateshead Autism Hubs

Gateshead Autism Hubs offer parents and carers of autistic children and young people (0-25 years) information, advice and support on a range of challenges that can impact autistic young people and their families. The Hubs provide drop-in sessions, peer support groups, and training for parents, carers, and professionals.

The Hubs can also offer information and signposting on related co-occurring conditions, such as: FASD, ADHD, Sensory Differences, Social and Communication Differences, Mental Health, and Learning Disabilities. Gateshead Autism Hubs are free to access and an autism diagnosis is not required to access support.

Find out more information: <https://www.daisychainproject.co.uk/gateshead-autism-hubs/>

Connect with other parents/carers via the Facebook group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gatesheadautismhubs>



**DAISY
CHAIN**
Autism & Neurodiversity

Gateshead SEND Youth Forum Update

"I would like some sort of hybrid SEND Youth Forum meeting, like where if people would prefer meeting virtually or in person they can." Gateshead SEND Youth Forum member

"I'd like opportunities to be able to meet new people and more spaces to chill out and be with other people our own age." Gateshead SEND Youth Forum member

In response to feedback from its members, Gateshead SEND Youth Forum meetings are now hybrid style. After the success of their Christmas meeting, the decision was taken to make all Forum meetings accessible in person and online. February's meeting was the first regular one to be held in this style, helping to promote accessibility and minimize any anxiety

issues or sensory preferences individuals may have.

SEND Youth Forum meetings are also now an hour longer than previously. The extra hour is used as a 'chat and chill' type session where young people can socialize, chat, play games etc in a relaxed atmosphere with their peers before the Forum meeting.

Gateshead SEND Youth Forum are always looking for new members to get involved. Meetings take place on the last Thursday of every month in Gateshead Civic Centre or via Teams.

For more information contact AlexThompson@Gateshead.Gov.UK or visit <https://gateshead-localoffer.org/gateshead-send-young-peoples-forum/>

MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD...

**GATESHEAD
SEND
YOUTH
FORUM**



CONTACT ME VIA E-MAIL:
ALEXTHOMPSON@GATESHEAD.GOV.UK

SCAN TO
VISIT WEBSITE



 **Gateshead
Council**

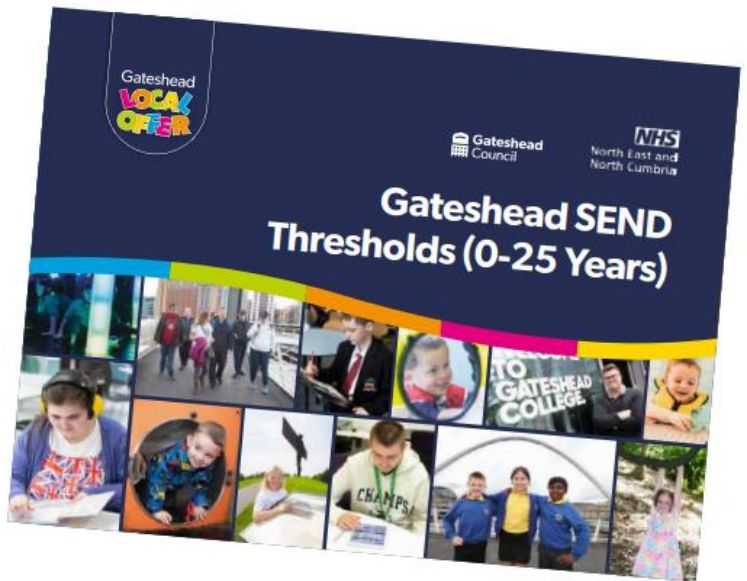
IF YOU ARE 12-25 YEARS OLD, LIVE IN GATESHEAD AND HAVE ADDITIONAL NEEDS, WE WOULD LOVE YOU TO GET INVOLVED IN GATESHEAD COUNCIL'S SEND YOUTH FORUM.

Gateshead SEND Thresholds

We are pleased that Nichola Kehoe, Manager and SENCo at Rowlands Gill Under Fives, will be joining the Area SENCos during the summer term one day a week to support PVI settings with the introduction of Gateshead's SEND Thresholds.

Nichola has been part of the Local Authority's pilot programme and has trialled the Thresholds in her setting over the past year.

We are asking all settings to pilot the Thresholds with one or two children during the summer term and then attend moderation meetings nearer the end of term, with the aim to fully implement them in September 2024. Nichola will be in touch with PVI settings shortly to discuss how she can help and support through this process.



More details and an electronic version of the SEND Thresholds can be found on the Gateshead SEND Local Offer website:

<https://gateshead-localoffer.org/send-thresholds/>

SEND Futures Event



A 'SEND Futures' event will take place on **Wednesday 19 June 2024 at The Fed, Dunston.**

The event is a chance to come together to improve the lives of children, young people and adults with SEND, and bring to life the Local Offer. It will be a marketplace event in two parts:

Part 1: SEND Futures Marketplace

9.30am - 1pm – open to all, parents, carers and young people and adults.

Part 2: SEND Futures Networking

1pm - 2.30pm (with a light lunch included) – professionals only.

The SEND Futures Marketplace will be providers, services and professionals, along with key areas such as Childrens Social Care, Adult Social Care, NHS, Transitions Team, and universal support from voluntary and community organisations and overarching organisations.

For more information, contact **Michelle Hall** MichelleHall@Gateshead.Gov.UK

SEND Team Feedback

Gateshead Council's SEND Team would love to hear your views about the contact you've had with them. They want to use your views and experiences to help make sure that they are providing the best possible service and have created a short survey to help with this.



