



APRIL NEWSLETTER

parents@balcombeschool.co.uk

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

Dear Parents,

Congratulations.....we made it to the end of the Spring Term without any further disruption from Covid 19. Thank you all very much for the care and consideration you have shown during the last few weeks in order to keep our school community safe.

I think it's fair to say that the children have all enjoyed being back at school and engaged well with the learning, but now are absolutely shattered and ready for a rest.

I wish you all a healthy, safe and happy Easter and hope that you get to enjoy some lovely family time together.

With Best wishes,

Wendy Millbanks

What to do if your child experiences symptoms of Covid 19 during the summer holidays

From leaving school on Thursday 1st April, if your child shows symptoms of the virus or a positive test result, please email parents@balcombeschool.co.uk. This email address will be checked daily until the **end of Sunday 4th April**. This is so that we can help with the NHS Track and Trace with contact tracing.

From Monday 5th April, please contact the NHS Track and Trace directly.

Please keep an eye on your emails over the holiday. If we have a confirmed case, where the child may have passed on the virus to others in the last few days of term, we will email you to let you know and identify which children will need to self-isolate.

If your child develops symptoms before returning to school on 19th April and needs to isolate during the start of term, please let us know by phone on the first day back

Symptoms of COVID 19

The most common symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) are recent onset of:

- new continuous cough and/or
- high temperature and/or
- a loss of, or change in, normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia)

For most people, coronavirus (COVID-19) will be a mild illness. If anyone does develop symptoms, you can seek advice from NHS 111 at <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/check-if-you-have-coronavirus-symptoms/> or by phoning 111.

How to stop COVID-19 spreading

There are things you can do to help reduce the risk of you and anyone you live with getting ill with COVID-19.

- wash your hands with soap and water often – do this for at least 20 seconds
- use hand sanitiser gel if soap and water are not available
- wash your hands as soon as you get home

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- cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze
- put used tissues in the bin immediately and wash your hands afterwards

Further information is available at <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

Change of organisation

We are planning to change our bubble structure when we return after the Easter Break, allowing all classes to mix outside (as long as we do not see a large increase in cases over the holiday). This is so that our pupils can play with friends in other classes and so that our older children can resume running activities for our younger pupils. It also means that the children can make much better use of our outside play space.

Class bubbles will remain separate, at least initially, whilst the children are inside.

Congratulations Spring Class

Well done Spring class for being excellent ambassadors for our school. They had a virtual visit from the Fire Brigade last week (complete with emergency call out part way through) and did us proud in terms of their behaviour and engagement. Shortly after the session, we received an email saying what lovely children we had, how beautifully behaved they were and how they asked the best questions of any school that had been virtually visited.

Here is what Anna and Elizabeth wrote about the visit.

Last Thursday, Spring Class had a Zoom call with Haywards Heath Fire Service. Before connecting with them, we watched an interesting video that they had made about what goes on at the station. We found out that when a fire call goes off, they have only 45 seconds to put on their protective clothing before they need to leave to attend the emergency.

Alarmingly, the Zoom meeting almost didn't happen due to a false fire alarm at a college. When we did virtually meet the crew, we asked some good questions (in fact, they said they were some of the best they'd ever been asked). Did you know, their highest ladder is four stories high and it takes four of them to lift it? Surprisingly, they were unsure about one question – how long the fire service had been in existence – but they managed to answer by 'Googling' it! At the end of the meeting, the Firemen had to leave urgently, as a house had flooded due to a burst pipe (luckily, nobody was hurt). We really enjoyed meeting them.

Elizabeth and Anna

Treetops

Don't forget to sign up to our breakfast club and after school care club. Treetops have agreed to run this for us as quite a few parents have asked for it, but will only run after school care if there are enough families who want it. Bookings must be made by 9th April to ensure the afternoon club goes ahead in the Summer Term – more details can be found on the website.

