



Secondary phase newsletter

Creating Tomorrow's Citizens Today

23rd October 2020

All-through news

We are all looking forward to our half term break next week as this has been an extraordinary half term of what has been a remarkable last six months in education. Staff and students alike are tired and not only weary of the new norms but we know some anxiety is already expressing itself as to what might be happening in the future.

Parents frequently ask about how we are helping students' wellbeing and we wanted to communicate with you some of the many things we have already done along with our future plans. As senior leaders, we know of what is happening in many schools across Hertfordshire. Each school has interpreted the return to school in various ways but we believe that our actions have helped so many students to refocus and feel good.

All of our children and young people are continuing to do practical subjects. At secondary level, this means cooking, designing, using specialist art and technology equipment and carrying out scientific experiments. All students are active in their PE lessons, and now within extra-curricular sports too, and playing music. This in many schools is not the norm. Our children and young people are enjoying their breaks and lunchtimes, simply playing or mixing with their friends in their year groups/bubbles.. We have not limited the curriculum to all days of maths and English, catch-ups and interventions. Our curriculum is allowing for discussion, focusing upon global events and is relevant, not exam/ test-driven. Our school-based counsellor continues to support both students and staff.

It is not surprising that a small number of our students and their families have been adversely affected during this pandemic. For some this has meant the loss of loved ones, whilst others loss of jobs. We are thankful for the support we have been given so we can help families, including food parcels and referrals to other community agencies. Some of these same children have returned to school really troubled and so we are endeavouring to support them initially by personalising programmes.

Indeed, at this time, it is so important that we continue to drive and promote our values education as we believe that this is fundamental to growth and personal development. Our PHASE (personal, health and social education) programme is strong and is addressing wellbeing. Here at Simon Balle, we have been involved with the charity "Action for Happiness" <https://www.actionforhappiness.org/> working with them to develop ideas for schools. We have used this approach at secondary level and it was always our intention that James Pooley and I roll this out to KS2 this coming half term. Do take a look at the materials and resources both for young people and adults! Endorsed and developed by the ex Headteacher of Wellington College, Sir Anthony Seldon, this is a powerful programme.

The PSA at its annual general meeting is planning to run some of its usual activities for families in the coming months, albeit in a different format, so I urge you to support them. This again will bring back some form of normality as well as fundraising.



Secondary parents

We have been so fortunate in that we have been able to use the fields and grounds for our various zones, allowing, in particular, the new Y7 and Y8 to have plenty of space to enjoy at break and lunchtimes. However, with the change in weather, this can no longer happen.

Therefore, like many other local schools from November 2, we are moving to what we are calling our “winter” format or timetable. This will possibly last until February half term (February 20, 2021)

This means:

Years 7, 8 and 9 will take an earlier lunch, from 12.05- 1 pm.

They will then go immediately to lesson 4 (at 1.05), followed by tutor time and lesson 6.

A similar pattern will take place on a Tuesday.

Years 10,11,12 and 13 will keep the normal lunch hour, from 1.05-1.55.

What this means is that:

- Shorter lunchtime queues
- More outdoor space for those students on lunch (whilst not using the fields)
- More indoor space when the weather is poor
- A more leisurely time to eat lunch in the dining area

PE News

After a delay in beginning our extra-curricular activities to ensure the safety of all our students, sports clubs are now up and running for all year groups. For the girls, we have had a fantastic start and attendance to clubs has been excellent. The girls have been completing a range of activities to complement their weekly PE lessons. Firstly, Year 7 girls have been attending netball clubs on Thursdays after school. Students have approached the sessions with excellent enthusiasm, working at a high intensity throughout and have shown progress in their match play already. Year 8 girls have enjoyed rounders club on Tuesday evenings, a sport which they missed out on playing in the previous summer term. Finally, Year 9 and 10 have been participating in cricket and lacrosse clubs respectively. Clubs across all year groups have been well attended, most notably Year 7 netball club with over 50 students each week!

In boys extra-curricular activities, the Year 7's have really enjoyed the football club so far with big numbers attending. As with the girls their enthusiasm is fantastic and we look forward to welcoming them back after half term. Year 8 - 11 boys football has also taken place with good numbers as well and alongside Year 7, the boys football club will continue throughout the month of November. We welcome all students of all abilities to our clubs, so looking forward to seeing lots of students attend after half term.

