



# Secondary phase newsletter

*Creating Tomorrow's Citizens Today*

**Friday 9th October 2020**

## All-through news

In this newsletter, we will be sharing with you some of the exciting things that continue to happen at Simon Balle All-through School, along with some important specific reminders.

### **New website and “Virtual Open Morning”**

We hope by now that you have enjoyed seeing and using our new website. Many of you will appreciate what a job this has been over the summer, spearheaded by David Ayres (Assistant Head) and Rachel Kirk (Vice Principal). We commissioned a review led by Hertfordshire (Herts for Learning) to see whether our existing website described the character of our school and what we did. Following receipt of a detailed report, we reimagined our school website and how we wanted it not only to inform but celebrate the life of our school. Whilst not finished, and still much to do, we are confident that it begins to tell both our vision and our story. This year because of COVID restrictions, all secondary schools are promoting Y7 admissions in the form of a virtual open morning. We invite all parents to look at this set of videos, particularly those in Y5, as this is your school, your home community. We are intending to update the website regularly so do “bookmark” it as a favourite!

We are pleased to be able to let you know that our primary virtual open day, for admissions to Reception in September 2021, will go live on Monday 30th November.

### **Simon Balle All-through Library**

This week saw the anniversary of the “recreation” of our school library. Ten years ago we spent considerable time planning and reimagining our school library, and then fundraising to implement our vision. We invited a member of staff from the British Library to perform the opening ceremony along with invited guests. Many people contributed to that project and in particular the vision of Janet Syme, our librarian, and Rachel Southall, then a Governor. This vision has grown from strength to strength and children and young people are inspired to be part of the library. This week saw the launch of the Y5 librarians who will in time work with our older student librarians to continue the inspirational work that comes from this place.

### **Black History Month**

This month we are celebrating Black History Month throughout the whole school. This is part of our ongoing commitment to create a truly inclusive curriculum that reflects our ethos and values. In History, Year 8 students have been learning about the Black community in Britain in the 16th century by using Dr Miranda Kauffman's book *Black Tudors* whilst also completing homework tasks on the African Kingdoms of Benin, Mali and Songhai. Year 9 have been investigating Britain's Empire in Africa and will soon be considering the contribution of ethnic minorities to the war effort through examining source material on Walter Tull. GCSE students have been revising their understanding of how attitudes in the 1970s led to changes in the law which made racial discrimination illegal. In Geography, students have looked at the experiences of the Windrush generation and the reasons behind the clustering of ethnic groups in London. Textiles students have been learning about a number of artists, designers and illustrators from many different cultures, one of whom is a young black female illustrator called Onome Oтите. In Computer Science lessons research has been conducted on Black pioneers in computing including Dr Evelyn Boyd Granville who was the first African-American woman to obtain a PhD in Mathematics and then went on to work at NASA on the Apollo division and Kimberly Bryant. In 2011, Bryant

Simon Balle All-through School

founded Black Girls Code, a non-profit organisation that teaches young girls from black communities to program computers.



Other subjects will be joining in in the coming weeks. Students have taken part in a virtual assembly this week entitled 'Black History is British History' which generated much discussion about the diverse nature of British society and the recent Black Lives Matters campaign. This will be followed up with further activities during period 5. We will also be running a house competition in the last week of the half-term encouraging students to find out more about the significant achievements of the Black Community in Britain and the Wider World.

“In the Larch, we have led year group assemblies across this week and we have much more to discuss as the weeks continue. We have been so impressed with the children’s knowledge of history (for example, we talked about Rosa Parks and how her bravery made such a difference) and their ability to reflect on values and what we believe in for our Simon Balle community. We have been reflecting on inspirational black people in history and now in fields as diverse as athletics, football, nursing, formula one racing, mathematics, computing and acting. Much more to come, and we will also be running a house competition in the last week of the half-term encouraging students to find out more about the significant achievements of the Black Community in Britain and the Wider World”- Mrs Kirk.

### **Covid-19 reminders**

Thank you to parents for this support during this very difficult time. We continue to insist on all students practising good hygiene and keeping to the safety procedures. However please can you also as a family continuously exercise social distancing, ensure that you and older children wear masks when required, do not organise children’s parties or large family gatherings or meet in large groups with friends. We await nationally more rules and restrictions but if you are intending to travel at half-term please abide by the rules. They are there to keep us all safe.