Links with St Mary's Church

We continue to have strong links with St Mary's Church. Our Open the Book assemblies are brought to us by a team of about eight people, mostly from St Mary's Church, but also from Christ Church, New England Road. They love acting out the stories for them to be converted into a short film which is shown in school, but most of all they are very much looking forward to coming back into school to act them 'live', with the help of some very enthusiastic children! The Rector usually leads assemblies in school 9 or virtually) once a fortnight; these will be led by a member of the congregation or visitors in the interregnum. The RE link governor is a member of St Mary's and attends the school prayer group. Here, once a month, the school, staff, pupils and occasionally parents by request, are prayed for. This group comprises of members of three local churches and membership is growing. Personal requests for prayer are welcomed and increasing. St Mary's is also looking forward to welcoming the school back into church as soon as possible and a few members

are hoping to lead prayer spaces in school again, just as soon as restrictions allow.

Smart Watches

We have noticed a small number of children wearing smart watches to school. As much as we encourage children being able to tell the time independently, I'm afraid that smart watches particularly those with a camera or recording capabilities, are not suitable to be worn in school as we cannot have pupils taking photos of each other without parents' permission. Please make sure that if your child wears a watch to school, it is an ordinary "no frills" timepiece.

Dr Matt

Earlier this week, the children were lucky enough to have a virtual visit from Dr Matt, a scientist and magician. The experience was enjoyed by all and I daresay many of his tricks have since been attempted at home.

If you and your children are interested in looking at more, you can sign up for his free monthly newsletter here:

<http://eepurl.com/ohhu1>

or take a look at his websites:

www.sciencemagicshows.co.uk
www.wordsonwonder.com

Sleep

Quite a few of our children have told us that they are having trouble sleeping and we wonder if this is connected to use of devices in the evening. It is known that the light from ipads and other devices actually inhibits sleep and playing quick action games on consoles will produce adrenaline, also hindering getting to sleep.

Our advice is that children should be participating in low stimulus activities for at least an hour before going to bed and not using phones, tablets and other devices.

Amazon Wish Lists

We have been overwhelmed by your generosity following our Amazon Wish Lists being published. Thank you very much for everything from the post-it notes, felt tip pens, chalk boards, electric pencil sharpeners and polydron magnetic sets, it is all very much appreciated and being used already! They have been updated if you wish to have another look.

PTA

Government lockdowns and restrictions have meant that we have not had any PTA events for over a year. In the Summer Term we will be relaunching the PTA and looking for new volunteers to join and help organise and run the events. We are hoping that restrictions will be relaxed further as we ease out of lockdown to enable us to hold at least one event next term.

Mental Health & Well Being

Mental Health has featured heavily in the news over the last year and to that end, we have added links to a range of useful websites and resources to our website. They can be found under Parents – Mental Health & Well Being.

App Guidance for Parents

We have put some useful guidance on WhatsApp, TikTok, Snapchat and Roblox on our website. Please do take some time to have a look, they have provided useful information for Parents.

Crossing Patrol

We are delighted to say that Mrs Harding will be returning to her Crossing Patrol duties in the Summer Term. She will once again, be on hand to help you safely cross the main road on a Monday and Friday.

Stationery List for Juniors

The pencil case should have in it:

Fountain pen (if a pen person – Parker Vector or similar)
Handwriting pen
Pencil
Rubber
Ruler
Pencil sharpener
Glue stick
Whiteboard pens

And also could have:

A green pen for editing
Coloured pencils
Felt tip pens
Highlighter pens
Scissors
Blue ink cartridges (if a pen person)

Lego Sets

Forest Class would love to have some small Lego Sets for the children. If you are having (another!) lockdown clear-out of toys and have any complete sets with instructions, they would be delighted to have them.

Dates for your diary

Mon 19th April– School opens for Summer Term

Mon 26th April – Clubs will resume – details to follow in the first week of Summer Term

Thurs 20th May – Class photographs

Mon 31st May – Fri 4th June – Half Term

Mon 7th June – INSET Day

Fundraising for School



[Link to Amazon Smile](#)

Amazon wish lists will remain open should you wish to purchase anything for your child's class.

Donate with
JustGiving

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/balcombprimary>

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 confidential.
[LINK](#) to pupil premium letter

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