

# Primary phase newsletter

Friday 9th September 2022

*Creating Tomorrow's Citizens Today*



## All-through news

This week has been a very special one as we have welcomed back our community; our youngest children joining us in reception for their first morning, along with their teddy bears or equivalent for a lunchtime picnic. Now towards the end of the week they are already settled! The rest of the classes in The Larch have been busy with their learning and once again shown great community values.

Year 7 have equally settled well and by attending summer school for 3 days during the summer, transition appears to be quite smooth and the school familiar. Assemblies have been held for every year group; the new Y12 have slotted in well to the life of the sixth form and we look forward to seeing them volunteer and welcome responsibility.

Both Mrs Kirk and I have spent time visiting classes in both phases and it is exciting to see the passion for learning return.

As a school we constantly celebrate our students achievements and efforts. We are proud to announce the rerun of our "Awards Evening" albeit later this year. The ceremony will take place on Thursday 22 September at 6pm at All Saints Church. Invites are in hand and our guest speaker this year is our own Rob Klippel. Rob spent many years on our Senior Leadership team and has just retired, teaching 2 days a week. Rob is a "Simon Balle" Legend and will entertain us I am sure with many stories! Further details will follow but a big well done to all students from Reception to Y13.

We also welcome the return of our "Open Morning" on Saturday 24 September. This year is different as

we are inviting both prospective parents for reception (2023) and Y7. Please see below for secondary information. Governors acknowledge the hard work from staff and students alike- hence an additional day of leave in November.

We are so proud of all of the achievements made by students in the summer of 2022. We couldn't possibly do justice to all here, but, for an overview please do visit our website pages:

<https://www.simonballe.herts.sch.uk/student-outcomes>

We are incredibly grateful for all parental support for all students in every phase of our all-through school. Some highlights:

- In Early Years, we are delighted that the partnership between home and school has resulted in such a high percentage of children (much higher than the Hertfordshire comparisons) being so ready for their learning in KS1 across so many subject areas. In particular, their personal, social and emotional development, and their early reading and understanding of the world stands all in such great stead for future learning.
- In KS1, a huge well done to Year 1, where 98% of children achieved an expected level in phonics - amazing readiness for the world of reading in Year 2 and far, far beyond! Equally our KS1 SATs results remain high, and well above the national average for 2019 in every indicator.
- In KS2, 89% of our Year 6 cohort achieved an expected level in reading, writing and mathematics - as this compares to 59% nationally, we can be confident that our children are so well prepared for their next steps ahead. Our Year 4 cohort too showed high levels of number recall in the first year of the statutory and national multiplication check: 77% of children achieving 23/25+.
- In Key Stage 4  
Progress 8 score +0.3

5+ in English and Maths - 64%  
4+ in English and Maths - 81%

- In Key Stage 5  
Entries where A\*- B - 64%  
3 A\* - A - 18%  
Average grade per entry - B-
- Those leaving our sixth form are attending a wide variety of establishments:
  - 22 attending Russell Group Universities (1 Student attending Cambridge to study Chemical Engineering)
  - Apprenticeships - Cyber Security, Amazon, Ministry of Defence and Tesco.
  - Employment - Hertfordshire Constabulary to an Insurance Advisor

### Dates for the diary

<b>WHOLE SCHOOL</b>	
Friday 23rd September	Doughies Pizza Event
Saturday 24 <sup>th</sup> September	OPEN MORNING
Thursday 22 <sup>nd</sup> September	AWARDS CEREMONY
Wed 5 <sup>th</sup> and Thurs 6 <sup>th</sup> October	Bag2School, textiles recycling
Mon 24 <sup>th</sup> Oct to Fri 28 <sup>th</sup> Oct	HALF TERM
Saturday 10 <sup>th</sup> December	Frost Fair
<b>LARCH</b>	
Monday 12 <sup>th</sup> September 6.30pm	Reception parents information evening
Wed 14 – Fri 16 <sup>th</sup> September	Y5 residential trip
Mon 19 <sup>th</sup> to Thurs 22 <sup>nd</sup> September	Larch into secondary open mornings
SATURDAY 24 <sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER	OPEN MORNING
Monday 26 <sup>th</sup> September	Reception parents morning workshop
Wednesday 5 <sup>th</sup> October 10am	Larch Harvest Festival
Mon 10 <sup>th</sup> Oct to Fri 14 <sup>th</sup> Oct	Larch parents evenings
Tuesday 11 <sup>th</sup> October	Flu immunisations Reception to Y6
Thursday 20 <sup>th</sup> October	Y4 trip
<b>SECONDARY</b>	
Wednesday 14 <sup>th</sup> September 6.30 to 7.30pm	Y12 Expectations evening
Thursday 15 <sup>th</sup> September to 6pm	Y7 Information evening
Friday 16 <sup>th</sup> to Sat 17 <sup>th</sup> September	D of E expedition
Wed 28 <sup>th</sup> to Friday 30 <sup>th</sup> September	Y10 residential trip
Thursday 6 <sup>th</sup> Oct to Fri 7 <sup>th</sup> Oct	Y9 Battlefields trip (1)
Tuesday 11 <sup>th</sup> October (evening)	Y10 theatre trip
Wednesday 12 <sup>th</sup> October (evening)	Y11 theatre trip
Thursday 13 <sup>th</sup> to Fri 14 <sup>th</sup> Oct	Y9 Battlefields trip (2)