### **The car park at Simon Balle**

We do know that we have written this several times before, and we apologise for being repetitive but it is important that we remind you that it is not possible to drive to Simon Balle. The car park at the Old London Road car park, and the system of us providing permits, is working very well. There is no need to drive to the school, with the exception of blue badge holders. Our car park is full of staff, and there have been occasions this fortnight where either families with disabled badges or staff arriving for work, simply cannot park. We ask you again, please, to walk to school and to avoid both the White Lodge and the main school car parks. It is so important that our community work together to support one another and to keep our school safe.

### **Thinking about a career in teaching? Then train to teach with the Alban Federation!**

Our schools are fantastic places to train, work and learn. They provide a unique school-based learning opportunity in partnership with the Alban Federation. Our partnership’s vision is simple but powerful; to ensure the delivery of high-quality initial teacher training that meets the needs of the local area. All partnership schools endeavour to create an environment in which staff, pupils and trainee teachers alike feel valued and supported. We have all worked with trainee teachers for many years and we fully recognise how much vibrancy, enthusiasm and drive they can offer our respective school communities. Importantly, the partnership sees its staff as its most valuable resource and its schools have a proven track record in training and professional development. Our teachers are excellent practitioners and are eager to share their skills, knowledge and practice with the next generation of teachers. For more information please visit <https://albanfederation.com/> or email [afgtpenquiries@sandringham.herts.sch.uk](mailto:afgtpenquiries@sandringham.herts.sch.uk) to request a call back. If you are interested in training to teach and would like to discuss the possibility of training to teach at Simon Balle All-through School, via the Alban Federation, please contact Yvonne Adshead [adsheady@simonballe.herts.sch.uk](mailto:adsheady@simonballe.herts.sch.uk). Applications, via UCAS, open on the 13th October 2020 for a September 2021 start.





## **Term Dates**

We have put the term dates on the public calendar but please note that they might be subject to change. The Government will soon be announcing possible changes to the public exam dates and this could well have an impact on term dates. As soon as we have confirmation we will, of course, let you know.

## **Road Works**

Please find below a letter about the upcoming roadworks that could affect your journey to school.

## **Secondary notices**

### **Coats**

As the weather turns colder (and often wetter) we would like to remind parents about the need for all students to wear a coat. This year this is now particularly important due to the changes we have had to make to keep all of our young people safe during this pandemic. As classrooms will need to be well ventilated with windows and doors kept open, coats or and scarves may need to be worn indoors. Students will need to continue to walk around the buildings to keep safe and to be outside during lunchtimes. It can be both cold and damp, so an umbrella might also help. However, students will need to carry/ wear coats as no one can use lockers at this moment in time. As we are a school where most children live locally, we want our students to walk to school, and as such would wear a winter coat.

Our policy has always been that students should wear at secondary level:

- A plain coat (not denim, leather or suede) and if it has a “logo”, not larger than a standard credit card in size

From September 2021, we will be stipulating the following: a dark coloured plain coat (as well as the above). Parents may now wish to consider this when purchasing a coat this season.

### **Y8 HPV Injections**

A reminder that the injections will take place on Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> October. If you wish your child to be immunised, and have not already done so, please complete the online consent forms.

*Wishing you all the very best for the fortnight ahead and thank you again for your great support.*

*Best wishes,  
Alison Saunders (Headteacher)*

Thames Water  
Mangrove Road Hertfordshire SG13 8AJ  
Our ref: 0081 08PFLZ  
thameswater.co.uk  
08003169800

29 September 2020

## **Our works nearby.**

We are carrying out some essential works in the Carriageway on Mangrove Road.

These are essential improvements to help repair a broken asset of ours and we will have to excavate the site.

## **What this means for you**

So that we can complete these works safely, there will be a road closure and diversion route in place until the works have been completed. There will be parking restrictions in place and we ask that you do not park in the coned-off area for the full duration of works.

We have an agreement in place with the council to carry out these works

Our Works are due to commence 24/10/2020. We expect the duration to be 9 days

## **How long will this take?**

Our works, including the reinstatement of the excavation will be complete by 1st **November 2020.**

If for any reason the duration is prolonged, we will notify you via letter.

## **Find out more**

If you have any questions or concerns, please get in touch with us on the details above.

We apologise for any inconvenience caused by these essential works and thank you for your patience.

**Yours sincerely**

**Chanel Jenkins** - Works Planner