

Secondary phase newsletter

Creating Tomorrow's Citizens Today

Friday 2nd July 2021

All-through news

Dear Parents,

We have decided to keep to our cycle of newsletters despite the fact that we are planning a “bumper end of term” edition during the last week of this summer term, now only 2 weeks away! So this “All through newsletter” will be shorter than usual, and will contain key messages.

Covid reminders

Secondary parents will have received a number of messages from me over the past few days, as like most secondary schools, we have seen an increased number of positive cases and thus have had to ask others to isolate. This mirrors the huge increase seen in East Hertfordshire. In the Larch, increasing numbers of children have had “cold-like symptoms” and have been advised to take the precaution of a PCR test. In school we continue to:

- Work in bubbles
- Insist on hand sanitising
- In secondary wear masks
- Ventilate all rooms
- All staff and students in secondary self-test daily

Please can you all continue to adhere to the rules; we are nearing the end of regulations if we believe the press coverage, but we still need to keep others safe and well.

I am sure that you are not surprised to hear that we still have no idea as to what will happen in September with regard to testing, bubbles and isolation. Last week we received notification that it was likely we would need to test all secondary students prior to their return to school in September. However, we await further information, and of course, we will let you know as soon as we do.

Communication from the School

Our In Touch system, which is used for most of our email communication have changed their address from 9194067@capita-intouch.co.uk to 9194067@sims-communications.co.uk. Please can you add this address to your email address book (or approved sender list) in order to prevent messages from being blocked by your SPAM/JUNK filters. Please also check your JUNK/SPAM folder regularly in case messages go there.

Sports day

In preparation for Sports Days, across our all-through school, Mr Brennan and the PE department have led assemblies on the “Olympic Values” this week. **Secondary Sports Day takes place on Friday 9th July.** Students are expected to come to school in Simon Balle PE kit and will remain in PE kit for the day. We also stress the importance of students preparing for the day by bringing filled water bottles as well as sun cream. The day will be split into morning and afternoon sessions. In the morning Year 7-10 students, during their allocated hour, will participate in the jumping, throwing, tug-of-war, middle distance and volleyball activities. We have restricted our usual programme to fewer events due to Covid restrictions, however, all students will be expected to participate in at least one activity throughout the day as well as supporting their peers.

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In the afternoon from 2 pm, we will come together as a Simon Balle secondary community for the sprint and relay races. Students will register with their form tutor and then go to the astro within their year group bubble which they will remain in for the rest of the afternoon session. We will conclude the day at 3pm with the eagerly anticipated house results and presentations. We look forward to this exciting day!

On Wednesday 14th July the Larch Sports Day will take place for **Years 2 - 5**. In the morning the children will compete in a mixture of different races including sprints, hurdles, relays and an obstacle course with all their class cheering them on! In the afternoon the children will take part in many different sporting activities including hit the wicket, penalty shoot out and archery just to name a few. We know how excited the children are for sports day this year and we hope it will be a celebration of their hard work and determination in this school year and a perfect end to the last week of term. As always there will be many stickers to be handed out throughout the day and of course, the trophy will be awarded to the house with the most points. I wonder which house will be victorious this year?

Please can we ask that children come to school with a named water bottle and they have all their PE kit in school including trainers. They will get changed for sports day in school. If the weather is hot please do ensure that your child has suncream and a hat.

In a change to previously announced dates, due to our need to be so careful with primary bubbles, Sports Day for **Reception and Year 1 will be on Monday 12th July.**

We know it is disappointing that we are unable to welcome parents to sports day this year but we will ensure to take lots of pictures throughout the day so you can share in our celebrations.

Music Exams

It has been a real pleasure this week to be holding music exams for a range of instruments at all standards. We know that our students, from Y2 to Y13 have prepared well and worked so hard with their performances. We await the results and will update you in our end of academic year newsletter.

