

# Primary phase newsletter

Friday 3rd March 2023

*Creating Tomorrow's Citizens Today*



## All through news

Welcome to our all-through newsletter, where we try and share with parents and carers, both news from school but also what is happening as part of the wider Simon Balle Community.

It seems that spring is on its way with the abundance of flowers, brighter sunshine and the lighter evenings. However we have just received a “cold weather warning” for next week and although it is always difficult to predict accurately whether there will be snow, sleet, frosts and or sunshine, temperatures are dropping once more.

Please ensure that your child wears a winter coat and has breakfast before they leave home. Gloves and hats will be recommended. We might also suggest that parents leave a little longer for journeys. We know that poor weather increases traffic problems and it is always best to think ahead. In school, we constantly assess the conditions on site; if too cold to go out for breaks, we will be suggesting indoor options. In the event of school closure, please do check the website. The Department For Education is quite clear now that home learning is now expected to replace “snow days”!

Thank you to everyone who supported the “Earthquake” appeal- read below for more details. We also know that many of you continue to welcome and support our Ukrainian friends who are so very much part of our Hertford Community, including within our own school community.

Turkey-Syria Earthquake collection! We were overwhelmed by the response and many people can now be helped with your amazing support. We have started working in conjunction with Humanitarian Aid Fund Great Britain (HAFGB) and Debs Bonfield, who many of you will know through her tireless efforts in supporting local families and beyond. We have set up a separate fundraising page with Debs' charity to provide direct aid and support

to the people affected in this disaster. We will continue to document our work there so you will be able to see exactly where your support is going. Please help us reach our target of £10,000. [www.justgiving.com/help/turkeyandsyriasurvivors](http://www.justgiving.com/help/turkeyandsyriasurvivors). Thank you.

This spirit of kindness and generosity is so important in any community. Miss Ahmed, our Head of Y12 has recently presented to Governors an impressive list of how all of our Y12 have embraced their volunteering responsibilities. From helping in lessons, mentoring y11, listening to our youngest children read, being part of the leadership of the walking bus, sports and music leaders to setting up various clubs and societies. The list and scope is impressive. Within the “Larch centre” there are equally students who take up leadership and volunteering roles, including our own Larch Presidents. Shortly Mr Moss and I, along with support from this year’s Presidents (Willow, Gabriel, Sarah, Josh and Yazmin) will start the process of appointing new Presidents. They in turn will work with Mrs Kirk to identify the Larch Presidents who will then take up their roles on various capacities including the School Parliament. And yet another way in which we do indeed “Create tomorrow’s citizens today”.

## Car Park

With many thanks to the vast, vast majority of our parents who are supporting us with students walking to school, and not driving to Simon Balle. Our site is safe, and pedestrians and cars separated at all points on site. Thank you.

That said, we have received a number of complaints from the cricket club up the road from the school. Firstly their car park cannot be used for parking or dropping off/picking up. Nor should you park on the verge as this is causing damage.

We would urge you, as always, to use the car park next to the fire station in Old London Road and walk to school from there. Families are able to park there

for an hour at both ends of the day free of charge. Please make full use of this facility. Thank you for your cooperation.

### Fruit and Vegetable shortages

You are probably aware of the current issues surrounding the availability of salad items and winter vegetables. There is, however, a reasonable supply of alternative products such as broccoli, lamb's lettuce, parsnips and other root vegetables.

As a result of the shortages our caterers, Accent, will be offering alternatives to their usual menu options. It is envisaged that this situation should be resolved within 4 weeks. There will be notices displayed in the canteen to inform students.

### Vacancies

We continue to advertise for a number of roles:

English Teacher (secondary)

Teaching Assistant (SEND- secondary)

Teaching Assistant (English- secondary)

All of these vacancies are available to view on our website

<https://www.simonballe.herts.sch.uk/community/vacancies/>

### SEND meetings

If you would like to book a virtual appointment of up to 15 minutes with a member of the SEND team, please use the following link:

<https://calendly.com/send-drop-ins/send-drop-in-meetings?month=2022-12>

### Library news

#### Extreme Reading

To celebrate World Book Day on Thursday 2nd March, we have had an **Extreme Reading Challenge**.

As part of the challenge students and staff had to choose a good book to read, find a weird and wonderful place to read the book, get engrossed in the book, and have a photograph taken.

