

Primary phase newsletter

Friday 09th December 2022

Creating Tomorrow's Citizens Today



All through news

I am sure that someone in your household is either counting the number of school days left or the number of sleeps until Christmas. Next week is our last full week; finishing on Wednesday 21st December (a half day) seems late but it does mean that our annual Christmas festivities are spaced out. Whilst the mocks continue for Y11, we can not use the school hall, but our new "Jubilee Suite" next year will allow greater opportunities. Our Christmas season starts with our very popular and amazing "Frost Fair" held on Saturday 10th December from 12pm - 4pm. This is a wonderful event for everyone - with craft stalls, tombolas, games, food and performances from our Larch musicians and dancers. Do come along; we need your support and contributions!

Next week we shall be at our local parish church "All Saints" on four occasions for secondary and primary carol services. The "day" services are for our children and young people but we invite you all to the evening services. Less than an hour long, with our own students playing and singing, you will be amazed by the quality and reverence of the event; a true way to start your Christmas traditions. Please note, the retiring collection is for the upkeep of the church; we value so much being able to use this special space so we do need to ensure that they too can pay their bills.

The secondary carol service is on Monday 12 December at 19.00; the Larch carols on Tuesday at 18.00hr. The posters are below on this newsletter.

Over the past few years, the school "Christmas Lunch" has become very much part of our Christmas celebrations. It is a huge task to feed so many children at one time and also to decorate the halls to create a spirit of festivity. On those days no other food will be served, and Christmas meals must be ordered. I am aware that information has already been sent out but this is just a reminder that those students not eating a Christmas meal will need to bring in their own food. The Larch Christmas lunch is on Monday 19

December and the secondary Christmas lunch on Tuesday 20th December. In lieu of Christmas crackers (given our ongoing focus on sustainability and the environment) all children eating a Christmas lunch will receive a candy cane (primary) or chocolate coins (secondary)!

Keeping all of our community safe is always of paramount importance. Next week we shall be sending home a briefing about the way in which the gates/ barriers will work from January 5th, to ensure that we control how cars come onto our school site. Secondary students have received briefings about the internal gates and we have now confirmed the details for parents who have to come onto the school site. Securing the site is just one example of how we keep students safe and we shall in future newsletters inform you of all of the many other things we are doing.

Our next newsletter will be sent out towards the end of term but I am sure that you can see that the community continues to focus upon teaching and learning, as well as providing a safe environment where students can flourish both academically and in terms of a wide menu of enrichment activities.

We thank you therefore for your support.

Staffing

It is somewhat unusual for us to be saying "goodbye and thank you" to several staff who are leaving us at Christmas this year. Miss Woolcott (Maths) will leave us, as will Mr Moloney (Computer Studies) who is going to a promoted post in Harlow. In addition, Ms Young (HOY 13 and Science teacher) is taking up a position in a sixth form much nearer to where she lives. We wish them all well.

Despite advertising, we have not been able to simply replace these staff. Both our maths and science teams have shuffled existing timetables in order to accommodate some of the teaching. This may affect a wider group of students but what it does mean is that

we are avoiding supply cover. We are pleased to let you know that we have managed to employ an IT graduate who has the specialist knowledge needed for our computer studies students. We are also delighted to welcome Mrs Jones (History) to the sixth form team as Head of Year 13.

Please be reassured that at all times our priority is to ensure the very highest quality of education for all - and even in challenging times with recruitment, our staff team pull together in wonderful ways. Thank you to all.

Music news

Please take time to read through our latest music newsletter that is published online.

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

Our Larch and Secondary Carol Services are also next week at All Saints' Church - we would be delighted to see as many people who would like to join us for the evening services.



All-through SEND team

If you would like to make an online appointment to speak to a member of the SEND team (primary and secondary) a 15 minute appointment can be booked via the school website. Click on **Inclusion**, then select **SEND** and the link is at the bottom of the page. These appointments are available during term time on a Tuesday morning between 10 and 11.30. We look forward to meeting and speaking with you all, for we know that a strong partnership between home and

school is crucial for all students, and particularly those who have additional SEND.

Future Living Christmas Gift Drive



Thank you for all the contributions to the Christmas gift drive run by our partner Future Living. Giving is a theme we are focussing on this term and the presents will be donated to local families in need.

School Governor Recruitment - other Hertfordshire schools

We have been asked to remind parents that Hertfordshire continues to look for school governors, both at primary and secondary level.

