



Balcombe

Church of England
Primary School

"In all that we do we are guided by God"



NOVEMBER NEWSLETTER

parents@balcombeschool.co.uk

We do have learners with allergies, so please remember - no nuts in school.

Dear Parents / Carers,

As we approach December, our thoughts turn to Christmas, specifically our usual activities in School. Obviously this year, so much will be different and as a staff we have thought and discussed at great length what we should do about our traditional Nativity Play.

Some local schools are planning to video separate Nativities with each class in the classroom and send these to parents. We have taken the decision not to do this: there is nothing like a live performance and in our opinion, a video in class is nothing like a live performance. We feel that our pupils deserve the opportunity to put on a "show" for their family and that you as parents deserve the experience of seeing your little ones dressed up, on stage, waving at you, singing their hearts out and generally looking extremely cute! A pre-recorded video, with a smaller number of children, in the classroom, not singing (guidance is that singing 'en masse' should still not be taking place) and without the usual unscripted surprises is just not the same. We also want to enable our pupils to do their very best and without the support and encouragement from a live audience, we feel the whole thing would fall rather flat.

With this in mind, we have decided that we will postpone our infant production until later on in the academic year when our current Covid restrictions are hopefully a thing of the past. We may put on a spring or summer Nativity, or something else altogether, but we will do something and we will give our pupils the chance to shine.

We hope that you understand and support this decision. Of course we won't let Christmas come and go without marking it in some way and sharing that with you, so please watch this space!

With best wishes,
Wendy Millbanks

NSPCC Speak Out Stay Safe



The children enjoyed wearing their own clothes to school a couple of weeks ago and all listened attentively to the online safeguarding programme run by the NSPCC. Thanks to your generosity, we raised an impressive **£192.05!** Well done everyone!

Stationery for Pencil Cases



A reminder to check and top up all pencil cases (great stocking fillers!) for the juniors, ensuring that you supply your own fountain pen (if you have a pen licence) and also ink cartridges.

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Reading in School: ACTION REQUIRED



As always, our priority is to keep members of our school community safe, but when lockdown ends if our risk assessment leads us to believe it is safe to do so, we are planning to invite a **few** volunteers in to read with some of our children. These volunteers will wear full face masks, follow strict hand hygiene and only work with children in one bubble. They will also remain in central areas of the school which are well ventilated. As with all visitors entering the building, they will be asked to confirm that they have not shown symptoms of the virus or had recent contact with anyone who has.

We have taken the decision to review our thinking on volunteers in school, as despite parents working on reading at home, some of our pupils are falling further behind with their reading. In order to ensure that these children make accelerated progress to catch up, they need to be reading daily, for a prolonged period, 1:1 with an adult. Regrettably, this is something that the adults in class do not have time to do.

With this in mind, if lockdown ends on 2nd December as planned and the risk remains minimal volunteer reading may commence from later that week.

If you DO NOT wish your child to read with a volunteer, please let the class teacher know by emailing them at the class@ email address.

Amazon Smile: ACTION REQUIRED



I am sure that, like me, you are beginning to order Christmas presents online. We recently wrote to you to ask you to use Amazon Smile and this is the perfect time to do it. It is **SO EASY** and takes only seconds longer than using the APP. As with most schemes like this, you have to spend a lot to get much back which is why we **REALLY** need your help. During this time, we are not able to hold fundraising events through the PTA and so our funding for those "extras" is almost non-existent. By supporting us in this way, even if your purchases make a couple of pounds for the school, it's a couple of pounds we can spend towards supporting your child's education.

So far, I've ordered 6 items (all quite small) and have raised.....drum roll..... 44p! I am sure that you can beat that.

[Link to Amazon Smile](#)

Covid Test

Thankfully, we have had no positive test results amongst our school community, however it is essential that you do not send your child to school if anyone within the household has any symptoms of Covid. The main symptoms are:

- **a high temperature** – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)
- **a new, continuous cough** – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)
- **a loss of change to your sense of smell or taste** – this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal

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If you or a member of your family does receive a positive result, please phone the school immediately to let us know. **If you are not able to speak to someone in person and the answerphone kicks in, or it is during an evening or weekend**, please send us an email to parents@balcombeschool.co.uk so that we are able to take the appropriate action.

Numbers of positive Covid cases are on the increase in Balcombe and the local area so can we please remind all parents and carers that whilst you are in the vicinity of School, dropping off or collecting children, that you wear a mask and limit contact as much as is possible with other parents and observe social distancing.

