



WEDNESDAY LETTER

11th March 2026



A WORD FROM MR BANKS...

A school community is a culmination of many pupil groups and identities. Some examples include; pupils with special educational needs, pupils with English as an additional language, pupils in receipt of free school meals, pupils who move to a school in-year. This list goes on but the key thing to recognise is that every pupil and group of pupil's face challenges that are unique to them. One group we are focussed on today is our young carers.

Who are Young carers?

- Young carers are children and young people who care for a family member.
- The person who needs care is unwell and cannot cope without their support.
- Young carers have responsibilities that they have to take on.



Today is Young Carers Action Day.

The theme for Young Carers Action Day 2026 is 'Fair Futures for Young Carers', a call to ensure every young carer has the same chances to learn, grow and thrive as their peers.

In 2026, together we will highlight the support young carers need to reach their potential, from recognition in school and access to training and employment, to meaningful breaks, wellbeing support and opportunities that help them build brighter futures.

Young Carers Action Day

Do you think you might be a young carer? Why not pop and see Mrs Rowlands or Mrs Cassidy in G19 or send an email to: wellbeing@birkdalehigh.co.uk

YOUNG CARERS @ BHS

YOU ARE INVITED TO THE YOUNG CARERS DROP IN

EVERY WEDNESDAY BREAKTIME IN UT1 (LIBRARY)

FREE SUPPORT

YOUR SPACE

Orbits and Networks

Understanding

Time out

Come and see Mrs Rowlands or Mrs Cassidy if you need any information

CARERS TRUST



Congratulations

Birkdale High School, Sefton

for successfully gaining a Young Carers in Schools Award.

Valid from 28 November 2024 to 28 November 2027





Attendance Matters

"A School Where We All Belong"



- **Absence** - If your son is not well enough to attend school, please either leave a message on the absence line 01704 577253 (option 1) or via email at attendance@birkdalehigh.co.uk by 8:30am.
- **Late** - If your son is late arriving, the reason will be obtained on arrival by a member of staff, and relayed to the attendance team. Phone calls are **not** necessary. If the reason for lateness is due to exceptional circumstances, please email attendance@birkdalehigh.co.uk.
- **Appointments** - Please ensure evidence is provided for any medical/dental appointments during the school day via email to attendance@birkdalehigh.co.uk. Where possible, please provide 24 hours notice in advance of the appointment.

If your child's attendance during the school year was...

95%

9 days from school

50 lessons

90%

19 days from school

100 lessons

85%

29 days from school

150 lessons

80%

38 days from school

200 lessons

75%

48 days from school

250 lessons

Did you know that in one school year...

If your child is late every day by...



5 minutes



10 minutes



15 minutes

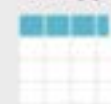


20 minutes



30 minutes

Your child would have lost approximately...



3.5 days from school



7 days from school



10 days from school



14.5 days from school



22 days from school

REMINDERS

Year 8 Parents Evening - Thursday 12th March

Year 8 Parents evening is taking place on Thursday 12th March from 3:30pm - 7:30pm.

Please note this is a face-to-face meeting, which will take place at Birkdale High School.

A letter providing details and how to book appointments was emailed to parents on Monday. **Please note the booking system closes at 6pm tonight, Wednesday 11th March 2026.**



Thursday 12th March 2026 - BPA Cake Sale

The BPA will be holding a cake sale on Thursday 12th March during morning break.

Please send in cakes (bought or homemade) and make sure the boys bring in money to spend!

Thank you as always for your ongoing support.



Monday Mile

Monday Mile is a great way to start the week - staff and pupils are invited to complete 4 laps of the track... run, walk or jog, rain or shine, every Monday.

We meet on the track at 8am. All fitness levels welcome!

All boys who take part will receive a raffle ticket, with the chance to win a prize.

A special mention to Matthew N (7DBW) who has impressively attended the Monday Mile every week, since September 2025 - an incredible display of dedication!



World Book Day Literary Clue Competition

Don't forget that the 'Literary Clue' competition is still ongoing, and the deadline is Wednesday 18th March.

