



Secondary phase newsletter

Creating Tomorrow's Citizens Today

11th December 2020

All-through news

Dear families,

In our final newsletter of 2020, we wanted to begin by thanking you for your support for our community over recent months. In what has been such a challenging time for so many, we are incredibly grateful for the way in which parents have connected with us in school (our first virtual parents evenings and parent workshops), supported home learning (with more importance than ever) and supported our community from charity work to fundraising to all of the adaptations required at this time. There are lots of virtual events and recordings in which to engage in the next week so do look out on our social media pages and on the latest news of our website.

Simon Balle All-through School mini farm

We have been so delighted to receive such generous donations to support the launch of the mini-farm at Simon Balle All-through school. At the time of writing, you have raised a wonderful £4,457.50 with only £42.50 left to raise! If you are able to contribute to help us over the final hurdle, please do click on this [link](#). We are pleased to let you know that work will commence over the Christmas holidays to prepare the area and fencing. Lots more to come between January and March with research required by the students to ensure we are truly ready to welcome animals to our community. We have had so many offers of help and expertise from across the all-through school; if your children or you are keen to get involved at this stage then please do email: kirk@simonballe.herts.sch.uk. Thank you again!

All-through teaching and learning

We are proud that despite all that has been happening around us, our commitment to ensuring that we concentrate upon improving on and delivering the very best quality of education remains very strong. To this end, we had two external visits from 'Herts for Learning'; the school improvement company in Hertfordshire. We thought we would share with you some of the comments made by our consultants.

"The quality of education is very strong and leaders are ambitious, reflective, analytical and aspirational"

"The School's transition and induction arrangements at all stages and for both staff and students, were extremely thorough and impressive"

"The all through curriculum is truly ambitious"

And, specifically with our primary children:

"Pupil's attitudes and approaches to learning were consistently very strong. Teachers have strong subject knowledge. The attention to detail is indicative of teachers having high expectations for all children"

Developing the right curriculum for all children continues to be one of our main priorities.



Virtual carol service

Please take some time out over the Christmas break to watch our virtual Carol Service. We have tried to incorporate many of the traditional features of our church service and there is some wonderful singing, reflective readings and great seasonal music contributed by students across our all-through school. Remember to share with your family and friends- a true celebration of light at this difficult time.

All-through home learning survey

Mr Ian Finch (Assistant headteacher) and Mrs Rachel Kirk (Vice Principal) are undertaking an important review of home learning at Simon Balle All-through school.

Please find below a link to a google form which we would be most appreciative if you could complete for each of your children that attend Simon Balle, in any phase or key stage. As you open the form, you will see a summary of our vision. However, this will only be fulfilled with the strongest of partnerships between home and school. As we commence this all-through review, we would like to take this opportunity to seek your views. Please complete this by Monday 14th December 2020. <https://forms.gle/Au14LVtZpuspPRGGA>

Community and charity work

For the last 10 years, we have traditionally held secret Santa at the end of term involving up to 130 members of staff. This year we thought that in the current climate, it would be a good idea to give our energies, money, time and thoughts to a number of good causes instead. So far we have managed to raise over £1,500 which will be split between The Herts Young Homeless, Blood Cancer UK and the local charity Jedidiah which supports families in our school and many local ones in providing food parcels. We are also taking part for the first time in the national Christmas Jumper Day in aid of Save the Children. We will notify you of the total raised in due course.

This Christmas, Simon Balle All-through School Sixth Form has partnered with the Hertford & District Foodbank. They wanted to make sure that no one in our local community goes hungry this Christmas. Many of our Sixth Formers contributed and will help provide much-needed food and essential items to families, children and those who are alone during these challenging times, by making sure they do not go hungry. Our footballers also gave of their time helping to deliver food parcels both locally and further afield.

Covid-19

If your child tests positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) at any point during the Christmas break, please notify us as soon as possible so we can complete the relevant tracking and tracing process with public health, if required, and notify any other children or staff who have been close contacts and who need to self-isolate.

During the holidays you should contact covid19@simonballe.herts.sch.uk – **this will only be monitored until Christmas Eve as after this point your child(ren) should not be a close contact of anyone at the school.** Please do not call the normal absence line as this will not be covered during the Christmas break.

Remember as soon as your child or any member of your household develops symptoms, they must start self-isolating immediately and book a test regardless of it being Christmas.