### Parking

It is lovely to see so many families and students walking to and from school and using the park and stride facility next to the fire station. There is also a

'walking bus' to bring students to the school from this car park.

However, we are very disappointed that we have already received complaints from neighbours about parents driving too fast and parking where they should not park. Harrison Lane is a private road and should NOT be used for dropping off or picking up. Residents have told us that drivers have been abusive to them when they have been asked to move. The vast majority of our students live within walking distance of the school so there should be no need for them to be driven to the school. If you require a permit to park for 1 hour free at the Old London Road car park please ask at either reception.

### Race and equalities award



We are pleased to announce that our all through school has been recognised nationally for its commitment to improving race equality and prioritising an inclusive culture where staff, students, parents and partners of all ethnicities are equally valued, by being awarded the Silver Level RACE Charter Mark.

Ann Palmer, CEO, Fig Tree International said: "I am absolutely delighted that Simon Balle All-Through School is receiving this recognition. This recognises their determination to make a difference, not only in their own school, but also in the local community. Simon Balle All-Through School has joined a great group of schools and colleges who are part of the RACE Charter Mark community. We applaud them for their work and aspirations to build a more inclusive society."

This is certainly not the end of the journey, indeed, it sets up the structure for us to continue to make further improvements. This year myself, Rachel Kirk and Alison Saunders have been accepted to join a

prestigious county group to look at equality and diversity. Exciting times ahead!

## Music News

Here is our Musical News for September, we are celebrating some excellent exam results, and introducing our new communication system! We look forward to another musical year!

<https://www.simonballe.herts.sch.uk/music-september-2022/>

## Hall of fame

Our 2022-23 Hall of Fame is now launched, so don't forget to vote for your favourite pieces! Click on the link below to vote for your top 3 pieces of Classical Music from our Simon Balle Hall of Fame. This will be the music we listen to in assemblies each week as we count down the Top 15 as voted for by you. Last year's winner was Ride of The Valkyries by Richard Wagner, but will it retain its place at the top? The decision is up to you!

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSenxSIOaoxqo0vjrkbFXMOKzz-JTO0SE\\_uYk\\_THI0z7CEgvGw/viewform?usp=sf\\_link](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSenxSIOaoxqo0vjrkbFXMOKzz-JTO0SE_uYk_THI0z7CEgvGw/viewform?usp=sf_link)

## VOTING CLOSSES ON FRIDAY 16th SEPTEMBER

Do have a listen to the pieces in our Hall of Fame on our spotify

playlist:<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/39aeNJOJ2bkGeVJYuF4Wrp?si=5aa523b0dfe7423e>

There are a couple of new entries to the Hall of Fame from some of our requests last year including I Giorni by Einaudi and Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto no.1

## Nut awareness and allergies

At Simon Balle we operate a nut free environment in all of our catering and curriculum activities.

It is not possible to guarantee or enforce a nut free school and as such we say we are "nut aware". A free-from environment creates a false sense of security and does not prepare children for environments where nuts may be present.

Each year, all of the teaching staff in the Larch Centre and the first aiders in the rest of the school complete a refresher course in the use of Epipens and how to recognise anaphylaxis. We even give training to our Year 6 students as an essential life skill.

We would like to remind parents and students in all phases of our school to not bring nuts in any form into school and especially not in packed lunches. If any of the student body would like training or further awareness of anaphylaxis please contact Mr Tweed.

## Environment Update

Lots of work has been taking place over the summer to help us reduce our impact on the environment. Energy efficient lighting has been installed throughout the site, upgrades have been made to pipework to reduce leaks and blue bins for mixed recycling have been placed in every classroom. Staff and students can help by using the correct bins for waste, and switching off lights and electrical equipment when not in use. In addition to this, students from years 7 and 8 will be involved in an action research project to monitor and reduce waste and energy consumption around the school site. Our focus upon energy efficiency is of course two fold as we, like all households are facing a colossal hike in our bills and we similar to businesses will receive no "cap". We will be asking all members of our community to help us with energy efficiencies- lights- computers- and once the winter arrives looking at how we heat areas of the school. Our solar panels have been very successful over the past years and once again demonstrate our commitment to sustainability.

