

Secondary phase newsletter

Friday 17th June 2022

Creating Tomorrow's Citizens Today



All-through news

Welcome back

It is so encouraging to see the return to the normal summer cycle of events after two years of disruption; exams continue for secondary students, a vast array of sporting competitions, residential and day trips, musical concerts and the annual art exhibition, to name a few. In addition we prepare so many students for transition- from local nurseries to reception, Year 6 to Year 7 and sixth form. Our Y9 have started their GCSE options (and we are delighted that they have so enthusiastically embraced these subjects) and we will next month, introduce our youngest children to their new class teachers.

For those who lead in schools, our calendar does appear "more condensed" than leaders in other professions. Whilst "the school does not sleep during the six week summer break" it is obviously more difficult for teams to meet and plan and thus much planning needs to occur before August, in order to commence in September. We are known as an innovative and creative thinking school, eager to develop and ensure that we promote the very highest standards. Our site is increasingly showing signs of age (the original buildings were erected in the mid 1950s) and we are now desperate for new spaces and facilities to reflect both the growth in numbers and current needs.

Therefore we are working on a longer term strategy site plan, which will start in September. Firstly you will see fencing being erected to ensure that the campus is more secure and this will include security gates at the entrance and exit. Whilst more details will follow, this will mean

that parents will not be able to enter the site to drop off or wait within normal school hours (after 8.30 and before 3.45pm) We are also investing on a large demountable space which we will be able to use as classrooms and after school a larger area for enrichment activities. We have been awarded a grant to replace some of our water pipes; this work will take around 8 months and will cause at times some disruption. Longer term plans include a new administration building, conversion of some other spaces to classrooms and ideally a long awaited sports hall.

We are committed to improving our facilities for local children, and want to try and ensure that any work is sustainable and fitting with our commitment to environmental concerns. Therefore it is with both frustration and sadness that I received a copy of the letter from Ball's Park residents Association which some of our parents received last week. We know that new families in our 2022 intake live within 1km of the school. We know that we have really worked on creating a "walking bus" and an opportunity to park locally free of charge for our families. We are over subscribed; we are a local school for local families and yet still parents bring their children to the school site or park as near as possible. Whilst there may be a few exceptions, this is morally wrong. Families should walk- for health, wellbeing and the environment. Thank you to those who walk, who use the walking bus and or park in the preferred place. Please continue to model the right habits; and for others plan ahead and change your habits.

Rail strike

For students and families who get the train to and from school please note that there are strikes scheduled for the 21st, 23rd and 25th June. A full strike timetable should be available on the Greater Anglia website from Friday 17th June. However, we would strongly recommend that you find alternative ways of coming to school.

Free school meals

Is my child eligible for free school meals?

Your child might be eligible if you access:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance or Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on
- Universal Credit, provided you have an annual net earned income not exceeding £7,400 (£616.67 per month)

How do I apply?

- You need to apply online:

hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/schools-and-education/at-school/free-school-meals/free-school-meals.aspx

- The online application process takes about ten minutes.
- To apply online you will need; an email address, your National Insurance number, basic personal details about you and your child/children.

For any student in Reception to year 11 who has been registered for free school meals we receive a Pupil Premium grant which supplements our normal school funding. This grant is used to support your child/children's achievement and can be used for help with additional academic support, music lessons and trips.

If you would like any help in applying or further information please contact Tania Noxon on noxont@simonballe.herts.sch.uk or 01992 410400 ext 236.

PSA

Slice of Summer

Our summer fair is fast approaching. If you are able to sign up to a volunteer slot, please do. You are welcome to sign up with a friend and this is open to parents, students and staff of both phases. We will start to make decisions regarding which activities and stalls will be feasible to man during the coming week.

As always, we thank you for your generous support.

<https://forms.gle/oL37DNvj17rRde5E8>



Dates

- Mon 20th June Secondary sports day
- Thurs 23rd June Guitar platform evening
- Mon 27th June UCAS information evening
- Wed 29th June Y8 celebration evening
- Thurs 30th June 6th form induction
- New Y7 parents meeting
- Sat 2nd July Saffron Hall music festival
- Tues 5th July Stevenson's uniform pop up shop
- Wed 6th July Art exhibition
- Thurs 7th July Y9 theatre trip
- Fri 8th July Sports presentation evening
- Sat 9th July Slice of summer
- Mon 11th July Y8 science trip
- Wed 13th July Music tour leaves
- Thurs 14th July Transition day
- Fri 15th July Y12 careers day
- Sat 16th July Music tour returns
- Mon 18th July Y6 graduation evening
- Tues 19th July Primary sports day
- Thurs 21st Term ends - early finish

Student Travel

Do you or your child travel to University, College or School by bus? If so, we've got the perfect solution!

Arriva Student and Child Saver tickets are valid for anyone in full time education and, is a cost effective and flexible way of paying for travel costs.

Unlimited Travel - You'll get unlimited access to travel on any Arriva bus, at any time, across all routes in your chosen area.

No Restrictions - The Saver tickets will cover your travel to and from University, School or College, evenings, weekends and throughout the holidays too at any time of the day.

Flexible Payments - Arriva's Direct Debit scheme allows you to spread the cost of your ticket over affordable monthly payments. It's an easy way to pay for travel and there's no contract involved, making it an ideal way to get reduced bus travel for the whole Academic year, without paying upfront.

Sign up in advance – Either set your direct debit a future date for when you need the ticket or, you can start your ticket now to get used to the local bus routes

Plan your journey – Please use our 'Plan a journey' tool on our website to work out which bus you require

It's a simple process to apply, to arrange your Direct Debit please visit the website below and, select the region the school, college or university is in

www.arrivabus.co.uk/monthlytickets

Once registered you can select either to receive your monthly pass by post or sent to your mobile phone, so you won't have to worry about paying every time you board the bus.

This ticket will rollover every month for as long as the direct debit remains active.

For any queries regarding the scheme, please email: talktous@arriva.co.uk

***Our tickets do not cover Arriva London/TFL routes**