To access the survey, scan the QR code or visit <https://forms.office.com/e/Yd5da2K0g9>
For more information, email the SEND Team senteam@gateshead.gov.uk or phone 0191 433 3626.

Contact us:

Special Educational Needs and Disability Team, Gateshead Council

senteam@gateshead.gov.uk

0191 433 3626

 [Follow us on Facebook](#)

We value your feedback and to help us improve our newsletter we have created a short survey which you can access by clicking <https://forms.office.com/e/iGHp2bGaSq>

Year 11 Examination and Revision Schedule: Week commencing Monday 6 May 2024

Timings	Tuesday 7 May	Wednesday 8 May	Thursday 9 May	Friday 10 May
08:00 - 08:40 Independent revision - breakfast items will be provided	N/A	French and German speaking MFL32 - JCS MFL36 - AMD	Religious Studies (paper 1): Buddhism and Christianity RE31 - ACE RE33 - JA	Biology (paper 1) Foundation/Higher SC27 - Mrs Craig
08:40 - 08:55 Guided revision				Combined Science: Synergy (paper 1); Foundation/Higher SC20 - CD SC21 - SFR SC22 - JF SC24 - EWR SC25 - SBR SC26 - LL SC28 - CB SC29 - LCR AR15 - HN
Pre-exam routines	08:55 - 09:00 Line up outside the exam location 09:00 - 09:02 Exam tips talk 09:02 - 09:05 Enter the exam location 09:05 - 09:10 Exam talk by invigilator			
09:10 - Exam start	N/A	French and German speaking (32/0) - Students attend their speaking exam as per the schedule set by the French and German staff	Religious Studies (paper 1): Buddhism and Christianity - 105/132 mins (35/12)	Biology (paper 1): Foundation/Higher - 105/132 mins (22/6) Combined Science: Synergy (paper 1); Foundation/Higher - 105/132 mins (150/47)
10:10 - 10:30 - Break				
Arrangements after exam	N/A	N/A	105 mins - Go to café for late break (10:55 - 11:30) for the remainder of P2. 132 mins - Go to café for late break (11:25 - 11:45) then go to the remainder of P3.	105 mins - Go to café for late break (10:55 - 11:30) for the remainder of P2. 132 mins - Go to café for late break (11:25 - 11:45) then go to the remainder of P3.
11:30 - 12:15 Revision session (changes to P3)	N/A	N/A	Drama PA11 - JRA	German Listening and Reading: Foundation/Higher MFL32 - JCS
12:15 - 12:57 Lunch				
Pre-exam routines	13:00 - 13:05 Line up outside the exam location 13:05 - 13:07 Exam tips talk 13:07 - 13:10 Enter the exam location 13:10 - 13:20 Exam invigilator talk			
13:10 - Exam start	N/A	N/A	Drama - 105/132 mins (9/4)	German Listening and Reading: Foundation - 80/101 mins (5/1) German Listening and Reading: Higher - 105/132 mins (9/2)
Arrangements after exam	N/A	N/A	105 mins - To go to the year base for the remainder of P5 132 mins - The end of the school day; students to leave the school site	80 mins - To go to the remainder of P5 101/105 mins - To go to the year base for the remainder of P4 132 mins - The end of the school day; students to leave the school site
15:20 Revision	German and French speaking MFL32 - JCS MFL36 - AMD	Religious Studies (paper 1): Buddhism and Christianity RE31 - ACE RE33 - JA Drama PA11 - JRA	Biology (paper 1) Foundation/Higher SC27 - EC Combined Science: Synergy (paper 1); Foundation/Higher SC20 - CD SC21 - SFR SC22 - JF SC24 - EWR SC25 - SBR SC26 - LL SC28 - CB SC29 - LCR AR15 - HN	English Literature (paper 1) EN10 - CBK EN11 - KB EN12 - SMY EN 13 - FR EN17 - ARE

Upcoming School Events for the Summer Term

At the beginning of every term we 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. The events for the Summer Term are:

Date	Event
Monday 6 May:	Early Spring Bank Holiday (School closed to staff and students)
Tuesday 7 May to Wednesday 26 June:	GCSE and A Level External Examinations
Friday 24 May:	Last day of school for staff and students – May half term begins Monday 27 May (Late Spring Bank Holiday). School reopens for all students on Monday 3 June.
Wednesday 26 June:	Year 10 into year 12 Taster Day.
Wednesday 26 June:	Transition Evening for parents'/carers of pupils who will be joining us in September 2024.
Friday 28 June:	Year 11 Prom.
Saturday 29 June:	Year 13 Prom.
Monday 1 and Tuesday 2 July:	Year 6 Transition Days – for pupils who will be joining us in September 2024.
Monday 1 to Friday 5 July:	Year 12 Work Experience Week.
Wednesday 3 July:	Year 11 into year 12 Transition Day.
Monday 8 to Wednesday 10 July:	Year 12 – Life After Lord Lawson.
Monday 8 July:	Year 7 Awards Evening, 5.30 – 6.30pm.
Tuesday 9 July:	Year 8 Awards Evening, 5.30 – 6.30pm.
Wednesday 10 July:	Year 9 Awards Evening, 5.30 – 6.30pm.
Thursday 11 July:	Year 10 Awards Evening, 5.30 – 6.30pm.
Monday 15 July:	Sports Day – All students.
Friday 19 July:	Last Day of Term for Staff and Students.
Thursday 15 August:	KS5 (A Level) Results Day.
Thursday 22 August:	KS4 (GCSE) Results Day.