

Primary phase newsletter

Friday 11th February 2022

Creating Tomorrow's Citizens Today



All-through news

We have now reached the mid point of this academic year and “spring” is definitely in the air. Lighter evenings are welcome as we see the return of sports matches both for upper KS2 and secondary students. More students are back in this week as thankfully covid rates start to decline amongst our children. Walking around both sites, it is reassuring to see our students engaged in their learning, and also helping others. One of the joys of being all through are the opportunities for children across phases to learn and play together. I was struck this week by the return of our sixth formers as tutors, listening to reading and helping in play areas.

One of our unique features as a school is the importance we place upon teaching values. We believe that this is a critical part of character education and personal development, and this informs all of our assemblies across each phase.

This week we have as a school been part of “internet safety” campaign and I hope that you will access the podcast. Educating our young people to be safe online is the duty of both parents and schools. I hope that the resources we sent in the last newsletter were also useful.

<https://simonballe.podbean.com/e/simon-balle-talks-safer-internet-day-2022/>

Vacancies

We are currently looking for a primary teacher (permanent) and a teaching maternity cover along with a TA. If you or anyone you know would be interested in joining our established team please check our website for full details and application instructions.

The poster features a vibrant, multi-colored silhouette of four people in various dynamic poses (jumping, dancing, etc.) against a light blue sky background. The text 'HERTFORD & WARE' is at the top in orange, 'LARK IN THE' is in large blue letters, and 'PARK' is in large purple letters. Below the silhouettes, it says 'FEBRUARY HALF TERM ACTIVITIES FOR 11 - 19 YEAR OLDS' and 'Supported and arranged by East Herts Community Safety Partnerships'. It lists two events: 'HERTFORD - MONDAY 14TH FEBRUARY' with times 12.00pm - 2.00pm and 2.30pm - 4.30pm, and 'WARE - THURSDAY 17TH FEBRUARY' with time 12.00pm - 2.00pm. A green checkmark icon and the text 'FREE No need to book' are on the right. At the bottom, small text lists funding organizations: 'East Herts District Council, HCC Services for young people, Network Homes and East Herts Town Councils'.

Covid reminder

If you are travelling abroad this half-term be sure to check and follow COVID-19 guidance for your country of travel and on re-entering the UK, you can find the latest travel guidance at:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/travel-abroad-from-england-during-coronavirus-covid-19>

- **Get vaccinated** - vaccination continues to offer the best protection for ourselves and others around us from becoming seriously ill from COVID-19. There are lots of walk-in options available locally for first, second doses and boosters, you can find your nearest vaccination centre and also book an appointment at:

<https://covid.healthierfuture.org.uk/>

Young people aged 12-18 yet to receive their COVID-19 vaccination(s) can find out more, including walk-in options for clinics for young people, and book at:

<https://covid.healthierfuture.org.uk/vaccine-information-for-young-people>

Half term COVID-19 'Relax and Vax' sessions for nervous teenagers

Five of the larger vaccination centres across Hertfordshire and west Essex are running 'Relax and Vax' sessions during half-term week aimed supporting 12 to 18-year-olds who are nervous about having their COVID-19 vaccine.

Specially trained staff will be on hand to help overcome worries like a fear of needles and answer any other concerns using simple and clinically effective relaxation techniques to help reduce tension and support them through the process. Children aged 12-15 need to be accompanied by a consenting parent or carer and just mention they are nervous on arrival so that the staff can make adjustments and they are given plenty of time and support. You can find a list of participating venues and times at: <https://covid.healthierfuture.org.uk/>

People under 18 who have recently had COVID-19 must wait 12 weeks before having their vaccination.

Test regularly – 1 in 3 people with COVID-19 do not display symptoms. Regular rapid testing at home can help to prevent transmission. Find out all the ways to get home test kits (LFD tests) at: www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/rapidtest

Stay at home – if you have symptoms stay at home and book or order a PCR test online at: www.nhs.uk/get-tested

If you test positive you must self-isolate for the required period and not have people visit you at home. There is support available to help people who need it to self-isolate, call HertsHelp on 0300 123 4044, email info@hertshelp.net or visit www.hertshelp.net

Please do not send children and young people back to school following half-term if they have any symptoms or feel unwell. There continues to be a high number of outbreaks across Hertfordshire's childcare, nurseries, schools, special schools and colleges – they need your support to help protect our communities and have the least disruption to children's learning and development as possible.

