

# Primary phase newsletter

Friday 4th March 2022

*Creating Tomorrow's Citizens Today*



## All-through news

Just as the pandemic seems at last to be easing, we are now learning of new tragedies with the Russian invasion of Ukraine. We have been contacted by a number of our families to ask us as an all through school if we intend to act in terms of humanitarian aid and also how we are educating and talking to our students who are seeing so much on the news.

A range of BBC newsround clips are helpful for showing children in an age-appropriate way what is occurring. You may wish to refer to these at home:

- The Russia/Ukraine tensions:  
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/60073636>
- More about the ongoing conflict:  
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/60513502>
- The involvement of the UK and US:  
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/60508750>
- We understand that this news may be worrying for our young people:  
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/13865002>
- Although aimed at staff in schools, parents may find this guidance helpful in terms of managing such important but sensitive content:  
<https://educationhub.blog.gov.uk/2022/02/25/help-for-teachers-and-families-to-talk-to-pupils-about-russias-invasion-of-ukraine-and-how-to-help-them-avoid-misinformation/>

Of course, the situation is constantly changing. We are working hard, in every phase, to respond to student queries, to educate, to focus on our Simon Balle value of compassion in relation to the experience of refugees, and to ensure that all content is age-appropriate.

What are we doing next?

One of our ex-parents is organising collections of

winter clothes to be sent to the Ukraine. If you wish to donate clean winter clothes (any sort) please put them into bags and bring them into the secondary reception. We will then call Chris Gould who will collect the donations.

The "Disasters Emergency Committee " has launched its "Ukraine Humanitarian Appeal" whereby the UK Government is matching funds raised. We encourage you to visit this website and donate

<https://www.dec.org.uk/>

## Walking Bus

We are so pleased with the success of the walking bus to date. Most importantly, the Larch children who are on the walking bus love to belong to it! It is clearly promoting the importance of walking to school (important for every family) and providing a great service to a number of families who can drop children at the Old London Road car park. We are so grateful to our parent volunteers and to our sixth form volunteers as well. We would be delighted to see our walking bus expand further - not least because it is part of the long-term solution to our car park, where parents are simply not able to drive their children to school. A particular thank you to Jo Brown (governor and parent) who has worked tirelessly in the set up and continued implementation of the bus. If you would like your child/ren to join the bus (for free) or if you would like as a parent to volunteer to support the bus (could be just one morning per week), then please email [simonballewalkingbus@gmail.com](mailto:simonballewalkingbus@gmail.com). If you are a sixth former reading this, we need your help! Thank you to all.

## Music

There is so much happening in music at the moment. Do please click on this link for much more information about what has been happening as our events return.

<https://www.simonballe.herts.sch.uk/march-news-2022/>

## Online safety

As you are aware we focused last term on reminding our children and young people of the importance of keeping themselves safe online. In school this has included specific educational topics, changes of passwords and log ins as well as insisting that phones are not used during the school day. We continue to ask for your support in some simple ways: When your children see you using your phones do make sure that you are modeling best practice in the language you are using. That you check your child's useage and that parental controls are used. There is a wealth of good information online so do educate yourselves.

<https://saferinternet.org.uk/guide-and-resource/parents-and-carers>

## Vacancies

We are currently advertising for a number of posts including :

- Primary teacher - permanent
- Primary teacher - 1 year contract
- Head of Art & 3D design
- Teacher - Health & Social Care
- IT technician/Support desk administrator

Please go to the [vacancies tab](#) on our website for full details and our application form. We will also be posting other vacancies over the next few weeks so please do keep looking if your interested in joining our community. We are also happy to receive enquiries about possible employment at the school so if you, or someone you know is interested in finding out more do please contact us.

## Attendance update

We are so very proud of the increased levels of attendance across all phases this term and also the fantastic uptake of enrichment both before and after school.

Attendance at our virtual parents evenings and specific year group events at school have also been exceptional and we thank you for your support.