If any students would be interested in joining our Eco Schools group they can come along to G1 at lunch on Monday.



## Welcome to our new SEND all-through team



We would like to introduce our new SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) team at Simon Balle led by Mr Quirke. Miss Craik will continue as SEND manager. Mrs Raven will be based in the Larch, Miss Wood will be in KS3 and Mr Robins will be working with KS4 and KS5. There will be opportunities to meet the new SEND team later this term including a coffee morning. Parents will also be able to book appointments to speak to the SEND team via the website later this month.

We are looking forward to supporting our students throughout their Simon Balle journey working with students, parents and staff to provide the best possible guidance and experience that we can'

### Arriva Bus strike

Arriva bus strike action will take place on Friday 16<sup>th</sup>, Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> and Friday 30<sup>th</sup> September. Strike action will also impact our Arriva Click services in Watford.

The link below will provide you with further updates <https://www.arrivabus.co.uk/latest-news/-bedfordshire-buckinghamshire-and-hertfordshire-industrial-action>

## Primary news

An enormous thank you for such a great turnout and engaged audience for our parent information evenings on Tuesday. Despite rain, and, at times, thunder and lightning (!), it was a great privilege to welcome so many parents to talk with teaching staff in person. Slides will be emailed out to parents in phases 1, 2 and 3, so we hope this information -both our curriculum and all opportunities that are upcoming, and practical guidance too - are helpful to receive. Here is the link to all curriculum information on our website:

<https://www.simonballe.herts.sch.uk/curriculum-overview/>

It is an exciting half term ahead. I would like to take this opportunity to draw your attention to a few particular areas:

- **All-through Presentation evening, Thursday 22nd September.** Awards for consistently demonstrating our school values in 2021-22 will be given for a number of children across the Larch. A wonderful all-through celebration evening.
- **All-through Open Day.** Please spread the news that our Open Day on **Saturday 24th** is all-through - for all families interested in prospective Reception places (as well as Year 7 and 12) in September 2023. We hope to welcome many families into the Larch - tours, music, speeches, sport and much more to share about the essence of Simon Balle.
- **Harvest** will be celebrated, as always, across the Larch - and, for Years 1 - 6, this involves our annual celebration in All Saints' Church on **Wednesday 5th October** at 10am. With our full and thriving Larch phase, unfortunately we cannot invite parents to join us - but we will do our best to share photographs to mark the event. Please do bring in tins and other longlife produce (list to follow) from Monday 3rd October to support Hertford's homeless and food banks.

And so, back to the excitement of classroom learning this term. Mrs Boyce is sharing below just a sense of the awe and wonder in classrooms we have experienced this week. The Larch has been so full of calm and readiness to learn, as well as great enthusiasm for summer learning (thank you to all parents) and excitement about the curriculum to follow!

A couple of small reminders please:

- Can parents with children in Years 3 - 6 please remember that it is a healthy, nut-free snack to be provided for break time please? For



Reception - Year 2, fruit is provided and nothing else should be sent in please. For Years 3 - 6, we are happy for children to have fruit, rice cakes, cereal bars, breadsticks, vegetable pots or similar. We do appreciate that Years 4 and 5 in particular need a substantial snack with a longer morning until lunch. Please do not send any crisps, chocolate or cakes - thank you for your understanding.

As we said at parent information evenings on Tuesday, please do remember how highly significant your role is at home in reading with your children daily. We are so appreciative of all that you do to, with us, promote a love of reading! All reading is valued in reading records - just let us know! Equally, please communicate with us as partners in reading, in relation to your child's sounding out, comprehension, ease or difficulty with the book, use of bookmarks sent home and more. We thank you in anticipation!

## Learning in the Larch

The Larch have been full of learning and engaged children in their first week of the Autumn term! Reception have been welcoming our new, youngest children into the Larch and it has been fantastic to see the children settling so well into their new classes, building friendships, sharing, exploring and learning!

Year 1 were immersed in the farm when I visited, even finding an egg that had just been laid which created a lot of excitement and wonder from the children! They have been using the value of responsibility to check the animals have water, food and showing extra responsibility by checking their bedding was clean and droppings were picked up!

Across the afternoon Year 2 were practising their throwing and catching skills in PE and also working together to draft a formal letter to Mrs Saunders and Mrs Kirk about cake! They were able to confidently discuss the formal differences compared with writing to a friend.

Year 3 demonstrated their excellent science knowledge by explaining in detail what we need to stay alive and how to stay healthy- they were able to give lots of examples and explain why various things including nutrients are important!

