

# Primary 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](mailto:9194067@capita-intouch.co.uk) to [9194067@sims-communications.co.uk](mailto: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 days

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.

Simon Balle All-through school

In the afternoon from 2pm, 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?

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 Tuesday 13th July**. This will follow a similar format to the above, with many exciting sporting activities during the morning.

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.

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 Year 3 to Year 13 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 |

Simon Balle All-through school

Y9 12.15

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 15<sup>th</sup> 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 **10<sup>th</sup> 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 30<sup>th</sup> 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 – 7<sup>th</sup> July, Smarties Challenge**

On **July 7<sup>th</sup>** 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.

### **Simon Balle All-through School Farm**

Thank you so much to all of the parents who have already signed up to support with and enjoy the farm over the summer. The animals need your support! Please do add your family to a slot (or more than one!) if you can possibly help out. Please add to the timetable here: <https://forms.gle/fn4TLUGSuQrRBM6dA>

### **Primary news:**

#### **• Reports.**

All Larch reports have now been published! We hope that you will be pleased to read of your child's many achievements this year, despite the turbulence we have all experienced. I would like to publicly thank all of the teachers for their incredibly hard work in writing such personalised reports so that the process is important and meaningful for every child and family. Please do read reports carefully, particularly to identify the specific next steps that you can support your child with at home and that we look forward to supporting them with in their new classes in September. Please join virtual parents' meetings next week with any specific questions that you have, where the teachers will be happy to discuss and to help. **It is very important, please, that you have read the report prior to the meeting in order to make the most of the time to talk.**

Accessing the reports is through Go for Schools for Years 1 - 5. To access the snapshot click on the 'progress and reports' link at the top of the page (or scroll down to the bottom). Once at the bottom, click on the 'view

Simon Balle All-through school

report' tab for the latest snapshot. On the next screen which opens, click 'view report as PDF' – you can then view on screen, save and/or print.

The information you will find on your child's report contains:

- Text to summarise their achievements, in reading, writing, mathematics, and in all areas of personal social and emotional development, character and behaviour, including our Simon Balle values. There is also a summary of aspects of the foundation subjects in which your child particularly thrives.
- Progress information. Each teacher has carefully recorded the progress that your child has made within their text. This progress may be small steps or steady, or good (which indicates the national expectation for progress), or excellent (which indicates accelerated progress).
- Attitude to learning. Teachers have selected from 'excellent' or 'good' or 'requiring improvement' for each of reading, writing and mathematics. The criteria for these is described in a short paragraph.
- Attainment. Separate from their progress above, we have also included where children are currently attaining in reading, writing and mathematics. This is recorded as 'age-related expectations' (ARE), 'greater depth' (above age-related expectations), 'working towards' (below age-related expectations) and 'U' which indicates working at a pre-key stage level. Any questions at all regarding this, don't hesitate to talk to class teachers next week.

Accessing reports for Reception is through Tapestry. When you are on your notifications screen, you will see 'Published report End of Reception' - just click to open.

The information you will find on your child's report is very similar to the above for their progress, their personal, social and emotional development, and their achievements. In relation to their attainment, in each Early Years area of learning, the report shows you:

- ELG - this means meeting the early learning goal (the age-related expectation)
- ELG+ - this means achieving above the early learning goal
- 40 - 60+ - this means working within the developmental band 40 - 60 months, which is below the age-related expectation
- 30 - 50 - this means working within the developmental band 30 - 50 months, which is below the age-related expectation.

We hope that we have been as informative as possible in all of the above.

- **Year group and classes for September 2021.**

Today has been a very exciting day in which all of the children found out about their class teachers and teaching assistants for September. Staff popped to say hello to their class and shared how excited they will be to meet them properly for transition morning next Thursday. When preparing for a new year, we always consider whether any cohorts would be best mixed into two new classes - this can be for all sorts of reasons that dynamics or learning may work better in a slightly different mix. Friendships are always carefully taken into account when children are mixed as well as everything that staff know about all children. Do remember that the year group will still be together in many, many ways including playtimes, lunchtimes, extra-curricular activities and more. The current Year 3 will be mixed to make new Kingfishers and Doves. The current Reception will be mixed to make new Badgers and Rabbits. As well as the staffing below, children will continue to be supported by Mrs Harding, Miss Norbury, Mr Leonard, Miss Mills, Mrs Cox, Mrs Sutton (a new teacher to Simon Balle working across classes), Mrs Southall, Mrs Hall, Mrs Bloss and I. We will continue to benefit from specialist secondary staff in subjects including modern foreign languages, music, and PE. All new staff will be here next Thursday for transition morning.

