Balcombe
Church of England
Primary School
"In all that we do we are guided by God"



9 OCTOBER - NEWSLETTER

parents@balcombeschool.co.uk

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

Dear Parents and Carers,

I would like to begin by extending my sincere thanks to everyone who joined us for our Harvest Celebration at St Mary's Church. It was wonderful to come together as a school community to reflect on the importance of gratitude, generosity and caring for others. We are especially grateful for the many food donations received. These contributions will be distributed to local causes and will help support individuals and families within our wider community. Your kindness and generosity truly embody our school values.

As we move further into the autumn term, I would like to thank all families for supporting good attendance and punctuality. Arriving at school on time each morning is incredibly important. A calm and positive start to the day helps children settle quickly, engage with early learning activities and feel connected to their class community. When children arrive late, they can miss important learning, routines and instructions, which can make it harder for them to start the day confidently. Thank you for your continued support in ensuring children arrive ready to learn each morning.

Finally, a reminder that our Parent Consultation Evenings will take place on 13th October and 21st October. These meetings provide a valuable opportunity to celebrate your child's achievements and discuss their progress so far this year. We look forward to welcoming you and continuing to work together to support every child to thrive.

Thank you, as always, for your ongoing support.

Best wishes,
Ben Turney
Headteacher

Celebration Assembly

Be Respectful, Be Ambitious, Be Resilient, Be Caring, Be Creative, Be Curious, Be The Best That You Can Be

Since our last newsletter, the following children have been celebrated for demonstrating one of our Values in Action:

Lily Rose - Coombe Class – being such a kind, caring, helpful friend.

Amelia - Forest Class – being the best she can be – amazing effort always!

Tilly – Spring Class – being the best she can be during writing and always showing EVERY school value!

Alistair – Mill Class – being curious – thinking of thoughtful and interesting questions in history lessons.

This week, the following children have been celebrated for demonstrating one of our Values in Action:

Etta B – Coombe Class – showing great curiosity in the creatures found when pond dipping.

Ivor – Forest Class – being the best he can be and ALWAYS with a smile!

Jacob – Spring Class – showing resilience in maths when rounding when tricky!

Alex - Mill Class – creativity/ambition shown when writing a 'blitz' scene, which created a vivid picture for the reader.

Contacting School

Please can we remind all parents and carers to use the email address parents@balcombeschool.co.uk when contacting school. This email address is checked regularly throughout the day. Both Mrs Power and Mrs Chettleburgh have access to this account.

The office@ address is used by sales companies – we get a lot of emails to this address on a daily basis - and important emails from parents are easy to miss.

First Aid – new reporting system

Our new reporting system for First Aid incidents and administering medication, is now fully operational. If your child has a head bump you will receive an email to notify you – the system then reports to us that you have read the email. You will only receive a phone call, if you have not read the notification by the end of the day.

For medicine, like Calpol, we will ring to check that we can administer it to your child and you will then receive a notification with the dose and time given.

School photographs

Horizon Photographic will be coming into school on Wednesday 21 October to take individual and class photographs. They will be on site in hall from 8.30am for pre-school sibling group photographs to be taken. Siblings in school will have a group photograph taken during the school day.

Please can all children wear a jumper or cardigan with the school logo on it. Hair should be tidy and if long, tied back, ideally with a blue hairband or similar.

Volunteers needed!



We are looking for adult volunteers to help empty the planters on Lake patio. We are hoping to do this work on either 17 or 18 October depending on the number of volunteers. Please let the office know if you are able to help.

Open Days for Reception 2027

We will be holding two Open Days for prospective Reception 2027 children. The sessions will comprise of a presentation by Mr Turney and then a tour of the school. If you know of anyone considering applying to Balcombe for a place for their child, please let them know and share the dates. Places can be booked by emailing the office – parents@balcombeschool.co.uk

Wednesday 11 November @ 3.30pm
Thursday 19 November @ 9.30am

Dates for your Diary

Mon 12th – Wed 14th Oct – Year 6 Bikeability
Mon 19th Oct – Y6 Height and Weight Check
Wed 21st Oct @ 8.30am – School Photographs
Mon 26th – Fri 30th Oct – HALF TERM
Mon 2nd Nov – INSET Day, school closed
Wed 11th Nov @ 3.30pm – Reception 2027 Open Day
Thurs 19th Nov @ 9.30am – Reception 2027 Open Day
Thurs 17th Dec @ 1.45pm – Christmas Service, St Mary's Church
Fri 18th Dec – Autumn Term finishes

INSET DAYS: 2 November 2026, 25 March, 7 June, 28 June 2027

PUPIL PREMIUM
updated criteria from 1 September 2026

The government has announced that the eligibility criteria for free school meals will change from 1 September 2026.
All children who live in a household that receives Universal Credit can get free school meals.

There will be 2 types of benefits-related free school meals (FSM).

Targeted free school meals
Children can get targeted free school meals if their household receives Universal Credit and earns £7,400 a year or less.
Children who receive targeted free school meals can also:

- take part in the Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme
- help their school receive extra Pupil Premium funding

Expanded free school meals

Expanded free school meals are for children whose household receives Universal Credit but does not qualify for targeted free school meals.

Children in this group can receive free school meals, but they cannot access the extra support linked to targeted free school meals.

Targeted free school meals in all West Sussex maintained and free schools and academies are available to pupils in receipt of, or whose parents are in receipt of one or more of the following benefits:

- Universal Credit
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guaranteed element of state Pension Credit

If your child already gets free school meals, West Sussex County Council will check whether they qualify under the new rules before 1 September 2026. They will tell the school the outcome, and we will notify you.

Once West Sussex County council (WSCC) give your child a free school meal status, either Targeted FSM or Expanded FSM, they will keep that status until the end of that school year.

WSCC will check your child's eligibility every year before the start of the new school year. If they do not have the information they need, they may ask you to provide updated details.

If your child does not qualify for benefits-related free school meals but is in Reception, year 1 or year 2, they can still get Universal Infant Free School Meals (UIFSM). You do not need to apply however you do still need to book their meals on the new FEED website.

If your child receives UIFSM and also qualifies for Targeted FSM, it is important to register for Targeted FSM.

Registering helps your child's school claim pupil premium funding. This extra funding gives schools more money to support children with their learning and wellbeing.

Fundraising for School

Link to PayPal

Remember to join easyfundraising - 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.

Job Opportunities with ISS
Click on link below for more information
Jobs at ISS

HET Blackthorns SENCo Vacancy – please see school website for details

LINK to SENCo Vacancy

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