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

13 NOVEMBER - NEWSLETTER

parents@balcombeschool.co.uk

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

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope you all had a wonderful half-term break and enjoyed some quality time with your children. It was a pleasure to welcome everyone back last week, and I have been particularly impressed by how quickly the children settled back into school and resumed their learning with such positive attitudes.

Last week, we welcomed Justin Smith, our Education Adviser through the Hurst Education Trust. With experience as a Headteacher, Executive Headteacher, CEO of a Multi-Academy Trust and educational adviser, Justin provides valuable external support and challenge.

During his visit, he praised the calm and purposeful atmosphere across the school, the high levels of pupil engagement and the strong work taking place in curriculum development, inclusion and writing. He concluded that Balcombe continues to make strong progress and remains firmly focused on providing the very best opportunities for our children.

It was particularly pleasing that the strengths he identified reflect what we see every day: hard-working children, dedicated staff and a school community that works together to help every child flourish.

As we move towards the festive season (and apologies for mentioning Christmas so early!), please do keep an eye on our newsletters, emails and the school calendar. The next few weeks are always busy, with a range of events, performances and celebrations taking place, and we would hate for anyone to miss out on important dates.

As we head into what is always a busy and exciting time of year, I hope you enjoy reading about all that has been happening at Balcombe. I wish you and your families a wonderful weekend.

With warmest 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:

Freya – Lake Class – being so creative when she made a rocket out of shapes.

Jack - Coombe Class – showing curiosity when finding out about Mary Anning in history.

Archie - Forest Class – being respectful.

Harrison – Spring Class – trying his best at the football tournament and supporting his team.

Dylan J – Mill Class – being curious when researching his family in WW2, and creatively presenting his research.

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

Joshua – Lake Class – being so creative by finding the beat and moving to the music.

Maeve – Coombe Class – being the best that she can be when writing her Tyrannosaurus Drip story.

Albie – Forest Class – being the best he can be.

Eddie – Spring Class – being resilient and working so hard on his handwriting.

Dylan Q - Mill Class – resilience shown during the orienteering competition, helping the team to victory!

School Meals Update

We wanted to update you on our school meal ordering system as we continue to work with ISS to ensure the best possible service for your child.

To make sure your child receives their preferred meal choice, we recommend ordering as early as possible. While ISS allows ordering until the evening before, booking in advance helps ensure your chosen meal is available. This is especially important if your child has a dietary requirement, as it gives the kitchen team time to prepare appropriately.

We know the kitchen team want to feed every child, however last week they had to manage 15 unbooked meals, which made planning very difficult. When meals aren't pre-ordered, it can lead to food waste, limited choices, and delays at lunchtime. To ensure fair service for all children, if your child arrives without a pre-booked meal, the kitchen will only be able to offer a jacket potato or meals they know have extra portions available. Your advance booking makes a real difference to the quality of service they can provide.

We're continuing to share feedback with ISS to improve the service. We're here to support you, and we're also working directly with ISS on your behalf. If you have specific concerns about the meal service that you'd like to raise directly with ISS, you can contact them at: feed@uk.issworld.com

Thank you for your patience and cooperation as we continue to improve this service together.

Children in Need

If you have not yet donated to Children in Need and would like to do so, please click on the link below.

Link to JustGiving for Children in Need

Inhalers

If your child uses one of the new-style inhalers, you will now receive an email notification when we administer the medicine to them. This is because there is a strict limit to the number of doses that can be given in a 24-hour period.

Leggings & Jogging bottoms

We would be very grateful for donations of old/spare leggings or jogging bottoms in any size. They are useful as spare clothes for accidents or anyone getting very muddy or wet! Please drop off donations in the office.

Christmas Lunch

This year Christmas Lunch will be on Wednesday 16th December. Bookings are available now and close on Friday 4th December – please see menu below.

The children can wear school uniform with something sparkly or festive of their choosing– jumper, hat, glasses.

INSET DAYS: 25 March, 7 June, 28 June 2027





Parking in Rectory Gardens

The new village car park is available for residents to use at the new development, Rectory Gardens.

As you drive into the development, please turn right – do not park in the first 5 spaces opposite the flats as these are reserved for residents of the flats. Currently, there is no signage to indicate that these spaces are private.

There are 10 parking spaces for use by members of the public, including an EV charger and Disabled Parking. These have been provided as a condition of the neighbourhood plan and MSDC for building of this development. See photo for spaces.



Litter outside School

A resident has noticed an increase in litter, particularly outside Mill's gate. Please remind your child not to drop litter on the ground but to use a bin.

Dates for your Diary

Sat 14th Nov @ 2pm – The Balcombe Jumble, Victory Hall
Thurs 19th Nov @ 9.30am – Reception 2027 Open Day
Fri 20th Nov – Festive Friday
Fri 4th Dec – deadline for ordering Christmas Lunch
Fri 4th Dec – Christmas Wreath-Making Workshop
Weds 16th Dec – Christmas Lunch
Thurs 17th Dec @ 1.45pm – Christmas Service, St Mary's Church

Fri 18th Dec – Autumn Term finishes

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.

Local Events

Fellow's Bakery school will be offering FREE decorate your own gingerbread on Friday 4th December from 3.30pm at the Bakery School in Bowders Farm. These are one-hour slots with limited spaces available. To

book a place please visit Fellow's Kitchen at Bowders Farm.

Whilst your child is at the Bakery School, why not browse the Christmas Market also taking place from 3pm – 8pm.

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







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