The updated attendance policy will soon be available to view on the website and we wanted to remind you of the protocols and expectations with regard to attendance, to ensure that attendance 'bounces back' following C-19 and periods of lockdown.

It is expected that all students will arrive at their lesson by 8.35am to start lessons at 8.40am in the secondary phase and 8.50am in the Primary phase. Registers will close 20 minutes after those times. Parents/carers must call into the school to report any absence as soon as possible.

At Simon Balle All-through School, our aim is to prepare students for their future lives and careers. With this in mind, we require parents/carers to observe the school holidays as prescribed. It is strongly recommended that holidays are not taken during term time and will only be authorised by the Headteacher, in exceptional circumstances once written permission has been sought.

Any requests for leave during term time must be made through the schools centralised system online and will be considered on an individual basis and the student's previous attendance record will be taken into account.

It is also recognised that some students have medical reasons or have struggled with the return to school and need support from our pastoral team.

Thank you for your continued support and please do get in contact if you need any guidance or support.

## All-through news

Our vision of an all through school, born in 2014, has become so much of a reality over the past few weeks! I felt so humbled and privileged to attend the Coram Shakespeare Festival in Finchley, whereby our 62 Year 6's performed Macbeth. The students took up this challenge and performed magnificently with confidence and maturity. This week, nationally all parents of children in Y6 received notification of their secondary school. Obviously our students in the "Larch" do not need to apply for in an all through school, an automatic place is given. However, once again the vision of all through is happening, as our Y6 will become the new Y7 joining 120 fellow Y6 students in local Hertford schools. A warm welcome to all.

## Science in our All-through school

As a school, we are always outward-facing and always looking to invite feedback about what we do well and where we can look for exciting next steps and opportunities for growth. Part of this professional development for leaders and for all staff is through our work with Herts for Learning. Yesterday we invited expert visitors to our all-through school to look at our teaching and learning in science: our HIPs (Hertfordshire improvement partners) enjoyed visiting lessons from Reception to Year 13; they greatly valued speaking with our young people, often with their science books again right the way across our all-through school; they spent time with leaders and teachers at all levels understanding the rationale behind the way that we have designed our bespoke curriculum at Simon Balle All-through school. There is too much to share here! But, they were pleased to note how the strength of relationships

(teacher-student and student-student is underpinning all enjoyment and readiness for learning); they evaluated our work within personal development to be very strong indeed; our curriculum is progressive and knowledge-rich; our curriculum is taught as intended; and enrichment opportunities and opportunities to work scientifically are plentiful. We are always open to next steps, and we look forward to our written report. This was an exciting day to visit lessons across the 14-year journey that our students can experience with us.

### Celebration

Congratulations to one of our former students, Reece Debnam, who after studying at Urdang Academy has completed his degree and will be setting sail with Royal Caribbean in the cast of Grease. He wrote to thank our Music and Drama departments for all the support they gave him in the formative years of his education.

Congratulations also to Willow in Year 5 who is part of the East of England squad for tumbling who represented Simon Balle in a Gymnastics national competition at the weekend! Willow showed so many of our values at the event where she was up against children who were older than her and we are very proud of her achievements. Well done Willow!

### DofE equipment appeal

As we start our journey with DofE we would like to appeal for any unwanted

- Tents (1-4 man)
- Sleeping bags (mummy-style with stuff sack)
- Rucksacks

This equipment would be gratefully received and put to good use. Please drop any items off at the front office for the attention of Mr Tweed.



### Alumni

Finally to add, we are always looking out to connect with parents or ex Simon Balle students who have chosen scientific careers. The science industry is such a wide and exciting field and it is so important that your current students understand the opportunities available by seeing great role models. Maybe you

could contribute to science week, give a talk or work with individual students face to face or online? Do let us know as we are trying to build up an active Simon Balle Science Community!