Students may have noticed that some 'Literary Clue' posters have started to appear around school. An important item has been stolen by a character and taken to a secret location! By finding the different character, object and item posters, students will be able to deduce who has committed the 'crime' and solve the mystery! The answers are the only posters that are missing.

The posters are hidden around areas of the school used at break time and lunchtime.

Entry forms are available from the English Department, and all completed forms should be passed to Mrs Keating, for a chance to win one of the three prizes!

Good luck!



WHAT'S COMING UP



#WAKEUPWEDNESDAY

Streaming services are popular with children - but auto play, endless content and personalised recommendations can make screen time spiral.

This week's latest [#WakeUpWednesday](#) guide explores the risks and shares practical tips for safer streaming.



KGV Masterclass Evening - Tuesday 17th March

KGV Sixth Form College invites you to take your college courses for a test drive at our Careers Masterclass Evening on Tuesday 17th March from 4pm - 6pm.

The evening will provide an exciting opportunity to try your applied-for course/s, explore what they have to offer and get to know your future tutors (and classmates)!

The link to book on is: [KGV Masterclass booking link](#)

Whistle down the Wind

Several of our students are performing Whistle down the Wind at the Atkinson during the Easter break.

Tickets are available from The Atkinson Box Office. Please see the poster below, with all the details.



Teenlife Parent Training - 14th April 2026 onwards

Sefton Autism and complex needs team are delivering Teenlife parent training after Easter at Formby Professional Development Centre.

This course is National Autistic Society accredited for parents of children aged 10 - 16 who have an autism diagnosis or are on the pathway.

Attached below is the course information which includes the venue address, timings, dates and topics covered each week.

Places are limited on the course so please book on quickly to avoid disappointment.



WEEKLY ROUNDUP

Young Carers Pizza Lunch

Today, we celebrated Young Carers Action Day with a delicious Pizza Lunch in the library. This special event is dedicated to our young carers, giving them a chance to relax, connect, and feel celebrated.

Events like this can make a huge difference. For many young carers, school is the one place where they can take a breather, feel seen, and build supportive friendships with others who understand their experiences.

Offering them a positive moment in the day can boost wellbeing, confidence, and engagement, reinforcing that they are valued members of our school community.

A huge thank you to 600 Degrees for kindly supplying the pizzas - the boys certainly enjoyed them! In fact, the pizza's were so good that the evidence ended up on a few shirts too!



North Sefton School Athletics Competition

Year 7 and Year 8 boys took part in the North Sefton Schools Athletics competition at Greenbank High School last Thursday and did extremely well.

The Year 7's won the competition which means they are through to the next round, where they will compete against other schools in Merseyside.

The Year 8's narrowly missed out on first place, but should all be very proud of their efforts!

Congratulations to all who participated!



WEEKLY ROUNDUP

Visit to Lancaster University's Computing Department

Last term, a group of talented Year 8 Computer Scientists visited Lancaster University's Computing Department for an inspiring day of hands-on learning and discovery.

The Boys were selected for their skills in programming and their interest in choosing Computer Science as one of their GCSE options. Their visit began with an insightful talk about life on campus and the wide range of Computing degrees available at the university.

They then explored the Future of Technology through an interactive presentation and a Kahoot Quiz to test our knowledge of AI. Using AI tools, pupils attempted to recreate images produced by the lecturer. This was more difficult than it might sound, and creative, as clever use of language was required to write detailed prompts that generated the closest matches.

After lunch, the group learned about encryption and used various methods to decrypt messages. The boys know Alan Turing's work in code cracking, but it was quite challenging to try to decrypt messages with little knowledge about the encryption algorithms.

The day ended with a fun session using Spheros, sphere shaped robots which the boys programmed using iPads to move around the room, display messages and change colour.

It was a great day, and the boys were absolutely superb. Hopefully, we have inspired some future Computer Scientists who will go on to shape our digital world!



WEEKLY ROUNDUP

Birkdale High Book Swap

Thanks to the generosity of our wonderful donators, who contributed over 900 books, Birkdale High's first ever World Book Day Book Swap was a huge success!