Well done to everyone who completed the challenge. There are many **extremely** excellent entries!



### World Book Day

David Rudd from Hertford Library came to visit year 3 today. Students in Wrens and Robins asked him lots of excellent questions such as: *What inspired you to become a librarian?*, *what is your favourite part of the job?*, *what is your favourite book, author, illustrator?*, and *which book is borrowed the most often?* David then discussed all the different events that take place in the library and the reasons why the library is an important place in the community.





## PE news

### Sportshall Athletics success



Congratulations to both Year 7 Girls and Year 5 and 6 girls who qualified for the County Sportshall finals on March 21st at Wodson Park. This is the first time we will have teams across the All through school competing at a County final. We are also proud to announce that our Year 9 & 10 Sports leaders will be supporting the running of the event. Many thanks must go to these students for their support in the delivery of the recent District Sportshall competition. We wish all athletes and sports leaders the best of luck at the County finals.

### Football news

Our Larch football team has been competing in the Hope cup since January. We are extremely proud of their achievements as they have qualified for the semifinals of this competition which involves all the local Hertford and Ware schools.

At secondary level four teams have qualified for the semi finals of the District Cup, this is our best showing in recent years. The following year groups have qualified;

- Year 7
- Year 8 (one game to play)
- Year 10
- Year 11
- Senior

Recently the Year 9 Boys beat Broxbourne School 3-1 but unfortunately with 2 wins out of three, it is not enough for a semi final place.

On Saturday 25th February Years 7-10 competed in our Saturday morning fixtures against Katherine Warrington school. Years 8 & 9 won and Year 7 & 10 narrowly lost. This Saturday we are due to play Roundwood Park with Years 8 & 10 at home and Years 7 and 9 away.

Our Year 8 boys play Ashlyns School (Berkhamsted) on Friday 3rd March in the Quarter final of the County Plate. They also play their final group game in the district cup on the 9th March. If they win this they will progress to the Semi-finals.

### Girls football:

#### U13 Girls National Cup

The U13 girls football team comfortably won their first game in the district cup and also progressed to the next round of the National Cup on penalties. All future games in the cup competitions can be found on the Sport calendar as and when they are arranged. <https://www.simonballe.herts.sch.uk/sport/>

#### U15 Girls National Cup

The U15 girls were away at St Albans High School for Girls' in the first round of the National Cup. Despite being their first game, the girls quickly started playing well and scored not long into the first half. As the game went on, the girls continued to play some excellent football and capitalised on their chances. The final score finished at 5-1 with the Simon Balle team progressing through to the next round.



### Hockey news

The U12 boys hockey team went to the County tournament at Bishops Stortford College. Despite being the first time to enter a competition at this level for year 7 boys, the boys played some fantastic hockey and competed with some very strong teams. Across the day, the boys had 3 draws and 3 losses and gained a lot of experience to take through to next year. Well done to all the boys for their commitment to the hockey club this year.



Coming up this month we have the district tournaments for Year 7, Year 8, Year 9 and Year 10 girls teams.

### Rugby news

Our Year 7 boys team is improving all the time and ran in 5 tries against Robert Barclay on Tuesday 28th. Their next match is against Chauncy on Monday 6th March (at home) where a big focus is on more control at the ruck and wider passing out of the ruck. It's great to watch their development and we look forward to next week.

Year 8 boys rugby plate quarter final Vs SRA is coming up next week.

### Netball

We are delighted that our Larch Netball team have qualified for the semi-finals of the Evans trophy which is out of all the Schools in Hertford and Ware. This is a knock out competition that the children have been playing in since January.

Year 10 girls competed in their school netball tournament hosted at Broxbourne. The girls played exceptionally well, finishing runners up of the tournament only losing to Presdales.

The year 7 girls play in their District netball tournament on the 8th March and the year 8's on the 21st March. We want to wish all squads the best of luck for these competitions.