### NHS guidance

Should my child go to school/nursery today? - a useful checklist if you are uncertain as to whether to send your child into school or not, however please note that it is guidance only.  
<https://www.hwehealthiertogether.nhs.uk/parents/carers/child-unwell-ok-go-nurseryschool>

### Primary news

A brief update from me in this newsletter as so much is contained in our all-through news above. We are so proud of our Larch children for all that they are achieving. Year 2 and 6 reports will be published next Friday (on Go for schools), with Years 1 and 3 - 5 to follow later this term and Reception in the summer term. We hope that you will be proud to read of their achievements (showing our Simon Balle values, in the wider curriculum and their core academic progress) and that you will be pleased to reflect upon their personalised journeys in education.

In sport and music, it could not be a busier time! Please keep up to date on social media and through our website - matches and concerts are taking place every week - from Year 2 - 6 - again, we are so proud!

### Parental communication

We wanted to take this opportunity just to remind parents of the best routes for parental communication. It is important that these are followed, so that you can receive a reply with efficiency (within 24 hours) and so that we have the right person managing the right query. As families approach UKS2, we also want to ensure that your transition to the secondary phase is smooth in terms of managing communications.

- For anything that relates to admin - for example, a child is absent, needs to be picked up or dropped at an unusual time because of a medical appointment, where somebody other than is usually expected is picking up etc please email [Larch@simonballe.herts.sch.uk](mailto:Larch@simonballe.herts.sch.uk)
- For anything that relates to your child's class experience- for example, reading, home learning, please email the class teacher in the first instance.
- For any questions for the phase your child is within, and where this may not directly link to the class teacher, please email:
  - Phase 1 (Reception and Year 1) - Miss Williams or Miss Hesketh
  - Phase 2 (Years 2 - 4) - Miss Ridley
  - Phase 3 (Years 5 - 6) - Miss Boyce

- For other enquiries:
  - Larch sports: Mrs Riddle ([riddlem@simonballe.herts.sch.uk](mailto:riddlem@simonballe.herts.sch.uk))
  - Music: [music@simonballe.herts.sch.uk](mailto:music@simonballe.herts.sch.uk)
  - Explorers: [explorers@simonballe.herts.sch.uk](mailto:explorers@simonballe.herts.sch.uk)
- Both I ([kirkkr@simonballe.herts.sch.uk](mailto:kirkkr@simonballe.herts.sch.uk)) and the Larch leaders and teachers welcome your emails, but please do bear in mind that it may not be possible for us to be back to you quickly if we are teaching and/or in leadership meetings. There may be other sources of information that may be quicker as above. Please do use newsletters on our website, emails sent, and indeed communication between parents to avoid a duplication of questions where at all possible. We thank you, as ever, for your partnership

### Contact details

We are conscious that in one or two cases recently, it has been clear that parental contact details have not been updated in school. Please, at your earliest opportunity, can you confirm via [larch@simonballe.herts.sch.uk](mailto:larch@simonballe.herts.sch.uk) if either parent or emergency contact person(s) has changed mobile number, any change of home address, or any change of personal family information that you believe we should be aware of in the Larch. Thank you.

### Primary staffing news

We are delighted to welcome back Miss Emery following her maternity leave. Miss Emery will be visiting us for days very soon, and starting back in the Larch at the end of March - welcome back Miss Emery! We are delighted too to let you know that Miss Williams is expecting a baby due in June 2022 - congratulations! For families with children in Badgers class, we are pleased to let you know that when Miss Williams maternity leave commences, and indeed in preparation for this, the class will be taught by teachers that the children know well: Miss Emery and Mrs Arnold (who is already teaching our Year 1 classes). Mrs Peters will be their consistent teaching assistant during this time of transition.

### Author visit

To celebrate International Women's Day on Tuesday 8th March, local author Ms Jones will be visiting the

Larch. Ms Jones will talk about her journey of becoming a writer and she will read extracts from her books. Students will then have the chance to ask Ms Jones questions. This is an exciting opportunity for students to meet a local author.

