

Primary 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.

Primary news

Vice-principal's welcome

Do I always start by saying what a busy period it is?! And yet, how exciting! I am delighted to share Mrs Riddle's dates below as there is just so much going on for sports in the Larch. We are so proud of our children in the way that they are pleased to represent Simon Balle, model our values and perform at such high levels. There is something for everyone this half term with sports day on the horizon - please do join us as parents!

Those parents who were able to join us for the primary music festival on Monday were, I know, moved and inspired by the children's performance. From the ensemble to soloists (both singing and narrators), it was a wonderful evening - thank you to all. As with sport, there is so much to look forward to in the coming weeks. Tasters for instruments (strings for the current Year 1, woodwind for the current Year 2, brass for the current Year 3) will be communicated to all parents - we are so excited to have new children join Team Music! And, Saffron Hall calls us - for the first time as a truly all-through school and since the pandemic - please prepare for an exciting evening on Saturday 2nd July. If you have any queries at all about upcoming music events or your child learning an instrument please email music@simonballe.herts.sch.uk

We are passionate about children having roles as student leaders, both in the Larch and across our all-through school. Mr Pooley has been blown away by the maturity of our anti-bullying ambassadors who will be leading assemblies next week - we will update you in a fortnight in relation to important messages shared. To the current Year 5 - please remember that the deadline for your applications to leadership roles need to be in by Friday 24th June (next Friday) - we need to hear from you whether you are passionate about eco-sustainability, music, sports, digital leads, or interested in being our second cohort of Larch presidents and vice-presidents.

Finally, just a word from me to thank you very much as parents for your ongoing support for your children's learning. As you know, parents' week will take place from Monday - Wednesday 11th - 13th July: virtual meetings for all Years 1 - 6 parents. Reception reports will be published too before the end of term. At present, we are busy supporting your children to show us their best learning - from phonics to times tables, writing to history, geography, science and more. We are, as always, impressed by the children's understanding of our Simon Balle values - resilience to demonstrate their best, respect to all. Please be assured that everything will be

communicated to you in a timely manner. Please keep up the support for reading and home learning despite this busy period! Thank you.

Sporting update

Sporting Success

We are delighted to let you know that our Year 5 and 6 cricket team were the winners of the Hertford and Ware partnership Dynamo cricket and they will now represent us for the county finals on Monday! Well done to all the children that took part and good luck for Monday!

Sporting events for the rest of this term

Friday 17th June-Dynamo cricket (Year 6) at Sele School

Monday 20th June- Dynamo Cricket County finals at St Margaretsbury Cricket club

Wednesday 22nd June-District Athletics (Year 5 and 6) at Wodson Park

Wednesday 29th June-Wodson Games (Year 5) at Wodson Park

Wednesday 6th July- Girls in football programme sessions (Year 4-6) in school

Friday 8th July- Sports presentation evening (Year 5, 6 and secondary) - children will receive a letter if they are invited to this event.

Wednesday 13th July-Rapid fire cricket tournament (Year 2) at Simon Balle

complete the Challenge receive a medal, a special pencil and certificate. They are also entered into a prize draw to win a ticket to an exclusive author event in September.

Please see here for more information!

PSA

1st July - Coloured Accessory Day

Children are invited to come to school wearing a coloured accessory, on Friday 1st July. Please see the below poster for more information.

We know how much the children enjoy being able to wear a coloured accessory to school, and thank you for your support with this.

While wearing an accessory is optional, we would greatly appreciate you supporting us by making a donation, if you can.



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>



Sports Day-Tuesday 19th July 2022

We are delighted to be able to invite parents again to our sports day this year. We would like to invite parents from 1:30pm from Reception to Year 6 onto our school field to enjoy watching our track afternoon of different races for each year group!

Summer reading challenge

It's almost time for this year's Summer Reading Challenge, the annual reading engagement programme delivered by The Reading Agency. It aims to tackle the summer reading 'dip' by encouraging children aged 4 - 11 to read for pleasure over the summer holidays by setting a reading target, reading their books and receiving rewards and incentives along the way. The theme for this year's Challenge is 'Gadgeteers'. Developed in collaboration with the Science Museum Group, the Challenge will show children that science is all around us every day and inspire them to unleash their curiosity and creativity.

Hertford Library will be challenging children to read six library books (or library eBooks/eAudiobooks) between July and September and visit us to tell us about them. In return we provide incentives including a poster and stickers. Children who successfully

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**