Every pupil had the opportunity to visit the Book Swap and choose a book that suited his interests.

Some of the boys also shared the reasons behind their book choices, and these have been featured across Birkdale High's social media channels - Facebook, X and now Instagram!

At the end of the event, only a small number of books remained. Those suitable for our school library have now been added to its shelves, and the few left over were donated to a local charity shop to continue being enjoyed by others.

All pupils have also been informed of the 37 prize draw winners, and all prizes have now been handed out to the lucky recipients.



Bedrock Vocabulary: Term 2.

Our Year 7 and 8 pupils have been working very hard on improving their vocabulary again this term!



Bedrock Vocabulary is a fantastic online resource used across Year 7 and 8 to boost vocabulary knowledge and retention. Pupils aim to achieve at least 20 points each week to ensure that they maximise their learning potential. Pupils in Year 7 and 8 are showing a real commitment to improving their vocabulary by completing their weekly lessons in school and as part of their homework. Pupils earn points for each of the activities, quizzes and units completed.

Logging in is straightforward as pupils can use their Microsoft sign in, rather than needing a separate username and password. Parents and guardians can create a monitoring account to support their child by using a student access code, which is available from lkeating@birkdalehigh.co.uk.

We reset the points each half term and publish a range of achievements including most improved, highest progress and highest points scorers. This term our highest points scorers for this term (since the start of January) are:

Highest number of points in Year 7:

Isaac O (7JDD)	1213 points
Matthew N (7DBW)	964 points
Tion P (7DBW)	814 points
Christopher E (7JQ)	592 points
Temirzhan Z (7ZF)	490 points

Highest number of points in Year 8:

Hugo C (8NJW)	667 points
Daniel F (8CW)	429 points
Alex D (8SK)	378 points
Thomas M (8RLA)	329 points
Sammy R (8JAC)	323 points

Well done - amazing achievements!

Congratulations to all of our featured learners and well done to all of Year 7 and 8 students for their hard work so far this year. Keep up the excellent work!

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about STREAMING SERVICES

Streaming services are platforms that allow users to watch cartoons, documentaries and movies online immediately (often referred to as SVOD: streaming videos on demand). Ofcom reported that children and young adults prefer streaming services to traditional TV. With two-thirds of UK households subscribing to at least one streaming service, parents must understand how to manage screen time, set age restrictions and ensure safe viewing.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

COSTLY

Subscription services can be costly. As the main source of entertainment, most households have at least one streaming platform, and each platform has its own monthly subscription fee. Services are charging more for ad-free viewing, and better quality and resolution; however, there is a cheaper option with adverts. Due to price increases, Netflix and Disney+ reported a sharp increase in users subscribing to their ad-supported tier in 2023.

ILLEGAL STREAMING

Sharing passwords or using modified Fire sticks to access streaming content without permission is illegal. Most streaming services have now put measures in place to detect account sharing. When account sharing is identified, platforms will offer an opportunity to pay for an added member or will ask the user to verify who they are.

AGE-INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Most streaming platforms allow users to set up a profile for each family member, with the option of putting specific restrictions in place. These include adding a profile lock or PIN, controlling autoplay of previews and next episodes, and limiting content based on age ratings. Nonetheless, these restrictions aren't foolproof. Content which is rated as suitable for an age group may still include themes, language, or images which children and families find inappropriate.

EXCESSIVE SCREEN TIME

Excessive screen time contributes to sedentary behaviour and can negatively impact physical and mental health. Ofcom found that 4- to 15-year-olds averaged 1.5 hours per day across all video-sharing platforms, not including gaming. The vast range of content available, combined with features such as autoplay, makes it easy for children to watch for extended periods of time.

BINGE WATCHING

Features such as autoplay make it easy for viewers – especially young people – to continue watching episodes without a break. This can foster unhealthy and addictive patterns, such as consuming a vast amount of content in one sitting. With binge watching come a lack of social interaction, lack of physical exercise, and often late nights and sleep disruptions which impact their mental and physical wellbeing.