Well done to all the students involved and we look forward to introducing more sports to our extra-curricular programme after half term, following of course the health and safety regulations.

Health & Safety in PE

We strongly advise that all students wear gum shields when participating in both hockey and rugby. We also strongly advise that all students when participating in football and hockey wear shin pads for their safety.



Unfortunately, we are still unable to open our changing rooms but we are looking at how we might address this as the winter months ensue. Please can I remind you of the correct PE uniform, including black trousers and a plain black sweatshirt.

Virtual Talk to Business Students by Amazon Senior Manager

Many of our Year 11 Business students are looking forward to meeting Gaetan Vanet virtually on Wednesday 11th November. *Speakers for Schools* is enabling us to hear Gaetan speak about his role at Amazon and his career journey as well as giving our students tips and hints regarding employability. There will be a chance for students to ask questions at this inspiring event. For more details please see <https://www.speakersforschools.org/speakers/gaetan-vanet/>

Main Library Celebrates 10th Birthday

In the last week of September, we celebrated 10 years since our main school library was significantly remodelled following receipt of a special grant and some fundraising by our community. To mark the 10th birthday we held two raffles - one for students and one for staff. Congratulations to Atahan (Y7) and Harry Ingram who were the successful winners of £20 Waterstones book/gift cards. In addition, there were a number of winners of book bundles etc.

Blended Learning at Simon Balle All-through School for the Secondary Phase

We always strive to provide the best possible opportunities for student achievement, progress and learning. Therefore, we would like to make you aware of our 'Blended Learning' expectations should the school have to close or if students have to spend time off school to self-isolate.

- Students will be following their timetable, when at all possible, with work being set on their Google Classroom for that subject.
- As well as students following their timetable of lessons, each year group is attached to an additional Google Classroom. The work set on here is in addition, and whilst not compulsory, offers an enriched list of activities for each of their subjects that compliments their curriculum work. Each student should use the relevant code to access the correct Google Classroom. They have been informed of this by their tutors.
 - YEAR 7 - nqseq5k
 - YEAR 8 - ke7ynum
 - YEAR 9 - gxs7rtt
 - YEAR 10/11 - ncltrds
- If the school is closed, or a whole year group cohort is out, we expect that 50% of all lessons set by staff are taught via Google Meets. This will be either in a 'live' video lesson or will be pre-recorded and still provide the most effective learning experience for our students.
- We will expect students to be engaging in remote learning by default. If your child is unwell and unable to complete work or join digital lessons, please email the school admin@simonballe.herts.sch.uk. Class teachers will make contact with the pastoral leaders for these year groups if students fail to engage. Pastoral leaders will then make contact with parents and students. Students who do not complete



- work set will be sanctioned in line with school policy once the school either reopens or the student is back in school.

Drama at Simon Balle

We were so excited that Drama lessons could go ahead in these strange times, with a few adjustments on timings of face to face contact and ensuring hands are washed and sanitised and the room is well ventilated, we were ready to go! The students in Key Stage 3 have all completed their first assessment and all students have been working hard with enthusiasm to achieve. The Year 7's have been introduced to the basic skills of tableau, narration and monologue. The Year 8's have been exploring character within a published script, applying the elements of vocal expression, facial expression, body language, stance, posture and proxemics and have verbally evaluated their own performance. This work is currently being developed into a written evaluation too. Year 9's have been looking at the effects of knife crime, whilst undergoing their biggest assessment of Key Stage 3 so far. They have performed a 4 scene play using naturalism, split stage, mime, voice-over and tableau as well as writing in character.

Key stage 4 are working hard exploring new practitioners and getting ready to prepare their devising work ready for their component 1 practical exam and the A' Level students are studying Hedda Gabler with a twist!

Whilst we are unable to currently run our theatre trips we are aware of some really great opportunities to book tickets in groups of up to 6 as theatres begin to re-open. There are also live-streamed theatre performances being shown at Hertford Theatre - tickets on sale now for War Horse on 12th November!

One Device Scheme – Delays to Chromebook Repairs

We are seeing some lengthy delays in getting some Chromebook repairs back to students due to a worldwide shortage of laptop parts. This is completely out of our control but we are working hard to try and get them back as soon as possible. We do have a limited number of loan devices that students can use whilst their repair is away but I am afraid we cannot guarantee that every student will get one. Please bear with us!