To Celebrate the Queen's 70 years of service, the fabulous Art Enrichment Class have created prints of the Queen's stamps. The stamps were then used to make a silhouette of the Queen's head for this wonderful display.

Amazing work guys! Well done to the class and thank you for your help!

Ms Smillie and the art department.



Parental support sessions

As part of the Wellbeing for Education Recovery Hertfordshire have commissioned the following parental support sessions with regard to anxiety and resilience through Bounce Forward. The specific programmes are:

- **Anxiety and Resilience** (A three-session on-line course for up to 150 parents)
 - Children and young people will feel anxious and worried from time to time. Anxiety is a normal or usual response to uncertainty. The way we respond as parents, and deal with our own anxiety plays a significant part in building our children's capacity to develop resilience.
- **Raise Resilience** (A 5 session on line course for up to 150 parents)
 - Raise Resilience starts with personal resilience, how parents can look after themselves, building self-awareness about what might be getting in the way, and helping them notice what is going well and their strengths as a parent.

The times/dates are listed below. The links to book and more information is contained within the attached leaflets. If you are interested I encourage you to book on quickly as these courses are usually very popular.

Anxiety and Resilience

(<https://bounceforward.com/anxiety-hertfordshire-parents/>)

- Mondays 8-9pm, Starting 14th March
- Tuesdays 12:30-1:30pm, Starting 15th March
- Tuesdays 7:30-8:30pm, Starting 26th April
- Wednesdays 10-11am, Starting 8th June

Raise Resilience

- Wednesdays 10-11am, Starting 2nd March
- Tuesdays 8-9pm, Starting 8th March
- Tuesdays 12:30-1:30pm, Starting 3rd May
- Mondays 7:30-8:30pm, Starting 13th June

#JUSTTALK

"It's okay to not be okay"

Mental health and wellbeing information for parents and carers in Hertfordshire

"Talking shows strength"

Information for parents and carers of children and young people. We all have mental health, and there are things all of us can do to help look after our own wellbeing and mental health, and to support those around us.

Hertfordshire's Just Talk website: www.justtalkherts.org is a central hub of information and resources for parents, carers and young people in Hertfordshire, to help children and young people improve their emotional wellbeing, build their resilience and develop positive coping strategies. It also has details of other organisations who can help if parents, carers, children and young people are struggling:

www.justtalkherts.org
Five Ways to Wellbeing e-learning
Facebook: JustTalkHerts
Instagram: @JustTalkHerts
Twitter: @JustTalkHerts

www.mindedforfamilies.org.uk is a national website for quality assured and free e-learning about young people's mental health and wellbeing.

Where to find advice and information

Hertfordshire websites

- www.justtalkherts.org for self help information and details of a range of support available.
- www.servicesforyoungpeople.org - part of Hertfordshire County Council, providing youth work projects, information, advice, guidance, work-related learning and wider support for young people in Hertfordshire.
- www.servicesforyoungpeople.org/support-for-young-people/support-for-young-lgbtq-people - projects across the county for the young LGBT+ community of Hertfordshire.
- www.healthyhubs.org.uk - free information, advice and support to help you stay healthy and well.
- www.hertsmindnetwork.org - essential mental health support for Hertfordshire residents over the age of 18 and dedicated services for 10-18 year olds.
- www.carersinherts.org.uk - advice, information and support to unpaid carers.
- www.healthyyoungmindsinherts.org - information on emotional health and wellbeing support.
- www.northhertscollege.edu - educational courses about mental wellbeing, free to all Hertfordshire residents aged 18 and over.
- www.healthforkids.co.uk - top tips and advice on all aspects of children's emotional and physical health.
- www.healthforteens.co.uk - information for teenagers about all aspects of health and lifestyle.
- www.hertscomhs.nhs.uk - information for young people, parents, carers and professionals about mental health issues and HPFT's CAMHS services.

UK websites

- www.annafreud.org - advice and guidance to help parent and carers support children and young people who may be struggling with poor mental health.
- www.thamis.org.uk - leading support service for young people in the UK.
- www.youngminds.org.uk - mental health charity for children, young people and their parents, making sure all young people can get the mental health support they need.
- www.nhs.uk/evermindmatters - NHS mental health resources include tailored advice, as well as practical tips on sleep and self-care.