Thank you for helping to keep everyone safe.

Christmas Lunch & Jumpers!



Our Christmas lunch day is on **Wednesday 16th December** and on this day we invite children to come to school dressed as Christmassy as they wish. This could be a token sprig of holly, a festive jumper or a full blown Santa outfit! All that we ask, is that your child brings whatever donation you can spare to go in to our charity collection for "save the Children". This will help to support Children around the world who will not be having a great Christmas this year, for whatever reason.

The Infants (Year R – 2) will automatically have a meal ordered however, if you do not wish your child to have one, please can you email the office and let us know by **Tuesday 1st December**.

For children in the Juniors (Year 3-6) you will need to order their meal through Chartwells by **Sunday 6th December**.

Click [here](#) to see the menu and price. This can also be found on the school website, under Parents – Lunch & Milk

A Plea for Spare Uniform

Our stocks of spare uniform are running low – if your child has come home wearing uniform that is not theirs we would be very grateful if you could wash it and return it to us ASAP. We are particularly low on socks and tights across all ages.

Parking

A gentle reminder please to ensure that when you park near to the school you are parking legally and safely. There have been a few incidents recently where cars have parked on the corner of a junction or on the yellow hatchings outside school.

School Shoes

I have been asked by a couple of parents about school shoes. If you are in a position to buy school shoes for your child to wear from January, or before if you would prefer, then please do so. If however, you are having to prioritise your spending, then your child may continue to wear trainers for the time being. Other uniform should be worn as normal and children should continue to wear PE kit on PE days. It is also important that pupils have wellington boots in school, so that when we are able to get back on to the field, they have the appropriate footwear.

Sponsored Walk

Please support one of our children in Spring Class, who has been doing a sponsored walk to raise money for Kent, Surrey, Sussex Air Ambulance and has already raised £800 towards the target of £1000! Let's help our little rambler get to the target.

The story behind the walk is on the justgiving page which can be reached on the link below.

<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/airambulance>

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Finish Time End of Term



Term finishes on **Friday 18th December**. Please pick up from your child's class between 1.05pm and 1.20pm.

West Sussex Transport Plan

West Sussex County Council has started a review of the West Sussex Transport Plan (WSTP). The current plan, which covers the 2011-26 period, needs to be reviewed to take account of changes to national and local policy, such as the Government's legally-binding commitment to achieve net zero carbon by 2050. The new plan will set out how we aim to continue supporting the economy and communities while protecting the environment. We will consider the best approaches to tackle key transport issues such as congestion, road safety and pollution, and set out our plans for all modes of transport.

We are asking stakeholders, such as local groups, authorities and transport providers, to complete a survey to gather information about their key issues and priorities. The survey is accessible to all, so individual members of the public can also submit their views if they wish to do so. The survey closing date is Thursday 17th December 2020. To complete the survey please visit: www.westsussex.gov.uk/WSTPsurvey

The survey results will help shape the draft version of the plan, which will be published for public consultation in summer 2021. We aim to adopt the plan in early 2022.

Dates for your diary

2020

Fri 20th Nov – Flu vaccinations

Mon 7th to Fri 11th Dec – Bikeability for Year 6

Wed 16th Dec – Christmas Dinner and Christmas Jumper Day

Fri 18th Dec – End of term, finish 1.05pm to 1.20pm

2021

Mon 4th Jan – INSET DAY, school closed to pupils

Tues 5th Jan – School open for Spring Term

Fundraising for School

Remember to join easyfundraising and Amazon Smile and you can collect free donations for us every time you buy something online. It won't cost you a penny extra, so please help us to raise funds.

<https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/balc-ombeprimary>

[Link to Amazon Smile](#)

REMINDER

Pupil Premium

If you are on a low income making a FSM application can greatly benefit your child.

It is often thought that parents of children in KS1 who currently receive Universal Free School Meals do not need to make a Free School Meals Application for the school to receive Pupil Premium. **THIS IS NOT THE CASE.**

Please read the linked information letter which explains that any accepted applications for Free School Meals (whether or not your child takes the meal up) attract £1320 per child per year which the school can use to greatly enhance the resources available for your child both within the classroom and for extra-curricular activities. We may be able to help with school uniform costs, trips and other extra-curricular activities like swimming and music tuition.

Making an application is easy and

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confidential.

[LINK](#) to pupil premium letter

Donate with
JustGiving™

Upcoming Events Outside School

<https://tinyurl.com/getsmart-gw>



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