Please can you ensure that student Chromebooks are kept in a case and if there is any damage at all then contact Hello@edde.education straight away with the details however minor the damage is. Our insurance policy requires that any damage is reported within 30 term-time days and they are being strict on this.

School Catering – Covid Update

We have been working with our caterers to ensure the food service is Covid safe, but this has resulted in a restricted menu for the time being. We are looking to expand both the food choices for students and the service times, but please bear with us whilst we implement these across the different year group bubbles. It is simply not possible to offer the full menu option at the moment but we are continuously reviewing ways we can make it better for students, this includes introducing a limited break time offer for some year groups this week.

Lives not Knives

Please find the leaflet below from the CYP Gangs and Schools team.



Halloween

We hope that children can still enjoy **Halloween and fireworks** evening this year, though we understand that normal celebrations will have been considerably curtailed. Please be aware of the following sites to support the understanding of current regulations (for example, in relation to the rule of six people as a maximum). Please find the letters below explaining how to stay safe during this time.

Raise Resilience

Please find a leaflet below with some helpful information on getting used to a new normal.

Statutory Admissions Consultation 2022/2023

We are holding a consultation on our Admission Arrangements for 2022/2023.

The consultation period takes place between 19th October and 27th November 2020. If you wish to make any comments regarding this consultation please email admin@simonballe.herts.sch.uk.

The admission arrangements can be found on the school website.

Dates coming up

- Week beginning 9th November - parents' week for Reception and Year 1
- Wednesday 11th November - virtual Remembrance day service
- Friday 27th and Monday 30th November - Occasional days
- Wednesday 16th December - Christmas lunch - more information to follow
- Friday 18th December - End of term (please note a slight change)

Covid news

It was remarkable that the school had no confirmed cases until this week. When a parent knows that their child has a confirmed case, we diligently follow the procedures set by HCC, DFE and Public Health England in terms of who we contact, identification of close contacts and therefore who needs to isolate, including the dates for the 14 days.

This week the information arrived for us too late to be able to be specific and so like other schools, the practice is to send the whole bubble home until the specific work can be done. This is when we need to see which students or staff members the positive case has been in close proximity to, according to the criteria set. This involves us talking with the confirmed case (as it could be on the way to and from school or non-lesson times) as well as scrutinising our seating plans. Those identified then are contacted and told to self-isolate for 14 days, whilst the remainder of students are expected back. Our Governors and staff Covid Health and Safety Group are meeting at least fortnightly to review practices.

Thank you to everyone who has expressed their understanding and support. These are challenging times for all and no fewer schools. We have a remarkable team here and it is our privilege to be able to work with such an amazing community.

May I thank again the children and young people from reception to year 13 for their incredible resilience, commitment and hard work. We are witnessing unprecedented times and education in its broadest sense and in particular, our school vision and values of hope and aspiration, living well with each other, dignity and respect, along with the key focus upon knowledge and skills, will ensure that our young people flourish and thrive as citizens way beyond this pandemic.

Let's all have a good rest, time to refresh and come back positive and eager to learn!

With sincere thanks
Alison Saunders

Safer Schools Newsletter

October 2020



HERTFORDSHIRE

CONSTABULARY

CYP GANGS & SCHOOLS TEAM



#STOPKNIFECRIME

Welcome to our second newsletter from the Herts Police Gangs & Schools Team. We are a dedicated team that work with local Officers and partners to prevent youth related crime. We conduct a range of prevention and engagement work to raise awareness of knife crime, gang & criminal exploitation to keep you safe.

Hertfordshire is a very safe place. Overall, crime in our area is down from last year.

Robbery - Know the facts

Robbery is the act of stealing from a person using violence or by causing fear of violence which can result in life imprisonment. For example a person who pushes a student walking home from school and steals the phone out of their hand has committed robbery.

How to stay safe -

- When out and about keep mobile phones in a closed bag or a zipped pocket so it is not visible to others.
- If you need to use your phone when out and about, try and find a well-lit public area.
- Stay alert and be aware of your surroundings.
- Do not become distracted by people asking for directions/the time.
- Set a PIN on the handset and SIM card.
- Know the phone's make, model and IMEI

number. Dial *#06# into your phone to obtain the IMEI number.

- Do not store any personal details such as bank accounts.
- Sign up to a free app such as Find my iPhone and register your phone to an accredited property database so the police can return it if it is found.