Where to find more advice and help

Parents and carers

You or your child might need some more advice, especially when experiencing difficulties, feelings of anxiety or low mood, or whilst adjusting to changes in life. You could speak to:

- your child's teacher, or mental health lead at their school or college
- your GP
- Hertfordshire's family centre service at: **0300 123 7572** or www.hertsfam@centres.org
- Chathealth texting service for parents/carers of 0-5s: **07480 635164**
- Hertfordshire's Wellbeing Service for people age 16+ at: www.northhertsxpert.nhs.uk
- HPFT (one of Hertfordshire's NHS providers of mental health services) **24/7 freephone helpline: 0800 6444 101** or you can have a live webchat Monday to Friday 7am-7pm at: www.hpft.nhs.uk

Young people

- free online counselling for anyone age 11-25 at www.kooth.com
- Herts Mind Network, Young People's Helpline for 10-17s: **01923 256391**.
- Chathealth text messaging service for secondary school aged young people: **07480 635050**.

Where to get some urgent help

- Call HPFT's freephone 24/7 helpline: **0800 6444 101** or
- Call NHS 111 and select option two for mental health services

In the event of a life threatening condition that requires an emergency intervention, call 999 for the emergency services.

Junior bake off

Calling all enthusiastic bakers aged 9-12 years old!!

Love Productions; the company behind The Great British Bake Off, The Great British Sewing Bee and The Great Pottery Throw Down, have recently opened applications for the 8th series of **Junior Bake Off**; a Channel 4 programme that celebrates the culinary talent and ambition of the younger generation in Britain.

With this in mind, we are contacting schools in the hope that you can help us spread the word regarding this exciting opportunity.

We are looking for young budding bakers between **9-12 years old**.

Filming would take place from July 2022, but our applications close on **Sunday 13th March 2022**.

Interested bakers can apply online at - www.applyforjuniorbakeoff.co.uk

enquiries:

applyforjuniorbakeoff@loveproductions.co.uk



Primary news

As this busy half term comes to a close, here is a round-up of wonderful core subject learning this fortnight shared by our phase leaders.

Phase 1

Reception have been busy learning about lots of different festivals and celebrations over the last few weeks. The children enjoyed learning about Burns Night, hearing about traditions for Chinese New Year, and sharing kind messages for Valentines Day. In Maths the Hedgehogs and Squirrels have been using objects to measure and compare items, as well as using the Julia Donaldson book 'Room on the Broom' to learn about ordinal numbers. They also had fun designing their own brooms and thinking about what special features theirs would include! In Year 1 we have been learning about money in maths. We have been adding coins to make different values, exploring different currencies and ordering coins and notes by value. In English the Badgers and Rabbits have enjoyed reading the story "Farmer Duck". We spent time learning about writing instructions and using our inference skills to think about how the characters would be feeling. We have also been reading non-fiction texts about farming and using our skills to answer a range of questions.

Phase 2

It has been a busy week in Phase 2! Year 2 have been finishing their unit on a fantastic story called Mufaro's Beautiful Daughter, writing a range of pieces using expanded noun phrases, conjunctions and even using inverted commas (or speech marks) to write dialogue between the different characters. In Maths, they have been telling the time. It would be wonderful if the children in Year 2 could continue to practise this over the half term as it's an important life skill as well as Maths learning. Linking nicely to

Year 2 and telling the time, Year 3 have been looking at fractions. They have calculated fractions of amounts, compared and ordered fractions and spotted equivalent fractions. They have been reading *Escape from Pompeii*, a brilliant fiction book based on the true events of Mount Vesuvius erupting and destroying Pompeii, and have written their own newspaper articles about this event. Last but not least, Year 4 have been working equally as hard in Maths and have had a big push on practising their times tables. Parents, please look out for the letters which have been sent out today regarding the Multiplication Tables Check and support around this. Learning to recall times tables with pace and accuracy is central to the maths curriculum in phase 2; not only is this an important skill in itself, it also underpins the maths curriculum in Years 5 and 6, where children will have much more working memory space free to tackle long multiplication and complex fractions calculations if the recall of facts is secure. Learning times tables can be really fun - please refer to our recent parent workshop for many, many ideas! In English, they have continued to read *Journey to Jo'Burg*, another wonderful book set in South Africa during Apartheid, and have been writing diary entries in the voice of the characters.