## Simon Balle All-through school

| Year group/class<br>September 2021 | Teacher                     | Teaching Assistant | Current class to go up |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Reception Hedgehogs                | Miss Pearce                 | Mrs Sansford       | New to Simon Balle     |
| Reception Squirrels                | Miss Hudson                 | Mrs Glover         | New to Simon Balle     |
| Year 1 Rabbits                     | Miss Ponder                 | Mrs Pettengell     | Mixed Reception        |
| Year 1 Badgers                     | Miss Williams               | Mrs Peters         | Mixed Reception        |
| Year 2 Foxes                       | Mrs Philip                  | Mrs Lafferty       | Rabbits                |
| Year 2 Deer                        | Miss Riddle                 | Miss Deards        | Badgers                |
| Year 3 Wrens                       | Mrs Summerfield             | Miss Gibbons       | Foxes                  |
| Year 3 Robins                      | Miss Ridley                 | Mrs Ludlow         | Deer                   |
| Year 4 Doves                       | Miss Evans                  | Mrs Hawkins        | Mixed Robins and Wrens |
| Year 4 Kingfishers                 | Mrs Prendergast/ Mrs Getley | Mrs Harris         | Mixed Robins and Wrens |
| Year 5 Mallards                    | Miss Blackman               | Mrs Clarke         | Kingfishers            |
| Year 5 Swans                       | Miss Hesketh                | Dr Gardner         | Doves                  |
| Year 6 Owls                        | Miss Boyce                  | Mrs Peddar         | Swans                  |
| Year 6 Eagles                      | Mr Peters                   |                    | Mallards               |

### • Year 5 Sports Leaders and Year 2 Rapid Fire tournament.

We were so delighted to welcome the Hertford and Ware partnership to school on Wednesday! Children in Year 5 took part in a leadership programme so that they can all become sports leaders. They were a credit to the school and it is clear they really are going to be amazing leaders supporting our youngest students in their sporting journeys. Well done to you all!

In the afternoon it was Year 2s turn and they thoroughly enjoyed a rapid-fire tournament. Rapid-fire is a cricket game and the children had the opportunity to perfect their fielding and batting skills. We were lucky to have some of our Year 5 sports leaders running this tournament for Year 2 and they really did put all they had learnt in the morning into practice. We know Year 2 were delighted with their certificates and stickers from the event.

### • Healthy snacks. Just a reminder please for the final two weeks of term, and for September too, that:

- Reception, Year 1 and 2 do not need to bring any snack at all into school. There is fresh fruit available every day for them.
- For Years 3 - 6, a healthy snack for playtime can be brought if you wish. This could include fruit, fruit bars (no nuts, of course), yoghurt or cereal bars, dried fruit, breadsticks or similar. Children may not have crisps, chocolate or any kind of cakes.

Simon Balle All-through school

## **Dates**

- **Week beginning 5th July - parents' week.** Just a reminder to make sure that you connect to meetings next week. We very much look forward to speaking with you in relation to your children's achievements this year and, of course, in relation to next steps and in support in transition.
- **Transition day:** Thursday 8th July. All children in Reception - Year 5 will spend 9 am - 12 pm in their new classes with their new staff for September 2021.
- **Music opportunities:** Please look forward to the video and audio recordings shared - so much to celebrate! Also demo sessions over the next two weeks, as well as letters to parents to share information, in relation to signing up to strings, woodwind or brass. Many opportunities for 2021-2022!
- **Year 5 only.** As part of our work on the transition to Year 6, Year 5 will be having lunch in the secondary dining room on Tuesday 6th and Tuesday 13th July.

*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)*