



## NOTES FROM THE ACTING HEADS



The magic of Christmas is in the air at Balfour!

It has been wonderful to see so many parents and grandparents at our Christmas shows where the children have transfixed us with their unique performances- whether narrating, singing, acting or playing percussion instruments, everyone has played their part and sparkled!

We had ten nurseries and all of the children in Years 3, 4 and 6 visit to watch the dress rehearsals so that we could celebrate and share this very special time with our school community.

It was lovely to hear the children reading and singing so beautifully in the stunning setting of St John's church for the Year 3 and Year 4 carol concerts. It was a fabulous way to start off December and get us all in the Christmas spirit. Videos of the Year 3 concert can be found on the [Year 3 page of the website](#).

Thank you to Miss Redfern and the choir for their fantastic singing at the Brighton Centre. Balfour was one of a number of Brighton schools who came together to celebrate music, singing and Christmas. The sound of singing and harmonising was extremely moving and a total joy!

The Year 5 Christmas production 'What a Knight' has been a huge success and entertained adults and children alike! The children, Ms Redfern and the Year 5 team have put in very long hours to produce something rather wonderful! Every child has had a part to play in bringing the play to life- whether they were front of house, back stage, lighting, designing posters and programmes or singing and acting the success of the show is down to fantastic team work.



Sandra Mulholland & Dawn Loader  
Acting Head teachers

## Photos from the Y5 Christmas production



## SAFE & WELL AT SCHOOL SURVEY 2018

Children in Years 4, 5 and 6 are currently undertaking the Safe and Well at School survey. They have approached this with maturity and respect and have demonstrated an understanding of how important it is to answer the questions honestly to improve how we can all work together to be friendly and caring towards each other and prevent bullying, which will make our school a happier and safer place to be.

## UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

We are incredibly fortunate to have such a strong and positive relationship with the University of Brighton and this has been developed over the past few years. We have recently received five teaching students - a mixture of PGCE and BA 3rd Years and we know they will enjoy their time with us at Balfour Primary. In the New Year, we will receive BA 1st and 2nd Year students. The children always make them feel incredibly welcome. If you have any questions regarding the placement of students within your child's classroom, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

## EXECUTIVE INCO

Rachel Tuck, our newly appointed Executive Inco, has joined the Senior Leadership Team for 4 days this term and already feels like a valued member

of our team! Ms Tuck has carried out a learning walk with our Assistant Heads, visiting the children in their classrooms to begin to familiarise herself with the children she will be supporting. Ms Tuck will take up her post in January 2019- Welcome to Balfour Ms Tuck!



## RSPB - STAMP COLLECTION

Kit in Uruguay class has provided Balfour Primary with a collection box in the reception area at KS2. He is collecting used stamps for the RSPB so please do bring in as many as you can to help support a wonderful organisation.



## KEEP UP WITH YOUR CHILD'S WEEKLY LEARNING

Don't forget that you can find out more about what your child is learning each week from the school website under the **Children tab- Year Group and Curriculum.**

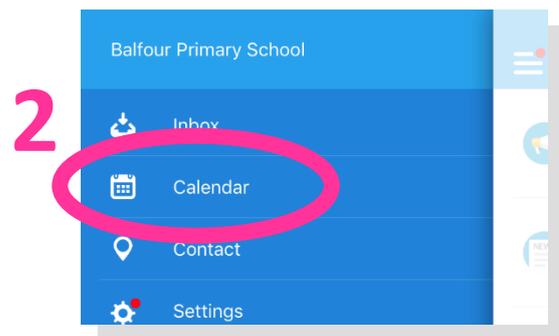
## RIGHTS RESPECTING CHAMPIONS

The newly appointed RRS Champions met on the 13<sup>th</sup> November to explore their role in school and what their priorities will be this term. The first project will be on reviewing how behaviour is managed in the class and how we can ensure that it is fair for all children. The champions will be consulting with the children in their class about how they feel when they are placed on the rainbow and the cloud. The children have some very good ideas- so watch this space!



## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

(Can now be found in the SchoolPing calendar but will **temporarily** remain in the newsletter during the transition)



DATE	YEAR:	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	EVENT
Mon 17 <sup>th</sup> Dec		x	x	x					KS1 Breakfast Club Christmas Party
Tues 18 <sup>th</sup> Dec		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	Christmas Dinner
Tues 18 <sup>th</sup> Dec								x	6-7pm & 7:30-8:30pm Y6 Christmas Concert
Tues 18 <sup>th</sup> Dec		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	Be More Snail Day non school uniform
Wed 19 <sup>th</sup> Dec		x	x	x	x	x	x	X	Last day of term
Thurs 3 <sup>rd</sup> Jan		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	First day back to school

Friday 4 <sup>th</sup> Jan	x					EYFS fancy dress day
Tues 22 <sup>nd</sup> Jan			x			Y3 Trip (Fern & Fossil) to Brighton Museum
Tues 23 <sup>rd</sup> Jan			x			Y3 Trip (Forest & Feather) to Brighton Museum



## OFSTED UPDATE

The Senior Leadership and Management Teams have carried out joint observations during the last few weeks with a focus on developing writing across the school. Whilst there are clear expectations around challenge for most able writers, provision for disadvantaged children and support for children with SEND, the learning and progress of all children is the key focus. Every teacher, receives feedback on the strengths of the lesson and suggestions on how learning and progress can be improved for the children in the class. The Assistant Heads will produce a report of overall strengths of teaching and learning across the school and any further training that will support the development of writing further.



## ASSEMBLIES

This half term so far have focused on sharing and community, World War One and Mindfulness. In Key Stage 2 mid-week assemblies have focused on developing children's understanding of their mental health and how they can look after it. We have considered the importance of gratitude, explored many aspects that make life special and have shared strategies that can help calm anxieties.

## SPORTING HEADLINES

Congratulations to the Year 5 & 6 Girls who finished runners-up in the Sussex Finals of the 6-a-side Brighton & Hove Albion Cup. The girls, who had already qualified through from the Brighton heat, won 5 out of 5 group matches, plus the semi-final before cruelly losing the final on penalties after a 0-0 draw. A fantastic achievement for the girls who played some super football along the way and should be very proud of their efforts - well done girls!

Well done to the Year 6 boys football team who beat St Lukes 4-0 in the league last week. A great performance against a strong team keeps the boys top of the league - keep it up boys!

## PARENT FORUM MEETINGS

We would like to thank all of the parents that attended the Parent Forum meetings on the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> December. Whilst numbers were low, contributions from parents were very intuitive, useful and much valued, particularly related to Poverty proofing, the half termly Report Card and how we can develop the whole school approach. We were able to provide updates on all the actions requested and implemented since the last parent forum.

We would like to encourage as many parents as possible to attend these meetings, as our parent voice is extremely important to us in informing school improvement.

We would also like parents to drive the agenda, so that we can ensure that the items discussed are relevant and meaningful.

**If you have any other agenda items that you would like discussed at the meeting please contact Ms Loader/Miss Mulholland.**

## LEARNING LEADERS

The Learning Leader class representatives met to discuss what they would like to have as their main focus for improving learning at Balfour. They all had so many wonderful ideas, including behaviour strategies, children's sense of pride in their learning and resources available in the classroom. We're looking forward to our next meeting in the spring term.

## MATHS LEARNING WALK

The Assistant Heads and Year Group Leaders carried out a maths learning walk, looking at how different year groups provide support for all children in maths. It was great to see the variation in approaches as the children progress through the school- starting with pre-number activities in Reception, up to Year 6 tackling more challenging number learning. There were great examples of teachers modelling mathematical concepts using concrete resources and some great challenging extensions to learning.