Phase 3

This week Year 6 have been fully immersed in their final rehearsals in preparation for their performance of *Macbeth* in London. We can't wait to see the performances come together under professional lighting and with a live audience! Outside of rehearsals, they have been very busy with their learning. They have been writing discussion texts based upon a controversial statement (that brought much debate in the classrooms!): *Macbeth*- tragic hero or evil villain? Year 6 have used their knowledge from performing and studying their literary canon text in-depth, and have worked hard to ensure they haven't shown bias in their writing.

Year 5 have been converting decimals, percentages and fractions- an important skill that can be applied in so many contexts. Students were able to articulate their understanding clearly and were incredibly enthusiastic! Maybe quiz your child on these to check their understanding in real life contexts such as on adverts and signs in shops. Year 5 have been enjoying reading *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* this half term, and have applied their understanding of formality when writing their own diary entries this week.

Year 4 Parent information evening - Residential trip

We are delighted to offer our Year 4 students the opportunity to take part in our school outdoor adventure

trip with Wildchild Adventure in the Autumn term of Year 5 later this year. The trip will take place at Phasels Wood Activity Centre, Hertfordshire, for three days and two nights on **Wednesday 14th-Friday 16th September 2022**. We would like to invite Year 4 parents to attend an information evening at **6pm on Thursday 3rd March** in the Larch hall where a representative from Wildchild will give you all the information you need and can answer any questions you have.

Internet Safety Day

On Tuesday, the Larch celebrated Safer Internet Day with the theme of 'All fun and games? Exploring respect and relationships online'. Edutech and their ambassadors were in the building talking to our Year 3s and 4s about how to keep themselves safe online. The children impressed Edutech with their knowledge of what is safe and what is not safe to do when playing or communicating online. KS1 had discussions in class, again, focussing on how it is important to not give out personal information online or talk to people who they have never met in person. This year is exciting as for the first time ever Simon Balle All-Through School has its own school podcast where two of our Year 6 Digital leaders were part of discussions with students from KS3 and 4 about their experiences online and how to keep themselves safe (the link is shared by Mrs Saunders at the top of this newsletter). It was interesting to listen to conversations around the school about the amount of time spent on screens and devices and this has highlighted how, although they are great resources to have to use for learning and playing, it is very easy to spend too much time on them, affecting behaviours and perceptions of real life situations. Well done to all and thank you to Edutech, the Edutech ambassadors and Digital Leaders for the support you have provided for the children in the Larch.

Year 6 Larch Graduation Evening 2022

We are excited to be asking you to put an advance date in your diaries! On Monday 18th July 2022, at 4.30pm, we invite all of our Year 6 children to join us, at Simon Balle, for their Larch graduation event. It promises to be fun and memorable for everybody! Much more information to follow, but please save the date now. Parents - we will be in touch asking for your support in the coming months - thank you in anticipation of this.

Thank you to all farm volunteers

Dear Parents/Carers, children, brothers/sisters and more!

We wanted to thank you so much for all that you do for the Simon Balle All-through School Mini Farm. The animals completely rely upon our community to look after them, whether it is raining or snowing or blowing a gale, whether it is pitch black or light,

whether it is Christmas Day or a miserable Saturday in January! Sometimes, our animals are very naughty - particularly Cookie! Sometimes we at school haven't realised that a necessary item has run out or that the bins need emptying (again!). Through all of this, you have been absolutely wonderful - committed, flexible, willing to give back to the school, solution-focussed, positive and more! Thank you very much indeed for the partnership between school and home; we wanted you to know how much we value what you do. With every best wish, and many more years of farming!

Mrs Kirk and Mrs Harding, on behalf of the whole Larch community.

BMX day in the Larch

This term Mike Mullen, BMX World Champion, shared his skills and ethos on learning with us. He delivered a fantastic assembly to the whole Larch on growth mindset demonstrating links to so many of our Simon Balle values. He encouraged the children to show determination, aspiration and courage. Year 5 were then able to participate in BMX workshops, where they not only developed an understanding of the values but were also able to put them into practice developing gross motor skills, balance and self-confidence. We had some children who were unable to ride bikes at the beginning of the hour session riding confidently and even performing tricks by the end! Thank you for all the highly positive feedback from parents - we are delighted that the children benefited so much from the day.



Valentines' Day

And finally...

The Larch has been lucky enough to have sixth form helpers this week. They have been supporting the children to spread Valentine's kindness, an important value at Simon Balle that the children have seen modelled by their older peers. Each child in the Larch will receive a Valentine with an anonymous kind message on it to make them smile.