Main symptoms of coronavirus are:

- a high temperature



- a new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot, for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours
- a loss or change to sense of smell or taste – this means they cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal

If you are not sure whether symptoms suggest that they have COVID-19 or an everyday cough or cold, you can consult this online NHS symptom checker:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/symptoms/>

Please do not send children back to nursery or school if any of the following:

- they have symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19)
- they, any members of your household, or any close contacts (including extended family or friends they have seen and bubbles at holiday activities and sports clubs) have tested positive for COVID-19
- They have not completed the full 14 days, or after Monday, 10 days, isolation period requested

Self-isolating is one of the most important things we can all do to help stop the spread of the virus and protect our loved ones and the vulnerable. You can read our helpful self-isolating guide at:

www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/selfisolatingguide

If you or your family are affected by COVID-19 and need support locally with things like shopping, getting medication or financial advice, visit: www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/coronavirus

Vacancies

We are currently looking to appoint a Director of Business and a Literacy Champion. You will find full details including the advert, job descriptions and person specifications on our website

<https://www.simonballe.herts.sch.uk/community/vacancies/>

With our very first cohort of primary children in Year 5, we will be recruiting our final cohort of staff for September 2021. Adverts for both teachers and teaching assistants will be published before February half term.

Secondary News

PE December News

Physical Education has continued to thrive at Simon Balle as we approach the Christmas break. Students continue to experience a broad and varied PE curriculum across the All through from Reception up to Year 11. We will also be introducing sixth form extra-curricular clubs throughout the spring term, so exciting times ahead. We have recently received the fixture list for the Hertfordshire Athletics league with our first Athletics meet taking place on the 6th May. We are also tasked with the honour of organising this years' County Athletics Plate Final in July at Jarman Park, recognition of our status within Hertfordshire Sport.

In January we will update you further in relation to our Spring extra-curricular programme.

We are continually reviewing our current practices and risk assessments, consulting with Governors' as well as adhering to both Government, Association for PE (Afpe), Youth Sport Trust (YST) and National Governing body guidelines, to ensure that we are in a position to deliver our PE curriculum safely. As PE staff we continue to adhere to a scrupulous cleaning programme and if you require any additional information in relation to our

Simon Balle All-through school

delivery approach to specific activities then please do not hesitate to contact me on brennand@simonballe.herts.sch.uk



Sports Leadership at Simon Balle



This term we have been delivering sports leadership both within our Year 8 curriculum through Football and Benchball, as well as the re-introduction of our Year 9 Sports Leadership Academy programme. 20 students have signed up already and have committed to the training programme, which will culminate in our students supporting both our own KS2 students as well as the local Primary schools through leading sports activities and supporting sports days. In the Spring term, we will be commencing our Year 10 Sports Leadership programme during core PE lessons, a programme which has now been running for nearly 15 years and gives every student in Year 10 the experience of leading activities for Primary aged students. More information will follow over the coming months.

Active In Mind

As a school, we have been fortunate to be selected by the Youth Sport Trust to deliver the Active In Mind programme at Simon Balle. This will involve a number of year 9 students being mentored by a group of year 12 students throughout the next term. The aim of the programme is to use physical activity to encourage positive lifestyle behaviours as well as develop strategies for dealing with mental health and wellbeing issues. The programme was launched this week when British Champion Sprinter, Lesley Owusu, visited the school to meet the students involved. She led the students through some physical activity as well as giving the students some mental challenges to complete. We look forward to virtually working with her throughout the next few months.



Simon Balle All-through school

Safer Schools

Please find attached the Safer Schools newsletter which is being sent on behalf of Hertfordshire Constabulary.



Stevensons

Due to the current situation, Stevensons have had to close their shops. However, please find the poster below that explains how you can still buy their products.

Arriva

Below you will find a poster from Arriva with details on how they can make your travel to school easier.

St Andrews Nativity

The Church has a lovely life-sized Nativity on display for the public to view. Please find the details below

Finally...

Governors and Senior Leaders would like to wish you a wonderful Christmas break (when it arrives!). We learned just recently that the word 'community' is from the Latin - 'com' - together and 'munus' - a gift. It seems apt to share this with you now - our very special Simon Balle community. Together we are stronger and we should appreciate this togetherness as a gift.

Please do stay safe, enjoy family time and we look forward to welcoming students back on Tuesday 5th January 2021.