HARMFUL STEREOTYPES

Many platforms track viewing habits, time consumed, and preferences, and generate recommendations to encourage your child to keep watching. This results in your child being in a 'loop' whereby they think the 'recommended' shows would be something they would enjoy rather than thinking critically for themselves. This can shape their beliefs, values, and understanding of the world from a young age without even realising it.

Advice for Parents & Educators

SET UP INDIVIDUAL PROFILES AND ADD PINS

Almost all streaming services allow users to set up individual profiles where each family member can have age restrictions put in place for the content they can view. Adult profiles can be protected through the use of PINs. Keep this private. Use the options of putting specific restrictions in place such as controlling autoplay of previews and next episodes, and limiting content based on age ratings.

MONITOR AND TALK OFTEN

Discuss with your child what they are watching, find out which programmes are trending, and watch them yourself. Have a little look at their watch history to check the content of what they're watching. Some platforms have been known to recommend or autoplay older or graphic content after a child's movie has been played. While some TV shows or movies may have a suitable age rating, your child may still find the content scary, or it may explore themes you don't want to explore with your child yet.

TALK ABOUT ALGORITHMS

Talk to your child about how streaming services track what they watch, and base adverts and recommended shows/movies on previous viewing. Encourage them to critically think about whether the recommendations are suitable and how they want to spend their time. Discuss stereotypes with your child and challenge them to think about what they watch and how this may influence their beliefs.

SET TIME RESTRICTIONS

Many streaming services offer the opportunity to buy movies, or add additional features to your subscription such as sports channels, as well as play games. This can increase the amount of time young people spend sitting idly in front of the screen. Some platforms (e.g. Apple TV+) allow you to set screen time restrictions. If the streaming service doesn't allow you to set screen time limits, set a family rule and stick to it.

Meet Our Expert

Dr Claire Sutherland is an online safety consultant, educator, and researcher who has developed and implemented anti-bullying and cyber safety policies for schools. She has written various academic papers and carried out research for the Australian Government, comparing internet use and sexting behaviour of young people in the UK, USA and Australia.



#WakeUpWednesday

The National College

An Amateur production of arrangement with LW Entertainment Ltd

Music by
Andrew
Lloyd Webber



Lyrics by
Jim
Steinman

WHISTLE *down the* WIND

With book by Patricia Knop, Gale Edwards &
Andrew Lloyd Webber
Orchestrations by David Cullen &
Andrew Lloyd Webber

9th - 11th April 2026

Box Office
01704 533 333

**THE
ATKINSON**

noda

Be inspired by amateur theatre

What does autism look like in teenagers?



Join the National Autistic Society's Teen Life programme for parents and carers of young autistic people aged ten to 16.

Teen Life programme

Get together with other parents to share advice and experiences. The six-session programme covers:

- understanding autism in teenagers
- women and girls
- self-esteem
- stress and anxiety
- puberty
- planning for the future.

**"What a course!
I would strongly
recommend
any parent with
a teenage child
on the autism
spectrum attend
this programme."**

Parent



This is your local licensed Teen Life group leader, trained by the National Autistic Society.

Contact them for more information:

Name: Libby Woods

Contact: seftonnastraining@sefton.gov.uk



Information and support

Get free resources and expert advice on a wide range of issues affecting autistic people and their families.

 Visit:
www.autism.org.uk



National
Autistic
Society

Teen Life
Licensed



Teenlife Parent Programme - Information

Summer 1 2026

VENUE: PDC, Park Rd, Formby, L37 6EW.

Sessions will be 9.30am- 12 noon

*This is a **free** course for both **parents/carer and a professional from school if parents wish and school can attend.** It runs weekly during the school day.*

Attendance is recommended to all sessions and is a great way to share good practice for both home and school and support families and carers with a child aged 10 and above with an autism profile through this programme.

Please see below for dates:

Session number	Date	Topic
1	14/4/26	Understanding autism
2	21/4/26	Understanding autistic identity
3	28/4/26	Stress and anxiety/ understanding behaviour
4	5/5/26	Health and well-being
5	12/5/26	Puberty
6	19/5/26	Education/ Transition to adulthood