### Upcoming Primary fixtures

- Thursday 9th March -Home matches against St Catherine's in Netball and Football
- Thursday 16th March-Home matches against Bengoe in Netball and Football
- Tuesday 21st March-Year 5 & 6 girls at the county sportshall athletics at Wodson Park
- Friday 24th March District netball 1-4 at Wodson park
- Monday 27th March- Year 3,4,5 & 6 Cross country at Hertford rugby club. First race at 3:30 finish at 5pm
- Thursday 30th March-District football at Haileybury school 12-4

### Dates for the diary

WHOLE SCHOOL	
Friday 31st March	End of term (normal finish time)
Monday 17th April	Start of summer term
Monday 1st May	Bank holiday
Monday 8th May	Bank holiday
29th May to Friday 2nd June	Half term
SECONDARY	
Saturday 4th March	Big Band Evening (7pm)
Tuesday 7th March	Y13 parents evening (revised date)
Monday 6th March to 8th March	Y10 geography field trips (3 groups)
Thursday 9th March	Mr Stevenson's Drum Evening (6 - 7pm)
Thursday 16th March	Guitar Platform Evening (6 - 7pm)
Saturday 18th March	A Celebration of Singing and Strings (6.30 - 8.30pm)
Monday 20th March	Y10 parents exam & information evening
Tuesday 28th March	Rock Gig (7pm)
Wednesday 29th March	Drama showcase
Monday 3rd April to 7th April	Y8 and Y9 sports tour
Tuesday 18th April to 21st April	Y7 residential trip to Bawdsey
Saturday 22nd April	A Celebration of Wind & Brass (6.30 - 8.30pm)
Wednesday 26th April	Y8 parents evening
PRIMARY	
Tuesday 14th March	Y2 String Celebration Concert (5.30 - 6.30)
Thursday 16th March	Y2 Windsor Castle trip
W/C 20th March	Reception parent conversations
Monday 20th March	Year 4, 5 & 6 Choir in Music Festival "Esther" (7pm)
Wednesday 22nd March	Y3 Celtic Harmony camp trip
	A Larch Celebration of Music (6 - 7pm)
Thursday 30th March	Y4 performance 5pm (change of date)

### Primary news

We appear to have arrived in March (where did February go?!) and it is a wonderfully busy and exciting time in the Larch.

This morning, as part of **world book day**, we were delighted to award so many certificates to children who we know just have a love of reading, developed by the consistency of their reading at home - thank you for your support. World Book Day in the Larch is always about connecting with others through reading - and this year continued this theme in delightful ways. Please see photos shared on our social media platforms with Year 6 children reading to Reception, Year 1 and 2; and also paired partnerships between Years 3 and 5. If you look closely at the photographs, you will see so many of our values in action: kindness (positive relationships are so evident), wisdom (the engagement of children clear to see), patience (both from leaders and younger children) and hope (children's reading journeys will continue as we know they will become lifelong readers)!

As well as this, we were delighted to welcome David Rudd from Hertford library who visited Year 3 today. Students in Wrens and Robins asked him lots of excellent questions such as: What inspired you to become a librarian?; What is your favourite part of the job?; What is your favourite book, author, and illustrator?; and which book is borrowed the most



often? David then discussed all the different events that take place in the library and the reasons why the library is an important place in the community.

Here is a round-up of many more reasons to celebrate learning in the curriculum and through extra-curricular opportunities this fortnight:

- **Year 4** are demonstrating such a depth of understanding of the **Romans** through their history learning this term. The production that they are looking forward to performing for parents is supporting their oracy skills too - a school development priority for this year. As well as knowledge and oracy, children are thriving in collaboration with one another.
- It is an incredibly busy term for **music!** I know that Mr Taylor will write in more detail, but we were so proud to give out many music medals and grade certificates this morning - well done to all. We know that this only happens through consistent practice at home - thank you! I was privileged this evening to attend the Year 5+ brass concert and I was reminded just how empowering it is for our young musicians to play with older musicians and to be inspired too by listening to what they can look forward to in the future. The benefits of the all-through were clear indeed! We hope that parents are looking forward to the concerts to follow in the next few weeks, including 'Esther' at the Ware Drill Hall for choir, and the Larch celebration of music involving over 100 musicians!
- Our all-through **sports** round-up above is wonderful to read. But I wanted to add my personal touch having been delighted to attend the last two football matches for our Larch team (I promise to attend netball next!). Across Larch sports, we are so proud of the values our children consistently show - they simply understand, profoundly, how to be excellent sportsmen and women. Their leadership, teamwork, positive support, focussed approach, fair play and respect are just a joy to see in action. As a result of their hard work, success has come in abundance in both football and netball - now through to the semi-finals in both cups. And, as for the sportshall athletics, please read above! We thank parents for your dedicated support. Parents and children - please remember to thank Mrs Riddle and Mr Leonard - I cannot tell you the hours of work that go into ensuring that children can take up every opportunity available from cross-country to athletics, football to netball, tennis to class

events and more. We will keep you posted!