At the end of the school day there will be a book stall in the Larch library where students and parents will be able to purchase signed books at a discounted price. The picture books will cost £4 and the chapter books will cost £3.

### Sport news

#### Hope and Evans cup: primary phase

We started off the new half term with our cup matches in netball and football with both teams winning their matches. We are very proud of all your achievements!

#### Sportshall Athletics

We had 27 children in the Larch representing Simon Balle in the sportshall athletics at Wodson Park on Monday. The children took part in many events such as obstacle races, standing long jump, paarlauf and speed bounce just to name a few. Well done to all the children who took part who showed all our values including sportsmanship.

Events to look forward to the rest of this half term:

- Monday 7th March-District netball at Wodson Park
- Friday 11th March-Year 5 tag rugby festival at Hertford Rugby Club
- Monday 14th March-Quicksticks hockey at Simon Balle
- Monday 28th March- District football at Haileybury
- Wednesday 30th March-Year 3-6 District cross country at Hertford Rugby Club

In 146 days the Commonwealth games will begin in Birmingham. Over the next few months our sports ambassadors will be helping to run a baton challenge to see which class can run the furthest or can we run to Birmingham and back? They will also be doing lots of Perry (the official mascot) challenges at playtimes and lunchtimes.

## Dates

Saturday 5th Mar	Big Band evening
Monday 7th March	Year 1 Church Visit
Tuesday 8th March	Author Visit for International Women's day
Thursday 10th March	Brass Celebration Larch Hall 6pm
Saturday 12th Mar	Vocal Showcase evening
Tuesday 15th March	Year 2 Strings showcase larch Hall 5:30pm
Friday 18th Mar	Red Nose Day
Wednesday 23rd March	Larch Concert, Secondary hall 6-7pm
Friday 25th March	PSA Doughies pizza
Friday 1st Apr	End of term - normal finish time



The poster features a dark background with a grid of photos showing rugby players in action. On the left, there are two calendar icons for April 2022. The top one is yellow and labeled '4TH', pointing to a yellow box with details for a '1 TO 1 SKILL DEVELOPMENT' clinic. The bottom one is light blue and labeled '5TH', pointing to a light blue box with details for a '1 DAY SPECIALIST SKILLS CLINIC'. At the bottom left, there is a QR code and contact information.

**CATALYST COACHING CLINICS**

# EASTER RUGBY CLINIC DATES

**4TH**

**1 TO 1 SKILL DEVELOPMENT**  
FOCUS: PLAYER POSITIONAL GUIDED  
Venue: Hertford Rugby Club  
Time: 60mins Sessions  
Age: U10 to U18  
PRICE: **£25**

**5TH**

**1 DAY SPECIALIST SKILLS CLINIC**  
FOCUS: HALF BACKS & BACK 3 DEVELOPMENT  
Venue: Hertford Rugby Club  
Time: 10AM to 2PM  
Age: U12 to U18  
PRICE: **£35**

Scan Me  
For More Info

**Contact:**  
info@catalystcoachingclinics.co.uk  
www.catalystcoachingclinics.co.uk

### Catalyst Coaching Clinics Easter Camps @ Hertford RFC

Hertford RFC 1stXV Captain Michael Sargent and 1stXV Coach Torran Macdougall are looking forward to returning to Hertford RFC for two dates over the Easter break.

Please see details below-

#### 4<sup>th</sup> April 1-2-1 Skill Development \*

**Focus:** Player Positional Guided

**Time:** 60 Mins (slot to be booked between 9am-3pm)

**Age:** U-10 to U-18

**Price:** £25

\*Small group bookings available, discounted prices for more players.