Larch Head Boy and Girl

Many Year 5 students have shown brilliant courage and resilience when applying for our first ever Larch Head Boy and Girl roles in recent weeks. Their first step was writing a letter explaining how they show all of our school values and will commit to the responsibilities the role has. Last Friday, they were full of butterflies and excitement when they brought an object of their choice that represented them to discuss in a small group with our Year 12 Head Boy and Girl (Ewan and Amelie), and their deputies (Emily and Harry). We were so impressed by their maturity and support for each other! We are happy to announce that, not only have all applicants been rewarded with an important leadership role for next year, we have also shortlisted four children: Isabel, Eva O, Maxwell and Sonny for this extremely important position. They have one final stage of the process, then it will be announced during the last week of term who will be our first ever Larch Head Girl, Head Boy, Deputy Head Girl and Deputy Head Boy!

Secondary Senior Student Leaders

Ewan, Amelie, Harry and Emily (all in Year 12) have been working hard over the past few weeks. Not only have they led the process within the Larch to select their leaders, but they have also visited local primaries to welcome the new Year 7s, led assemblies, and represented the school. One of their key roles next term is to re-establish the year councils and the School Parliament. Well done and a big thank you!

End of term arrangements SECONDARY

Secondary students will be dismissed at the following times -

Y7	12.25
Y8	12.20
Y9	12.15

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Y10 12.05

Y12 12.05

There will be no break food or drink available at break time for students.

End of term arrangements LARCH

All students will leave the site at 12 noon

Please DO NOT drive on site to drop off or collect your child(ren) - free parking is available at the car park next to the fire station in Old London Road. Please also note that Balls Park is a private estate and you should not be using Harrison Lane or any other areas within Balls Park estate.

PSA news:

Doughie's – Pizza Night for Larch and Year 7, Thursday 15th July

The pizza kit order window is now open for all Larch and Year 7 families! Orders can be placed directly with Doughie's, via [this link](#), before **10th July**. Each batch of dough is handcrafted and is made to order. Your kit contains enough fresh ingredients to make a 12" artisan pizza and costs £6.50. **Please include your child's name AND class/form on the order form.** We cannot process orders without this information. If the text box is glitchy, please cut and paste your text into the box. Regular and vegan pizza kits are available. Unfortunately, gluten-free kits are not available at this time. Please contact Doughie's directly with allergen queries. For the chance to win a FREE Doughie's pizza kit, simply upload your finished creation to the [Simon Balle PSA Facebook Page](#), tagging @doughiespizza. The creator of the pizza with the most likes by 30th July will receive a refund on their winning pizza kit. You can find more information in our [leaflet](#).

*** Please note: Due to covid restrictions, we are limiting this event to Larch and Year 7 families only, on this occasion. If we receive a good number of orders, we will be able to run this event again.***

World Chocolate Day – 7th July, Smarties Challenge

On **July 7th** we celebrate World Chocolate Day! It was on this date in **1550** that chocolate (first as a drink) was introduced to Europe. To celebrate this delicious day, the Parent Staff Association has a special treat and a Summer holiday challenge for all Larch and Year 7 students. Please see the leaflet attached [here](#) for more information.

- A little piece I can write re enrichment for Sep: Years 6 - 8 enrichment, plus Explorers for primary
- Inviting help with farm during the summer
- Rules re collecting primary aged children: EY/KS1 - Parent, could be Year 10 + with permission
- KS2 - Year 7+ with permission
- Year 5 from Jan, and Year 6 - independent

Secondary news

Transition

Hertfordshire County Council took the decision to cancel "transition day" for year 6's this year as a face to face experience. Our new Year 7 have been visited in their primary schools and Pastoral Staff have talked with their class teachers. As with last year, there have been a series of online activities, meetings and events. These have been greatly welcomed and we are hopeful that our new young people will settle quickly.

Arriva Student Travel 2021-2022

Please find more information about Arriva and their Student saver tickets, [here](#).

Herts and Fire Rescue Cadet Scheme

Herts Fire & Rescue are looking for new cadets Herts Fire & Rescue are recruiting for new fire cadets to join our scheme. It is a nationally recognised educational programme open to young people aged 14 to 17 and supports them to make a positive contribution to society. This programme provides an opportunity to learn about, engage

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with and experience the Fire & Rescue service and enables young people to gain skills and knowledge in a fun, safe and secure environment. For more information please contact the Herts Fire & Rescue service.

Wishing you all a happy and fulfilling final fortnight of the school year ahead!

Best wishes,

Mrs Alison Saunders (Headteacher) and Mrs Rachel Kirk (Vice Principal)