### **Larch student leadership**

We are passionate about our children benefiting from leadership experiences at every stage of their development through Simon Balle All-through school. Roles in the Larch include presidents and vice-presidents (recently confidently conducting tours for many prospective headteacher applicants); children as school council representatives (in the older years sitting on the all-through parliament, and for all classes the Larch parliament) and leaders of so many different areas of school life. Here are two specific examples from the last fortnight:

- **World Book Day Assembly**

To celebrate World Book Day, the **Larch librarians** led an assembly for students in KS1. The Larch librarians asked students about their favourite books and authors, and then they did a book quiz. Do ask your KS1 children about questions in the quiz - there was much excitement in the hall!

- **Larch sports leaders.** Our sports leaders wanted to tell you about recent sports events in their own words. Thanks to our sports journalists Marley, Lucas, Willow and Lola:

*Over the past month the footballers have been participating in the Hope cup and they have successfully made it to the semi final! We have made our school proud by showing all of our school values. Our first game of the Hope cup was against St Marys; we beat them with a great goal scored by Daniel B to make Simon Balle go through to the next round. Away at Bayford, a successful game, we won and our goalie scored a penalty.*

*In the netball, the girls have been working hard to stay in the competition and have done so, winning all of their matches so far. They beat Hertford Heath 18-5 and also beat St John Baptist. All the girls showed great sportsmanship in these matches and have made it to the third round which is two away from the final.*

*Recently, the year sixes and year fives have been competing in an athletics event. There were track events and field events which the pupils tried their hardest to win for their school. The final results, which were very close, said the boys were in 3rd and the girls in 1st! We are sure they are very proud of themselves.*

**PSA news**

The PSA have started planning for the Slice of Summer and are looking to expand the team or organisers. This year, the summer fair will take place on Saturday 1st July, 12-4pm. Area Leads are needed for the following: Volunteers, Creative, Attractions, Stallholders, Music & Entertainment, Food and Drink, Games and Prizes, Raffle, Maps and Planning, Sponsorship.

If you are interested in leading or co-leading with a friend, please refer to this form for more information and to sign up:

<https://forms.gle/Ts4odcMxtwEgMMVDA>



# HOW TO HELP

Simon Balle PSA

- Register via this form
- You will be emailed with volunteer opportunities and invited to sign up via either:
 

**Google Form**

**VolunteerSignUp link**
- Wait for an email confirming when and where your help is needed - please check your junk folder.  
[psa@simonballepsa.org.uk](mailto:psa@simonballepsa.org.uk)

**Re-homing unwanted and excess gifts**

The PSA would be very grateful for any new/unopened excess gifts you may have that we can offer as Raffle prizes at our fundraising events. Please drop them off at either reception.

Thank you.

**Volunteer Opportunities**

We have a number of volunteer opportunities including supporting the bar for the Music Department's Strings and Singing evening on 18th March, as well as their Wind and Brass night on 22nd April. Later in the year we will be looking for support with the Larch Frozen Fridays, the Slice of Summer and our September quiz night.

To be included on our volunteer database, please complete this short form:

<https://forms.gle/njydecWi2mqaddvg29>

Monday 20th March  
Thursday 4th May  
Thursday 15th June

7.30-9pm  
Refreshments from 7pm

## Jubilee Suite

Enter via double gates, to the left of the Larch Hall.  
Jubilee Suite is located between the science block and trim trail.

# PSA meetings

All welcome





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Teaching School Hub

# WANT TO BECOME A TEACHER? THEN WE WANT TO MEET YOU!

Interested in becoming a teacher in Hertfordshire? To find out more about the School Direct route come along to our virtual information event.



Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> March

Online Information Event (register for the link)

5.30pm -6.30pm



01727 799560 Ext 4217



afgtpenquiries@sandringham.herts.sch.uk

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



Register here: <https://bit.ly/AF-15March>



Working as an LSA before, I realised how wonderful it is to be able to inspire others and impart knowledge that makes young people feel empowered and capable."

Xhina Gjoka 22/23 trainee