There are many governor roles, so a diverse team with different skills, and work/life experiences is important. Governors can also be parents, grandparents, or carers of a child in a local school. Help and support is provided every step of the way to becoming an effective school governor. For further information about becoming a school governor/trustee:

Visit

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/schoolgovernors>

Call Governance team at Herts for Learning on 01438 544487

Email: governance@hertsforlearning.co.uk
local community

PSA news

Frost Fair - 10th December, 12-4pm

We are looking forward to welcoming you to our winter fair for an afternoon of festive fun. With over 30 external stallholders all offering quality items in our Festive Market, various games, licensed bar, giant inflatable snow globe, live performances and Secret Shopping Room (12-3pm) and more, we are sure you will find something to enjoy.

Thank you to each and every [volunteer](#) that has contributed endless hours of time planning the event, those donating their time to help at the fair and to the sponsors for their generosity.



Simon Balle PSA

Frost Fair & Festive Market

Saturday 10th December
12-4pm

£1 admission, children free

Simon Balle All-through School
Mangrove Road, Hertford
SG13 8AJ

kings GROUP EDWINS **chirp** Thanking our supporters

Simon Balle Festive Gin

Created this Christmas by our friends at Spirit of Hertfordshire, our [artisan gin](#) is back by popular demand for the 2022 festive season. **Save on postage**, select Local Pickup at check out and note collection from Frost Fair. Available on all online orders placed by lunchtime on Friday 9th December.

<https://spiritofherts.co.uk/product/simon-balle-hertford-festive-gin/>

As well as the zesty notes of juniper and citrus, and the enigmatic perfume of bergamot and lavender, this gin also features the classic spice mix of clove, cinnamon, nutmeg and ginger. For freshness and tang, It also contains sprigs of real aromatic Christmas trees, hand picked by SoH's resident forager. Even better, Simon Balle All-through School PTA receives a contribution for every bottle sold!

18+



Festive Gin



18+

Created this Christmas by our friends, Spirit of Hertfordshire, to celebrate 2022/23.

As well as the zesty notes of Juniper and citrus, and the enigmatic perfume of bergamot and lavender, this gin also features the classic spice mix of clove, cinnamon, nutmeg and ginger. For freshness and tang, it also contains sprigs of real aromatic Christmas trees, hand picked by Spirit of Hertfordshire's resident forager. Even better, Simon Balle All-through School PSA Receives a contribution for every bottle sold!

Orders can be placed directly via the SoH website and prices start from £15.99

<https://spiritofherts.co.uk/product/simon-balle-hertford-festive-gin/>

Save on postage, select Local Pickup at check out and collect from the Frost Fair.

Available on all online orders placed by 12pm on Friday 9th December.

LAMDA lessons

We are also delighted to be working in partnership with Corinne Vallé, from The Vallé Academy of Performing Arts, to offer individual and small group LAMDA Drama lessons for students. LAMDA exams offer students the opportunity not only to build confidence in acting but also public speaking and speaking of verse and prose. It was amazing to see students engaging with their first lessons this week and we look forward to this continuing exciting partnership.

Should students be interested in signing up for LAMDA lessons in the future, we are operating a waiting list. Please contact the front office to be added to this should a lesson slot become available.

Food bank Jedidiah

Jedidiah's pantry provides free food to anyone: no questions asked. The pantry is open every weekday between 12pm and 1pm. All you need to do is head down there with a bag. It is located at 138 Fore Street (next to M&S). The food is collected from supermarkets and would otherwise be wasted.

<https://www.jedidiah.org.uk/locations>



Particularly referenced this week were patience, kindness and responsibility - we heard how children have shown patience and responsibility in their learning by consistently trying their best; how kindness has been shown in class and at play/lunchtimes; how values have been shown in collaborative learning and how children have overcome previous difficulties to now achieve success. Our values really do underpin all that takes place and we are so fortunate that your children understand the real importance of these - thank you for your partnership and support, as ever.

Kids kick start

Kids Kit

A workshop for parents focusing on:
Routines & Boundaries

What will I learn in this workshop?

- ✓ Why we need to structure routines and create boundaries
- ✓ How this can make your child feel safe
- ✓ How to take back control of your relationship with your child



FUTURE LIVING

Together, we can build a tool kit for the hardest job in the world!



FREE session
10:00 - 12:00
12th December
2022
Vale House, 43
Cowbridge, Hertford
SG14 1PN

For more information
contact:
info@futurelivinghertford.co.uk
01992 537344

Registered charity Number 1155145

Phonics books

This week has seen the roll out of our new phonics books. We hope that the use of these books will secure phonics in each phase and build reading fluency whilst supporting spelling and writing too!

