

# DECEMBER NEWSLETTER

#### parents@balcombeschool.co.uk

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

#### Dear Parents,

What a fun filled last few days of term we are having.

Our children loved the visit from Rocksteady Music school last Friday – they absolutely rocked the rafters with "We will rock you". Don't forget to reply to the email we sent out on Friday if you are interested in your child taking part in our school workshops.

Rocksteady will be coming back into school to run two **trial workshops** for pupils and their parents who are interested in registering for lessons. These will be held on **30<sup>th</sup> January at 9am for Mill and Spring and 9:45 for Lake, Coombe and Forest.** Obviously, for working parents it might be difficult to attend; this is fine, your child will still be included. If you are free and able to join us for either workshop, please do just turn up.

https://www.rocksteadymusicschool.com/

On Monday, Florence and Libby from PQA (Haywards Heath) facilitated some brilliant singing, dancing and acting inspired by the film "The Nativity". It was lovely to see our pupils having such a great time working together to make a video. PQA run two sessions on a Saturday (am and pm) for children from 4 - 18. The areas covered include film, musical theatre, comedy and drama.

https://www.pqacademy.com/academies/haywardsheath/

On Tuesday, we journeyed to India and tried some Bollywood dance. This was a more relaxing and serene experience, with the children showing really good concentration. On Wednesday, Mrs Butcher brought us her own unique style of Christmas madness, through elf drama. This was greatly enjoyed by all, especially the older children exploring the concept of moody, teenage elves!

Today, our carol service at St Mary's made for an atmospheric and reflective afternoon, pondering on the meaning of Christmas. It was lovely to see so many parents joining us.

And finally, tomorrow, we will bring 2024 to a close with our end of year celebration assembly. Parents are very welcome to join us - we aim to start just after 9am.

I would like to say a huge thank you for the cards and gifts that have come into school for us all over the past few days, they are very much appreciated and will certainly be enjoyed over the holiday (if not already demolished in the staffroom)!

On behalf of all of the staff and governors at Balcombe School, we wish you a very MERRY CHRISTMAS and a HAPPY NEW YEAR.

Best wishes, Wendy Millbanks

### **Parent Survey**

Thank you to those parents who filled in the recent HET survey and shared opinions about what the school does well and also areas where we can improve. I will take some time over Christmas to look at the survey results in detail and send a more detailed response in January

#### Science Selfie Winners!

Thank you to all the children and their families who took part in our Science Selfie Competition. We really enjoyed learning about what you got up to in our assembly, and were impressed by the wide range of entries, such as an indicator to test for acids and bases, a lava lamp demonstrating hydrophobicity, a



zip line investigating stability and a bubbling monster in a jar! Congratulations to our winners: Jacob, Max and Kika.

## Census Day – 16 January 2025

Census Day is an important day in the School calendar, as the Government will use the numbers of those who eat school meals on this day to identify the level of funding each school receives for Universal Free School meals. For the Census Day we will pre book hot dinners for all children in Reception, Year1 and Year 2. Please do check on ParentPay and change the meal choice if required by **Thursday 2 January 2025**. If your child has any food allergies and you haven't already advised Chartwells, you will need to complete a medical diet request which can be found on their website.

Meals are free for Reception, Year1 & 2 and children are encouraged to try a hot meal even if it is just a taste. If you feel your child will not eat the lunch provided please feel free to send in a packed lunch as well.

The menu is below for your information.

Thank you for your support. The more children eating a school meal on this day, the more funding we can access.



### Pencil Cases

If you are stuck for last minute Christmas gifts do consider stationery for pencil cases for children in the Juniors.

#### **Stationery List for Juniors**

The pencil case <u>should</u> have in it: Fountain pen OR handwriting pen Pencil Rubber Ruler Pencil sharpener Glue stick Whiteboard pens

And also <u>could</u> have: A green pen for editing Coloured pencils Felt tip pens Highlighter pens Scissors Blue ink cartridges

## Dates for your Diary

Mon 6<sup>th</sup> Jan 2025 – \*\* INSET day \*\* Tues 7<sup>th</sup> Jan – Spring Term starts Mon 13<sup>th</sup> Jan – Clubs restart this week Tues 14<sup>th</sup> Jan – Spring Class trip to South Downs Planetarium Thurs 16th Jan – Census Day Fri 24<sup>th</sup> Jan – Spring Class Cakes (FoBS) Fri 14<sup>th</sup> Feb – Mill Class Cakes (FoBS) Mon 17<sup>th</sup> – Fri 21<sup>st</sup> Feb - \*\* HALF TERM \*\* Thurs 6<sup>th</sup> Mar – World Book Day Sun 23<sup>rd</sup> Mar – Bull Run Mon 24<sup>th</sup> Mar 4pm – 7pm – Parents Evening Thurs 3<sup>rd</sup> April 3.30pm – 5.30pm – Parents Evening Thurs 3<sup>rd</sup> April – Term Finishes @ 3.15pm Fri 4<sup>th</sup> April -\*\* INSET DAY \*\*

### **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**<sup>-</sup>

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.

## 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.

Making an application is easy and confidential.