



# Balcombe

Church of England  
Primary School

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



## OCTOBER NEWSLETTER

[parents@balcombeschool.co.uk](mailto:parents@balcombeschool.co.uk)

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

Dear Parents,

As you know, at Balcombe School, we prioritise the teaching of reading above all else (except safety) and as a result our children almost always develop a love of reading and a proficiency in it. This is evidenced by last year's yr6 SAT results, with 93% of pupils achieving age related expectations (1 pupil did not) and 71% achieving greater depth. To have so many readers attaining well above average is a great achievement for the school, but more importantly ensuring that those individual learners will have the skills needed for the whole of their learning journey. Our aim is to make sure that all of our pupils can read well and access texts at least at an age appropriate level.

In every class, there will be children who find reading more difficult to master and may start to fall behind their peers. Those pupils will receive targeted intervention from staff at school, to support them to make accelerated progress to close the gap and to help them overcome any issues they may have. Reading at home and practising the skills taught in school, is important for every child, but particularly those who may be struggling a little. This is where parent support is crucial and why we ask parents to help their children develop reading skills on a daily basis. We appreciate that lives are busy, but we really need your help to ensure that all of our pupils become confident readers. For this reason, I have included below an extract from the letter I sent to you all last year. I think it's worth reading again.

*Our pupils should be reading at home daily (with older, fluent pupils still sharing stories or other text with an adult at least twice weekly) and seizing all opportunities to discuss what has been read.*

*Reading is the one most important skill that we can teach our children; failure to do so will have a huge detrimental impact on them for the rest of their lives. In school, we prioritise reading above all else because:*

- *Children who read have higher levels of mental wellbeing and happiness.*
- *Reading leads to children's improved social skills, attention, and fewer negative behaviours.*
- *A child who is an engaged reader provides themselves with self-generated learning opportunities that can be equivalent to several years of education.*
- *Children who start reading early and continue reading throughout childhood have greater general knowledge. Reading helps to kick start and sustain a child's ongoing learning journey.*
- *Reading enhances educational attainment. By feeding into cognitive skill development, developing forms of reasoning, complex concepts and imaginative richness, reading supports children to develop problem solving and their intellectual capacities.*
- *The impact of reading for pleasure is four times more powerful on progress in vocabulary, mathematics, and spelling at age 16, than that of parental education or parental socioeconomic status.*
- *Stories can offer children a realistic and authentic 'mirror' of their own lives and experiences and a 'window' to view the experiences of others. When children are emotionally involved in a story, they feel connected to and see their lives as part of the wider human experience. This*

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*can be transformative when it comes to developing their empathy.*

The statements above are evidenced by a wide range of research and academic studies referenced in the original letter. Please help us to help your children by making reading and sharing a love of books a priority at home as well as in school.

Best wishes,  
Wendy Millbanks

## Nature Ninjas Working Party

Huge thanks to those parents and friends of the school who gave up some time to attend our working party on 12<sup>th</sup> October.

They made a huge impact on the Nature Ninja site and around school, clearing brambles and fallen trees, clearing our vegetable garden, constructing a temporary shelter, reinstating a path, making Swedish candles and clearing our parking area.

I am so grateful to the following for their help and support:

Phil Jones  
Rick and Pauline Evans  
Kathryn and Dylan Owen  
Adam and Charlotte Donovan  
Henry Stuart  
Tom Worrall  
Paul Clout  
Steve Hardy  
Libby Taylor  
Alistair Graham  
Lara Power

## Walking Home After Clubs

For those children in Years 5 & 6, please remember that after half term children are not allowed to walk home alone after a club due to the fading light.

## Book Look

On Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> December, we would like to invite you to come into school and look at your child's work with them. Parents (or parent stand-ins) are invited to visit between 2:15pm and 3pm. Our youngest pupils often find it upsetting if they are expecting you to arrive and you are unable to, so please let us know if you are not able to join us and we can manage your child's expectations and distract them elsewhere.

## Christmas Lunch and Jumpers

On Thursday 12 December we will be having our Christmas Lunch. This will be available to book on ParentPay after half term. If you have already booked a meal for that day, you will be notified that it has been cancelled in case your child does not want a Christmas lunch. **You will need to re-book it.**

Also on Thursday 12 December, we will be inviting the children to wear a Christmas Jumper to school to help get everyone in the festive spirit.



**Christmas Lunch**

Join our festive lunch by ordering on ParentPay for  
.....Thursday 12th December.....

**MAINS**  
Roast Turkey in Gravy,  
or  
Quorn Roast in Gravy

**SIDES**  
Roast Potatoes, Peas, Sweetcorn  
Mini Sausage & Stuffing

**DESSERT**  
Festive Cupcake

Scan QR code to order, no later than Thursday 28th November, Or visit  
ParentPay.com

\*Special diets v:† remain in place.

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## Science News

Exciting news! This year, all the schools in the Hurst Education Trust, have become Ogden Trust Schools. The Ogden Trust is a charitable trust that exists to promote the teaching and learning of physics in both primary and secondary schools. They will work closely with us, giving expert advice, equipment and experiences to both our children and staff. This is a great opportunity and we are very excited to see where it takes us!

Our first Ogden activity is a Science Selfie Competition. Over half term, we would like you to try to do something at home linked to science.

It could be ...