The first few pages of the book are designed to prepare the children for what is to come in their book, practising key and target sounds and tricky words and providing an opportunity to practise blending with the target sounds. The last few pages of the book offer a brilliant opportunity for discussion, recap and comprehension building, further developing a love of reading through understanding a text.

Using these texts alongside our robust reading scheme is the best way we can support children's reading, offering them more and more opportunities to engage with different texts.

If you have any questions or queries please feel free to contact Miss Hesketh (heskethk@simonballe.herts.sch.uk).

Primary news

Vice Principal Welcome

'It's the most magical time of the year...' and this is so evident within the Larch at the moment. From Christmas jumpers today to choir and orchestral rehearsals for the Frost Fair and Carol services next week, from the magic of the Reception nativity to Christmas-themed reading and writing across the Larch. It was so special to see Years 1 and 2 enjoy a wonderful time with our sixth formers on 1st December, coming together to enjoy Christmas activities - and to feel that sense of community that makes our all-through school so unique. There is much to look forward to in the remaining part of this term, and we will enjoy sharing this with parents/carers whether in person or through our newsletter, website and social media.

As well as all of the special events taking place, celebration assemblies both yesterday (KS2) and today (EY/KS1) celebrated so many of our Simon Balle values so wisely shown by our Larch children.

Punctuality

Thank you for your support with dropping your child off during our soft start 8.40am - 8.50am and leaving the playground promptly so we can close the gate at exactly 8.50am. We have already seen a positive impact on punctuality and lessons starting more promptly which is really helping the children. Thank you!

Learning in the Larch

It has been a very busy couple of weeks with lots of learning and also assessments for the children so we can identify strengths and next steps to tailor learning and support for the Spring term. On Christmas Jumper Day, I walked around the Larch and every class had children engaged and enthusiastic about their learning! Reception were in the middle of child initiated learning with festive themes. There was lots of fine motor practice with sequins and counters to create patterns, writing and drawings of their favourite Christmas things and so much more.

The children in Year 1 were writing a retelling of The Three Little Pigs with their own changes, using 'next' and 'then' to link their ideas. I was so impressed by the creativity, the use of full stops and capital letters and pride in their handwriting!

Year 2 have been creating pieces of writing based on the newly released Asda Christmas advert based on Elf. They were working very hard to insert inverted commas for speech and were enjoying the challenge of extending their writing.

High-energy dancing was taking place in Year 4 during their PE lesson in the hall. The smiles and positivity from the children filled the room with a fantastic atmosphere!

Year 5 were working on their conversion of mixed numbers to improper fractions, and many of the children were very confident in explaining how to do so. Do ask them to give you a lesson please!

Finally, half of Year 6 were in the middle of a French assessment with real focus and the other class were in the middle of writing a high-level descriptive piece based on the literary canon text, Skellig. They were really focusing on including the senses and building some suspense in their piece.

It is always a privilege to visit such purposeful and engaging lessons - do feel free to return to and browse our curriculum overviews for the spring term if you would like to know what is next!

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

Year 5 walking independently

We have had some parents asking us when we will be allowing Year 5 to walk independently to and from school.

We have recently put extra learning in place for the children to support with understanding and knowledge of online behaviours and phone use to supplement what we already do in PSHE lessons. At the moment, we don't feel the cohort are quite ready for this responsibility, particularly as many parents ask children to bring a phone to school when they walk alone, so we will review this again just before February half term. This, of course, will coincide with days becoming longer and lighter too. Do email Mrs Boyce as phase 3 leader with any questions at all:

boycek@simonballe.herts.sch.uk

Upcoming dates

- Tuesday 13th December:
 - Year 1 Pantomime visit
 - Larch evening Carol service, 6pm All Saints Church
- Wednesday 14th December: Larch carol service, children only
- Thursday 15th December: Reception Nativity performance **10am Larch Hall**
- Monday 19th December: Larch Christmas lunch
- Wednesday 21st December: end of term, **12pm**

Director of Public Health

Prof Jim McManus, D.Sc, FFPH, CPsychol, FBPsS,
CSci, FRSB, CharteredFCIPD



Hertfordshire County Council
County Hall
CHO231
Pegs Lane
Hertford SG13 8DE

Date: December 5th 2022

Dear Parent,

Increase in Scarlet Fever and Group A Streptococcus (GAS) cases

I am writing to update you of a recent national increase in notifications of scarlet fever to the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA), which is above expected levels for the time of year. I have also previously written to all schools and early years settings across Hertfordshire regarding this matter and will be writing again with advice and guidance.