## FANTASTIC FAB CHRISTMAS FAIR

The Fair on Saturday was spectacular, with something for everyone! It was lovely to see children and their families making Christmas badges, snowmen and women, decorating biscuits and taking part in all of the games on offer. The Grinch was super-grumpy and to offset this we were visited by Father Christmas who reminded us all that people who think of others can look forward to a gift or two at Christmas! Thank you to all the FAB volunteers, who spent many hours of their time planning, coordinating and preparing for the fair. Thank you also to the Premises Team, who by some miracle had the school looking clean and orderly by Sunday afternoon!

## ATTENDANCE AND LATES

As you know, school attendance is a high priority at the moment and we want to **celebrate our successes** ... and highlight areas for improvement ... so we publish in each newsletter the percent attendance and the number of late arrivals. The figures below are for the previous fortnight only.

	Reception	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
% attendance	96.87	95.3	97.77	98.57	97.6	97.14	94.92
# of lates	5	9	9	27	37	43	24

Whole school attendance since Sept 2018 = 97.41% (down from 97.59%)

Please note that if your child is late the office staff will ask you to record the reason. (e.g. traffic, overslept, etc.) This is part of our attendance procedure and we thank you for your help and support.

## TERM DATES FOR 2018/19

**Autumn Term:** 3rd Sept to 19th December

☞ ~~Autumn Half term: 22nd Oct to 2nd Nov~~

☞ Autumn End of term: 20th Dec to 2nd Jan 19

**Spring Term:** 3rd Jan 19 to 9th April 19

- Spring Half term: 18th Feb to 22nd Feb
- Spring End of term: 10th Apr 19 to 22nd Apr 19

**Summer Term:** 23rd Apr 19 to 26th July 19

- Summer Half term: 27th May 19 to 31st May 19

**INSET days 18/19:** ~~3rd Sept, 4th Sept, 5th Nov~~, 15th Feb 19, 24th May 19

## TERMINOLOGY & ACRONYMS

If you have any questions about terminology or acronyms we have a handy guide on our website! ([Parents](#) → [Helpful Curriculum Information](#) → [Commonly Used Acronyms](#))

## GOVERNORS

If you wish to contact the school governors for any reason, their email address is: [balfour.governor@balfour.brighton-hove.sch.uk](mailto:balfour.governor@balfour.brighton-hove.sch.uk)

## FAB UPDATE

### RAISE MONEY WITH YOUR ONLINE CHRISTMAS SHOPPING

Did you know you can raise money for the school simply by shopping online? We've already raised over £1,000 thanks to parents using easy fundraising.

Around 3,000 retailers are on board with the scheme, including Amazon, John Lewis, Aviva, the train line, Toys R Us, Marks & Spencer, Debenhams and Sainsbury's.

It's quick, simple and free – just go to:

<https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/friendsatbalfour/>

You can also do the same at AmazonSmile. Just shop at [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com), and Amazon will donate a portion of your purchase price to FAB.



### BALFOUR SWIMMING SCHOOL

Balfour Swimming School sessions run on Thursdays after school (3.30pm-4.30pm), and on Saturday mornings (9.05am-10.50am) at Surrenden Pool. They cost £5.50 for a 30-minute session.

Swimmers of all abilities are welcome – we teach children in three bands: beginners, intermediate and confident. Places are currently available at all levels.

For more information, and to find out about availability, please contact: [Balfourswimmingschool@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:Balfourswimmingschool@yahoo.co.uk) or 01273 505149

## CONTACT FAB

If you'd like to help out at any of our events, please contact us at [balfourfabvolunteers@gmail.com](mailto:balfourfabvolunteers@gmail.com).

This address should also be used for all class rep communications.

For anything else, drop us a line at [friendsatbalfour@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:friendsatbalfour@hotmail.co.uk).

Follow us for the latest information on our events and meetings:

**Website:** [friendsatbalfour.org](http://friendsatbalfour.org)

**Facebook:** Friends at Balfour

**Twitter:** @FABatBalfour

*Merry Christmas*