Symbolism was the focus in a Year 4 PRE lesson, and the children were recalling their prior knowledge of what different symbols represent- their memories were very impressive! They were also designing

symbols that represented themselves and it was brilliant to see the individuality of the children.

Year 5 were immersed in maths and demonstrating their fluency skills- moving between various areas of maths including demonstrating their short division (bus stop method) to solve calculations.

Year 6 have been reading extracts of their new literary canon book, 'The Spiderwick Field Guide', to create some fantastic writing such as recounting meeting a boggart and writing a warning to people to not to enter where a cocatrice may be lurking... It has been exciting to hear the children across the Larch talk about their literary canon books, and their excitement of Roald Dahl day where classes will immerse themselves more in the texts they have been reading.

## Year 6 Macbeth

Tickets are now on sale for Year 6's performances of Macbeth at Artdepot theatre, Finchley, London. We highly recommend booking as soon as possible to avoid disappointment! We look forward to seeing our community supporting the children with their performances.

- Owls class are performing Tuesday 22nd November 2022.
- Eagles class are performing Wednesday 23rd November 2022.

Box office link:

<https://www.artsdepot.co.uk/theatre/coram-shakespeare-schools-festival-0>

## PSA news

### Doughies Pizza Event - 23rd September

If you are a Doughie's fan or just love a good quality PSA pizza or cookie, then it's time to place your Doughies orders, for delivery on 23rd September. Kits (vegan kits available) can be ordered directly from Doughies before 19th September, but please do remember to include your child's name and class.

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

Important information: Named Larch Centre orders will be distributed via classrooms and sent home.

Named orders from across the secondary phase are welcome but **MUST BE COLLECTED** from outside the reception office immediately after school on Friday 23rd. 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 or refunds.



# PIZZA & COOKIE EVENT

## 23rd September



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.

**ORDER HERE**

THE SCHOOL RECEIVES £2 PER PIZZA AND £1 PER COOKIE KIT SOLD

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

Orders to be collected on **23rd September**. Details will be shared with primary & secondary phases

**NAMES, AND FORMS MUST BE INCLUDED ON THE ORDER FORM**

## SIMON BALLE PARENT STAFF ASSOCIATION



<p><b>23rd September</b></p>	<p>Doughies home bake pizza and cookie kit event returns this <b>4th &amp; 5th October</b></p>	<p><b>10th December</b></p>	<p>Save the date for our much loved all-through Frost Fair and Festive Market. 12-4pm.</p>
------------------------------	--	-----------------------------	--

## WELCOME

A huge welcome to all of our parents and carers, old and new. We are looking forward to the new academic year, with plenty of opportunities to unite the school community and create some special memories for all. We are incredibly thankful for the support and generosity shown by families, students and staff. While each of you are part of the Parent Staff Association, we are reviewing our PSA event/activity volunteers list and so invite you to please complete our short survey, whether established or new to the school - to help bring a little magic to our fundraising efforts. This will enable us to evolve and grow, something we can not do without your engagement. Please scan the QR code, or enter this link into your browser:

<https://forms.gle/JNrFtsUzjZ7X5hwF8>



**MyNametags - Save 20%**  
 When you order clothing tags via MyNametags, enter our School ID: 37273 and pop LABELALL20 into the discount box, you will save 20% on your order total.  
<https://www.mynametags.com>



**Amazon Smile**  
 Shop on Amazon, via browser or app using our link, and Amazon will donate a percentage of your total to us - at no additional charge to you.  
 Bookmark this link!  
<https://smile.amazon.co.uk/ch/281561-0>

[psa@simonballepsa.org.uk](mailto:psa@simonballepsa.org.uk)  
[simonballepsa.org.uk](http://simonballepsa.org.uk)  
[Facebook.com/simonballepsa](https://www.facebook.com/simonballepsa)

# Bag2School

4th & 5th October 2022



Drop off your bags on 4th & 5th directly to the PSA container, near the pool. Collection point will be manned during morning drop off and afternoon pick up.



Volunteer opportunity

[www.bag2school.com](http://www.bag2school.com)

**Bag2School**

We accept:

Men's, Ladies' and Children's clothing. Paired shoes (tied together or elastic band around). Handbags. Hats. Bags. Scarves and ties. Jewellery. Lingerie. Socks. Belts. Soft toys. Household linen. Household curtains. Household towels. Household bedding (bed sheets, pillow cases and duvet covers).



We DO NOT accept:

Duvets and blankets. Pillows and cushions. Carpets, rugs and mats (including bath, shower and toilet mats). Soiled, painted, ripped or wet clothing. School uniforms with and without logo. Corporate clothing and workwear. Textile off cuts, yarns or threaded material.

[www.bag2school.com](http://www.bag2school.com)