Join The Prince's Trust Team

Are you aged 16-25?

Give your life a kick-start



For more information, please contact:
Email: hfrs.youth@hertfordshire.gov.uk
Or call free on 0800 842 842 or visit princes-trust.org.uk/team to find out when your nearest Team starts.



Prince's Trust



For more information about the work that we do go to [@HertsCYP](https://twitter.com/HertsCYP)

Young people can report crime 100% anonymously at www.fearless.org



Stay safe, think of others and enjoy Halloween and Fireworks night

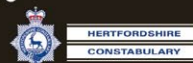


Do

- Remember road safety and wear bright clothing while 'trick or treating'
- Keep Halloween 'tricks' safe
- Be considerate to others
- Keep your distance from fireworks
- Go to an organised fireworks display – it's the safest way to enjoy them

Don't

- Go 'trick or treating' alone and take an adult with you
- Cause damage to people's homes or property
- Handle fireworks if you're under 18
- Knock on strangers' doors
- Scare or hurt others
- Let off fireworks in a public place or anywhere between 11pm and 7am*



*Except on November 5th when the curfew is midnight and for Diwali, New Year's Eve and Chinese New Year, when fireworks can be let off until 1am.

LIVES NOT KNIVES

event brought to you by

Hertfordshire Constabulary CYP Gangs & Schools Team and Herts Sports Partnership.

An opportunity to listen live to a variety of inspirational speakers with real life experience of knife crime and gang affiliation.

Are you ready to hear the TRUTH behind the headlines, think it's about excitement, money and status?



CYP GANGS & SCHOOLS TEAM

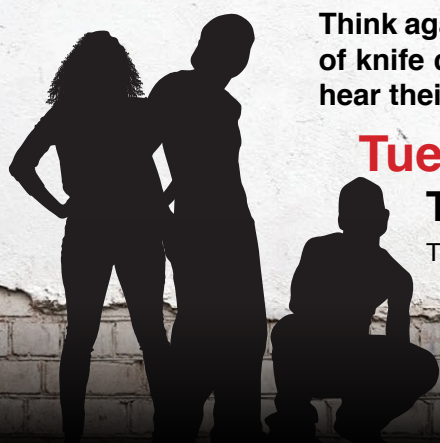


Think again... tune in to our inspirational speakers with lived experience of knife crime and serious violence and have the unique opportunity to hear their stories & ask them questions about their experiences.

Tuesday 20th October | 6.00pm - 7.30pm

To watch the event live - @entercareermode

There will be the opportunity to ask the speakers questions at the end of the event.



Free Herts Sports Partnership goody bag for each young person that attends the event.

If you need to contact the Police please call us on 101 or 999 in an emergency. You can also speak to us online and find more information at www.herts.police.uk.

For Coronavirus advice and mental health support contact www.youngminds.org.uk



**bounce
forward**

*Thrive in life.
Start with resilience.*



**Fully Funded by
Hertfordshire DSPL 3**

RAISE RESILIENCE

Helping Children Thrive Into The New Normal

A six-session course with worksheets

The coronavirus has forced children and families to deal with uncertainty head on. As you continue adapting to the new normal, you, and your children may be anxious for a whole host of reasons - leaving you and them feeling stressed, overwhelmed, or exhausted.

There is an immediate need to preserve childrens' wellbeing and build resilience at this point in history, where it is genuinely needed. To support this need, Bounce Forward has developed a series of sessions to help parents, help their children cope and thrive.

The sessions provide reflective and practical approaches in resilience to support positive changes in cognition and behaviour. Parents will learn how to build skills to help their children be more resilient during this uncertain time.

“ Really good sessions with some great practical strategies that can really help for both adults and children.

Two date options available

Wednesday morning starts 4th Nov
Thursday evening starts 5th Nov

LEARN MORE & SIGN-UP



Halloween 2020

Many traditional Halloween activities can be high-risk for spreading viruses. There are several safer, alternative ways to participate in Halloween. We have therefore developed these guidelines to help our residents have a safe Halloween.

If you have COVID-19 or are self isolating, you should not participate in in-person Halloween festivities and especially should not hand out treats or sweets to people who visit (eg for “trick-or-treat”).