HERTFORDSHIRE
CONSTABULARY

CYP GANGS & SCHOOLS TEAM

**LIVES
NOT
KNIVES**

#STOPKNIFECRIME

#PASSITON

**LIVES
NOT
KNIVES**

#LIVESNOTKNIVES

PASS IT ON

#LIVES NOT KNIVES

Support our #LIVESNOTKNIVES campaign by passing it on

- 1 Take a team photograph with the LIVESNOTKNIVES basketball
- 2 Post the picture on your social media account reinforcing your clubs support against knife crime
- 3 Pass it on to the next club and repeat

Let's see how far we can pass the ball and spread the #LIVESNOTKNIVES campaign

LIVES NOT KNIVES

#LIVESNOTKNIVES

#PASS IT ON

**LIVES
NOT
KNIVES**

#LIVES NOT KNIVES

CHRISTMAS AND 2021 OPENING UPDATE

Like all retail businesses, we have faced an extremely challenging 2020 and as such have reviewed our opening hours with a view to making a change for the upcoming seasonal break and into 2021. Our store and warehouse teams have worked tirelessly over the summer and autumn, in very difficult circumstances, with many unable to take their scheduled holidays. This we need to rectify.

We are approaching the quietest time of the year for our business due to the seasonality of our trade and as such have made the decision to have an extended shut down over the holiday period. We have also taken the opportunity to assess the trading pattern of our business into the new year and will be closing our stores each week on a Wednesday for the early part of 2021.

EARLY CHRISTMAS STORE SHUTDOWN

Due to the very limited shopping in our stores, in both the approach to Christmas and over the new year period, all our stores will be closed between:

MONDAY 14th DECEMBER 2020 – FRIDAY 1st JANUARY 2021.

We will re-open on **SATURDAY 2nd JANUARY 2021.**

During this extended break customers will still be able to shop online, and orders will still be processed by our warehouse team. Delivery times may be affected by the expected general increased use of both the postal and courier services.

Our 120 day returns policy remains in place for the majority of items we sell, so you if your child has a growth spurt over the Christmas break you can exchange items easily later on.

A MORE EFFICIENT WORKING WEEK

Having analysed our staffing numbers during non-peak periods, we know that we generally have limited members of the team on the sales floor within our current 6 day a week opening. The need to schedule each member of staff's day off on low staffing numbers in each shop means there are less of our team around to serve customers, every day.

So, from **MONDAY 4th JANUARY** we will close all our English stores on Wednesday every week. This will enable all staff to have the same day off, resulting in better all-round service on the remaining 5 days we will trade in each location. We will return to 6 days trading in the months June - September 2021.

ENSURING STABILITY

We believe that in these continued difficult times, these are small changes that will provide increased stability and still deliver the high level of customer service that our history and reputation demands.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

E: customerservices@stevensons.co.uk

T: (0) 1727 815700 (9.00am - 5.30pm Mon - Sat. For Bank Holiday opening times, check our website)

W: www.stevensons.co.uk

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Why not Travel with Arriva?

You could save money by travelling
by bus with these amazing benefits:



Unlimited bus travel each month.



Parents/Guardians can set up direct debits
on behalf of the student.



Ticket sent direct to your
home or mobile.

Convenient monthly payments
by direct debit.



Ongoing direct debit meaning tickets can be
used throughout half term, summer holidays
and into the next academic year.



Quick and easy to join.



How to apply

From the link below it's a simple 2-step process to sign-up to obtain the student ticket:



STEP 1:

Order your ticket online by choosing your local travel zone and completing the direct debit application form - you will need your bank account details.

STEP 2:

Receive your season ticket via your chosen method.

•To receive an m-ticket you must download the Arriva m-ticket app and register your details first.

**Full terms and conditions are available on our website*



How it Works

Pay even less for your travel each week by purchasing a yearly ticket but paying for it monthly with a direct debit.

There's no set up fee and no minimum contract, which means that you can cancel your direct debit at any time should your circumstances change.

This makes it an ideal way to get reduced bus travel for the year without having to pay upfront.

Payments are taken on the 1st or 15th of each month. The nearest direct debit date will be the default option available to choose. Please allow at least two weeks to register before the date of your first direct debit payment.

Sign up today or email us on



**Download the Arriva bus app
& m-ticket app today!**



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Welcome to the St Andrew's 2020 Nativity!

From 29 November and over the days leading up to Christmas you will be able to see familiar and life-size figures from the nativity story appear in the grounds of St Andrew's Church.

You will also see some letters appearing... Will you be able to find them all to spell out a very special word? And will you be extra clever and manage to find the bonus objects relating to the story?

All figures, letters and objects will be placed within the church grounds but outside of the church building.

You can share your pictures via **Facebook @Hertford St Andrew's Church** and there's more information at **www.hertfordstandrews.co.uk/nativity**

**Good luck, enjoy and wishing you a very peaceful Christmas
from all at St Andrew's Church, St Andrew Street, Hertford**