Contact [info@catalystcoachingclinics.co.uk](mailto:info@catalystcoachingclinics.co.uk)

#### 5th April 1 Day Specialist Skill Clinic

**Focus:** Half-Backs & Back 3 development \*

**Time:** 10am to 2pm

**Age:** U-10 to U-18

**Price:** £35

\*All positions welcome as clinics cater for all players looking to develop their passing and attacking.

For further information and to book your place on these fun and engaging rugby clinics please visit:

[www.catalystcoachingclinics.co.uk/services](http://www.catalystcoachingclinics.co.uk/services)

Please email any questions to:

[info@catalystcoachingclinics.co.uk](mailto:info@catalystcoachingclinics.co.uk)

## PSA News

### 11th March - Hearts of Hope Virtual Balloon Race

(postponed from 25/2)

There is still time to enter our Virtual Balloon Race! To join, simply follow the link below, before Friday 10th March, 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.

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.

[www.tickettailor.com/events/virtualpta/647042](http://www.tickettailor.com/events/virtualpta/647042)

*Da Gamers*

# Hearts of Hope

## Virtual Balloon Race

 **Simon Balle PSA**

*Golden business balloons available*

*Charlotte's big red heart*

*Thank you Miss Boyce*

*Dream Team For the win!*

**Friday 11th March - Monday 14th March**

Ticket sales close at 5pm on 10.3.22

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](http://www.simonballepsa.org.uk) or [facebook.com/simonballepsa](https://facebook.com/simonballepsa)

**Buy 1 for £3 or 2+ for £2.50 each**

[www.tickettailor.com/events/virtualpta/647042](http://www.tickettailor.com/events/virtualpta/647042)

## **25th March - Doughies Pizza and Cookie Event**

Order by Tuesday 22nd March

We look forward to Doughies returning to Simon Balle with their 12" regular and vegan home pizza making kits on 25th March.

These artisan kits are of exceptional quality and you can now add pepperoni as an optional extra to your kits. Please order directly via the Doughies website, and do not forget to include a name and class/form.

<https://doughies.co.uk/products/simon-balle>

Doughies have launched delicious bake at home cookie dough kits too. Choose from: Chocolate Chip, Chocolate Brownie and or Oat and Raisin.

Please see [website](#).

Please note, cookie kits are not vegan.

Important information. Larch Centre orders will be distributed via classrooms and sent home with the children. Orders from the secondary phase are welcome but they **MUST BE COLLECTED** from outside the reception office after school on 25th. Please set a reminder, as any unclaimed kits will be assumed unwanted after 4.30pm. They will not keep unrefrigerated over the weekend and we are unable to offer home deliveries.

We are looking for a number of helpers to pack and distribute kits. Please sign up here, if you can help. Thank you in advance. [volunteersignup.org/WT7KY](https://volunteersignup.org/WT7KY)



# PIZZA & COOKIE EVENT

## FRIDAY 25TH MARCH

We've teamed up with Doughies for a fun family night in. Order your pizza & cookie making kits and you'll receive everything you need to make artisan margherita pizzas (**regular or vegan**), and warm gooey cookies in your home oven.



Orders to be placed via the Doughies website by Saturday 19th March  
<https://doughies.co.uk/products/simon-balle>

Orders to be collected on Fri 25th March. Details will be shared with primary & secondary phases

### Volunteer opportunities

Further to the Music Department's exciting update about this year's forthcoming live musical events, the PSA is delighted to provide support with a bar and refreshments as a great opportunity to fundraise for our school, whilst delighting in the talents of our students.

- An Evening with the Simon Balle Big Band - Saturday 5th March
- A Vocal Showcase - Saturday 12th March

We will need your help please to fully support these events. It's a great opportunity to meet other parents within our school community and you're guaranteed to have a great evening! Please don't worry if you've not been involved in a bar event before – full briefings and guidance will be provided beforehand and on the day.

Signing up is quick and easy, and can be done via: [volunteersignup.org/WT7KY](https://volunteersignup.org/WT7KY)