No risk activities

These activities can be safe alternatives:

- Carving pumpkins with members of your household and displaying them.
- Decorating your home
- A Halloween scavenger hunt where accompanied children are given lists of Halloween-themed items to look for while they walk outdoors from house to house admiring Halloween decorations at a distance.
- Having a virtual Halloween costume contest
- Having a Halloween film night with your household or people in your support bubble.

Moderate risk activities

- “No contact” goodie bags - where individually wrapped goodie bags are lined up for families to grab and go while continuing to social distance (such as at the end of a driveway or at the edge of a yard)
 - If you are preparing goodie bags, [wash your hands](#) with soap and water for at least 20 second before and after preparing the bags.
- Having a small group (no more than 6) , outdoor, open-air costume parade where people are distanced more than 2 metres apart
- Attending a costume party held outdoors where protective masks are used and people can remain more than 6 feet apart
 - A costume mask (such as for Hallowe'en) is **not** a substitute for a cloth mask. A costume mask should **not** be used unless it is made of two or more layers of breathable fabric that covers the mouth and nose and doesn't leave gaps around the face.
 - Do **not** wear a costume mask over a protective cloth mask because it can be dangerous if the costume mask makes it hard to breathe. Instead, consider using a Halloween-themed cloth mask.
- Going to an open-air, one-way, walk-through haunted forest where appropriate mask use is enforced, and people can remain more than 2 metres apart. Do not mix outside your households or bubbles.

- If screaming will likely occur, greater distancing is advised. The greater the distance, the lower the risk of spreading a respiratory virus.
- Visiting pumpkin patches or orchards where people use hand sanitizer before touching pumpkins or picking apples, wearing masks is encouraged or enforced, and people are able to maintain social distancing

High risk activities

Avoid these high risk activities to help prevent the spread of the virus that causes COVID-19:

- Participating in traditional door to door trick-or-treating where treats are handed to children.
- Crowded costume parties held indoors (these are unlawful under the regulations)
- Going to an indoor “haunted house” where people may be crowded together and screaming.
- Using [alcohol or drugs](#), which can cloud judgement and increase risky behaviours.

Illegal Activities

Gathering in groups of more than 6 people or multiple households unless as part of a properly organised COVID secure event (by a charity or public body) is illegal and Police can take enforcement action including fines.

Parent / Guardian

October 2020

Dear Parent / Guardian

Re: October Half term

We are writing to you as a parent or guardian of a young person who attends a school within East Herts and seeking your support in the forthcoming weeks in regards to Halloween and Fireworks.

Regrettably last year there was an increase in anti-social behaviour (ASB) within the district from young people, including the misuse of fireworks. There were groups of young people causing a nuisance in public places resulting in several members of the public to feel alarmed and distressed. In addition one Police Community Support Officer sustained a serious burn to their leg after having a lit firework thrown at her.

Those who were responsible for this behaviour were identified and action taken against them. In some areas the ASB was planned and arranged over social media with groups targeting locations and meeting points.

Over the past year agencies within the East Herts Community Safety Partnership (CSP) have been working together to ensure that these incidents do not occur again this year. Some of the planned actions cannot be progressed due to the pandemic and current government restrictions, however it is perhaps even more important that we have your support during these uncertain times to keep our communities safe.

We are therefore asking that you ensure you know where your child / children is/are during the half term break and the days that lead up to and after Halloween. You remind them of the 'rule of six' and advise that **any** young person found to be causing ASB will have robust action taken against them. We would also ask that if you hear of any planned activity that you report it to Herts Police on 101 or email community.safety@eastherts.gov.uk. Police will be increasing patrols and also using powers under the ASB Crime and Policing Act to take young people home. Information of those responsible for any ASB will be shared with schools and other relevant agencies (such as Housing providers).

Proactive work is also happening with firework retailers and also information will be circulated in communities on how to enjoy the Halloween and Firework season responsibly and safely.

At the time of writing we await advice from Public Health England in respect of trick or treating. We will be publishing any further advice on our CSP Facebook page (East Herts Community Safety Partnership), Police Twitter accounts and East Herts Council's website as it is received.

We would like to thank you in advance for your support in keeping East Herts a safe place to live, visit and work, and not allowing the behaviour of the minority to negatively impact upon communities.

Yours faithfully



Chris Hunt
Safer Neighbourhood Inspector

Hertfordshire Constabulary



Julie Pomfrett
Community Safety &
ASB Manager

East Herts Council