Dates for the diary

Mon 14th to Fri 18th	Feb HALF TERM
Mon 21st Feb	Inset day school closed for students
Fri 1st Apr	End of term - normal finish
Tues 19th April	Inset day school closed for students
Wed 20th Apr	Summer term starts

PSA news



Hearts of Hope
Virtual Balloon Race
Simon Balle PSA

Friday 25th February -
Monday 28th February

Ticket sales close at 5pm on 24.2.22

Da Gamers
Golden business balloons available
Charlotte's big red heart
Thank you Miss Boyce
Dream Team For the win!

The poster features a vibrant rainbow arching over a green field. Several heart-shaped balloons are scattered around, each containing a message. A computer monitor and a smartphone are shown at the bottom, displaying the virtual balloon race interface.

Following last year's successful VBR, we have decided to mark the passing year by hosting our second race. The Simon Balle Hearts of Hope Virtual Balloon Race is intended to bring the entire school community together (virtually). We hope that you will enjoy participating in this fun event and warmly welcome students, staff, family and friends near or far to join in. There are prizes (and HPs for SB students) up for grabs too.

To join, simply follow the link below where you will be able to customise your virtual balloon, adding a message of hope or appreciation, if you wish. You will be sent a personal link that allows you to track your balloon throughout the race and view a leaderboard.

For more information, please see: www.simonballepsa.org.uk or [facebook.com/simonballepsa](https://www.facebook.com/simonballepsa)



**Buy 1 for £3 or
2+ for £2.50 each**

www.tickettailor.com/events/virtualpta/647042

The banner features a blue background with a cluster of colorful balloons in shades of purple, pink, and red.

<https://www.tickettailor.com/events/virtualpta/647042>

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Simon Balle PSA
Is hosting
JOULES SECONDS
IMPERFECT CATALOGUE RETURNS
AND SAMPLES
Wednesday 2nd March, 2022

Simon Balle PSA have teamed up with Joules clothing to bring a Joules Seconds sale to Hertford.

The Joules team will be at Simon Balle All-through School on Wednesday 2nd March, selling heavily discounted end of line, imperfections, samples and returns. You will find a variety of clothing, footwear and accessories for all ages, sizes and occasions.

Tickets will **not** be available on the door and are strictly advance purchase only, via this link: <https://simon-balle-all-through-school-psa.sumup.link/> Tickets cost £6 and a limited number of just 65 will be released for each of the time slots. This is to accommodate Covid mitigations, as requested by Joules.

Please ensure you wear a face covering, unless exempt and kindly note children are not permitted.

Sale slots as follows:
6.15-7.15pm
7.30-8.30pm

You will need to show your proof of purchase upon arrival, and will not be admitted before your time slot.

Sales will close 24 hours before the event, or sooner should tickets sell out. The Joules team will be managing sales. All items are sold as seen, no returns or exchanges. Please do bring your own bags for your purchases.



The bottom section of the poster contains three photographs showing the interior of the Joules Seconds sale. The photos depict rows of clothing racks filled with various items, including coats, shirts, and accessories, set in a well-lit room.

Wednesday 30th March

We are looking for a number of helpers to support the bar during the Drama Showcase. Please get in touch if this is something you can help with.

<https://volunteersignup.org/WT7KY>



Simon Balle Parent Staff Association

Dear Parents/Carers,

Upcoming Events – Help Needed!

Further to the Music Department's exciting update about this year's forthcoming live musical events, the PSA is delighted to have been asked to provide support with a bar and refreshments. And at the end of March, a fabulous evening of drama to look forward to, at which refreshments will also be provided.

We need your help please to fully support these wonderful events. As a volunteer, you get to meet and chat with other parents within our school community, feel directly involved in fundraising for the school's future projects, and even build life-long friendships. Plus you are guaranteed to have a great time! The list of benefits to getting involved is endless - why not give it a go?

No need to worry if you've not been involved in a bar event before - full briefings and guidance will be provided beforehand and on the day.

Simply click on the link below and volunteer for as much as you can do. We'll be in touch to discuss the rest.

An Evening with the Simon Balle Big Band - Saturday 5th March

A Vocal Showcase - Saturday 12th March

Drama Showcase – Wednesday 30th March

<https://volunteersignup.org/WT7KY>

Your time and support is greatly valued, wishing you all a lovely half-term break!

Jo Duggan - PSA Chair