I would like to take this opportunity to remind you of the signs and symptoms of scarlet fever. Scarlet fever is usually a mild illness, but it is highly infectious. Therefore, look out for symptoms in your child, which include

- a sore throat, headache, and fever, along with
- a fine, pinkish or red body rash with a sandpapery feel which is rough to the touch
- On darker skin, the rash can be more difficult to detect visually but will still have a rough, sandpapery feel.

Please Contact NHS 111 or your GP if you suspect your child has scarlet fever, because early treatment of scarlet fever with antibiotics is important to reduce the risk of complications such as pneumonia or a bloodstream infection. If your child has scarlet fever, keep them at home until at least 24 hours after the start of antibiotic treatment to avoid spreading the infection to others.

Scarlet fever is caused by bacteria called group A streptococci. These bacteria also cause other respiratory and skin infections such as strep throat and impetigo.

In very rare occasions, the bacteria can get into the bloodstream and cause an illness called invasive Group A strep (iGAS). While still uncommon, there has been an increase in invasive Group A strep cases this year, particularly in children under 10 and you will have seen the recent media reports of some tragic deaths as a result of iGAS. Sadly, Deaths do occur each year due to iGAS however this year has seen a slight increase which could be related to the increase in scarlet fever cases.

Currently, there is no evidence that a new strain is circulating. The increase is most likely related to high amounts of circulating bacteria and social mixing.

There are lots of viruses that cause sore throats, colds and coughs circulating. These should resolve without medical intervention. However, children can on occasion develop a bacterial infection on top of a virus and that can make them more unwell.

As a parent, if you feel that your child seems seriously unwell, you should trust your own judgement. Contact NHS 111 or your GP if:

- your child is getting worse
- your child is feeding or eating much less than normal
- your child has had a dry nappy for 12 hours or more or shows other signs of dehydration
- your baby is under 3 months and has a temperature of 38°C, or is older than 3 months and has a temperature of 39°C or higher
- your baby feels hotter than usual when you touch their back or chest, or feels sweaty
- your child is very tired or irritable

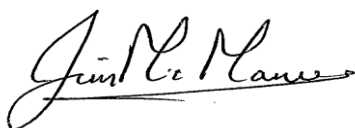
Call 999 or go to A&E if:

- your child is having difficulty breathing – you may notice grunting noises or their tummy sucking under their ribs
- there are pauses when your child breathes
- your child's skin, tongue or lips are blue
- your child is floppy and will not wake up or stay awake

Good hand and respiratory hygiene (cough and sneeze into tissues and washing your hands regularly) are important for stopping the spread of many bugs. By teaching your child how to wash their hands properly with soap for 20 seconds, using a tissue to catch coughs and sneezes, and keeping away from others when feeling unwell, they will be able to reduce the risk of picking up or spreading infections.

We wrote to Schools and early years settings such as nurseries in September to advise them of Scarlet Fever and GAS, and advise on actions to take. I am writing to them again today with further information and advice.

Yours sincerely



Jim McManus
Director of Public Health

Ware Musical Theatre

formerly **Ware Operatic**

presents

LIONEL BART'S

Oliver!

BOOK, MUSIC AND LYRICS
BY LIONEL BART

Ware Musical Theatre (formerly Ware Operatic) is looking for talented young performers, both boys and girls, between the ages of 8 and 16 years for our lead characters (Oliver and the Artful Dodger) and to form our kids chorus (workhouse, Fagin's gang and so on). We are holding a kids workshop on **Sunday 18th December 2022** at 2pm (until approx. 3.30pm) at Leaside Hall, High St, Ware, SG12 9BT. There is no need to book, please just arrive with a bottle of water and lots of talent, energy and enthusiasm!

The afternoon will involve everyone being taught a short excerpt from a song, a short movement routine and they may be asked to read from the script. The next stage will be individual auditions based on what has been learnt at the group session (kids unable to attend the workshop will still be able to audition). These auditions will be held on **Sunday 8th January 2023** from 2pm - 4pm at Southern Maltings, Kibes Lane, Ware.

The show performances will be **28th March to 1st April 2023** (including a Saturday matinee) at The Ware Drill Hall, Amwell End, Ware.

Rehearsals will primarily take place on Sunday afternoons at Southern Maltings, Ware from January 2023 up until the show but a full rehearsal schedule will be available soon.

If any adults are interested in getting involved (on or off stage) or if you have any queries, please contact our secretary Jo: joanne.griffin3@icloud.com

Musical Director Keith Willis

Director John Hebden

Book, Music and Lyrics by LIONEL BART

Orchestral arrangements by William David Brohn

This amateur production is presented by arrangement with Music Theatre International
All authorised performance materials are also supplied by MTI www.mtishows.co.uk