- you test the friction of your shoes
- you make and fly a kite
- you see which materials in your house are magnetic
- you will also find some ideas in the Crest Home Learning Collections attached to the email

ALL you have to do is to take a selfie of you doing the activity and then email it into school!

There are two prizes to be won (YR-2 / Y3-6) for the most inventive selfie.



## Nativity

This year our Nativity for Coombe and Lake will be on Wednesday 11 December and Thursday 12 December at 9.30am in the school hall. There is no need to book tickets, just turn up and everyone is welcome. More details to follow after half term.

## Skip2bfit

Thank you to those who have brought in their sponsored skipping money – this is a final request for it to be brought into school so that we can count it after half term.

Well done to all of our children who skipped their legs off and are still captured by the skipping bug.

## FoBS Cake Challenges

After half term FoBS will be challenging each class to hold a cake sale. More details about this to follow after half term.

## Children in Need

Children in Need is on Friday 15 November. Mill and Spring classes will be running a variety of games, stalls and activities to raise money. If you wish your child to take part, please send them to school with a small amount of money in a named envelope or purse– please provide change in small denominations if possible.

## Owl Visit





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Coombe and Lake enjoyed a wonderful visit from the UK Owl and Raptor Centre. They learnt lots of new Owl facts and loved watching the Owls swooping around the school hall! Thank you to parents for helping to make this happen.

## Dates for your Diary

**Thurs 24<sup>th</sup> Oct @ 4pm – 7pm** - Parents Evening  
**Fri 25<sup>th</sup> Oct** – INSET day, school closed  
**Mon 28<sup>th</sup> Oct – Fri 1<sup>st</sup> Nov** - \*HALF TERM\*  
**Fri 8<sup>th</sup> Nov** – Coombe Cake Challenge  
**Weds 13<sup>th</sup> Nov** – Forest Class Trip to Butser Farm  
**Fri 15<sup>th</sup> Nov** – Children in Need  
**Mon 18<sup>th</sup> Nov** – Lake Cake Challenge  
**Mon 18<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> Nov** – Bikeability for year 6  
**Thurs 5<sup>th</sup> Dec @ 2.15pm** – Book Look  
**Fri 6<sup>th</sup> Dec @ 3.30-5.30pm** – FoBS Christmas Crafts  
**Fri 6<sup>th</sup> Dec @7pm** - FoBS Christmas Wreath Making  
**Weds 11<sup>th</sup> Dec & Thurs 12<sup>th</sup> Dec @ 9:30am** – Nativity  
**Thurs 12<sup>th</sup> Dec** – Christmas Jumper Day and Christmas Lunch  
**Thurs 19<sup>th</sup> Dec @ 1.45pm** – Carol Service, St Mary’s Church  
**Fri 20<sup>th</sup> Dec @9am** – Final assembly  
**Mon 6<sup>th</sup> Jan 2025** – INSET day, school closed

## Fundraising for School

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

**Please ensure you include your child’s name and the class on a gift receipt so we can get your gift to the correct class and thank you for your generosity!**

Donate with  
**JustGiving**

**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.**

<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 contact the office if you think you may be eligible for Pupil Premium funding. Any accepted applications for Free School Meals (whether or not your child takes the meal up) attract over £1300 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.**

**INSET DAYS: 25 October 2024, 6 January, 4 April, 2 June 2025**

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Making an application is easy and confidential.

### We are recruiting

Term time contract and school friendly hours.

ID will be required for an enhanced DBS and Right to Work UK.

Contact the manager now:

[laurey.davis@compass-group.co.uk](mailto:laurey.davis@compass-group.co.uk)





## HORSHAM OCTOBER FOOTBALL CAMP



AGES 5-12 YRS

**TUES 29 OCT - THURS 31 OCT**  
10am - 3pm  
Tythe Barn, Pondtail Rd, Horsham, RH12 5JF



**BOOK** [www.southcoastsports.org.uk](http://www.southcoastsports.org.uk)



## OCTOBER HALF-TERM CAMP

SPORTS, GAMES, ARTS & CRAFTS

AGES 5-11 YRS

# HANDCROSS

HANDCROSS PRIMARY SCHOOL

**MON 28 OCT - FRI 1 NOV**  
8.30am - 5pm OR 9am - 4.30pm

**BOOK ONLINE:** [www.southcoastsports.org.uk](http://www.southcoastsports.org.uk)

### SOCIAL MEDIA AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO CHILD AND ADOLESCENT MENTAL HEALTH

PRESENTATION BY  
DR FELICITY WILLIAMS  
ALL WELCOME!



TUES  
12TH  
NOV

Dr Felicity Williams, a clinical psychologist at Beacon House Therapeutic Services and Trauma Team, will explore some of the links between social media and mental health. Felicity aims to provide practical strategies to help families navigate their way through this often difficult aspect of parenting. This talk is relevant for parents/carers with children of all ages.

FREE ENTRY - RSVP APPRECIATED  
TUES 12TH NOV

8:00 - 9:30pm

BALCOMBE CLUB

Balcombe, Stockcroft Rd, RH17 6HP

✉ [balcombesfc@gmail.com](mailto:balcombesfc@gmail.com)

CLICK HERE TO  
INDICATE YOUR  
ATTENDANCE



**BALCOMBE SMARTPHONE  
FREE CHILDHOOD GROUP**

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