



Dear parents,

As I write this it seems hard to believe that a whole term has flown by. We have been busy in our classes improving our skills in netball, football, handball, basketball, dance and gymnastics this term.

The term has been a little quieter than usual on the NEARS front, but we have still participated in a number of events. Any that had to be postponed will hopefully be re-arranged for the coming year.

### NEARS Sports Crew training

Back in September the newly appointed Sports Crew pictured below went to St Giles' Primary in Horsted Keynes to receive their training. They spent the afternoon learning how to plan events and how best to use equipment to keep fellow pupils busy. I have to say they have been brilliant all term working with a number of groups of children and running their own inaugural dodgeball competition. Well done Lourenco, Poppy, Zara, Daniel, Callum, Jack and Sophie.



### NEARS Netball league

The NEARS group of schools play in a netball league during the Autumn and Spring terms. The squad of players are picked from the children who attend netball club after school on a Wednesday. We enjoy testing ourselves against other schools. Our first match was against Albourne during which we played extremely well to win 13 – 0. As all of the squad were new to playing competitively against other schools this was a tremendous result.

Our second league night was on an extremely cold night at the end of November. Our first match was against Warninglid. We started extremely strongly scoring 8 goals in the first quarter. We continued to play strongly but couldn't keep up our high scoring in the following quarters. We eventually won 11-0. Our second match of the night was a hard fought match against St Augustine's. By this time our hands were cold and simply catching the ball was painful. We played with great determination and despite losing two players to injury won 4-1. The squad are pictured beneath. Well done everyone, they were difficult conditions to play in.



### NEARS Football league

The football league runs in a similar way to the netball although this year we are experimenting with dividing the schools into big and small schools. Somehow, we qualify as a big school! Our first matches were against St Giles and Albourne. We played two hard fought matches but were unable to win either, losing 1-5 and 1-4. We have plenty to work on, especially holding onto the ball and trying to move quickly up field but the squad thoroughly enjoyed their matches and I can honestly say that their team spirit was the best I have seen since being at Balcombe. They never gave up trying and continually encouraged each other. As you can see they still had smiles on their faces at the end of the afternoon...



### NEARS Cross Country

At the beginning of November a group of five boys and five girls from Y5 and Y6 went to St Giles for the annual Cross Country Tournament. They had been picked after a gruelling jog around the school field during lesson time. The afternoon saw the girls compete first over a 1.3km course

which includes a long slope, fine on the way out but punishing on the way back.

The girls' team did fantastically well as their combined placings put them first. Particular congratulations to Grace (fourth place), Poppy (sixth) and Zara (eleventh) who should all now go forward to the Mid Sussex finals in January.

The boys then competed over the same course. They also ran strongly to come in fourth place with Callum (ninth place) and Lourenco (tenth) also qualifying for Mid Sussex.

The two sets of points were put together which saw us draw with St Giles for equal first place. A super result which sees Balcombe hold the trophy for the third year running. Again the camaraderie in the squad was super with everyone striving to do their best for each other.



Many thanks go to Mrs Bishop who has organised running club in school for us over the last few years. We shall need some new volunteers next year. Perhaps you might be interested?

### NEARS Handball Tournament

On the 28<sup>th</sup> November a squad of players from the handball club went to Warden Park to participate in an afternoon of handball fun. We were extremely lucky to have lots of Warden Park students, including some old Balcombe pupils, helping throughout the afternoon.

The session started with lots of skills based drills involving, movement, passing and shooting. We then moved on to compete in a round robin tournament. The space we had to play in was much larger than any of the local NEARS schools were used to so it took a while to settle into our game but all the matches were fast flowing with end to end action.

We lost our first match 1-2 to Twineham, but then won the following two matches. In our fourth match against Handcross, who at this point were undefeated we drew 2-2 with a late goal disallowed which would have given us a hard fought win. We then went on to beat the final team comprehensively. At the final reckoning Twineham won the tournament, Handcross second and we came a very impressive third with only two points between all three teams. It was a great afternoon with the squad all competing in every game we played. Well done to all the squad, pictured below, who made it such an enjoyable afternoon of sport



## Spring Term 2018

The proposed dates for next term's NEARS events are detailed below. There may be some changes, and some events added to the schedule, but the football and netball dates in particular should remain as outlined below:

<b>Date</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Venue</b>	<b>Time</b>
Monday 15 <sup>th</sup> January	Basketball Tournament Yrs. 4/5/6	Worth School	2:00 - 4:00pm
Tuesday 23 <sup>rd</sup> January	Small Schools Football League Night	The Triangle	4:00 – 5:00pm
Thursday 25 <sup>th</sup> Jan.	Big Schools Football League Night	The Triangle	4:00 – 5:00pm
Tuesday 30 <sup>th</sup> January	Netball League Night	The Triangle	4:00 – 5:00pm
Tuesday 6 <sup>th</sup> Feb.	Small Schools Football League	The Triangle	4:00 – 5:00pm
<b>HALF TERM</b>			
Thursday 22 <sup>nd</sup> Feb.	Third Netball League Night	The Triangle	4:00 - 5:00pm
Thursday 1 <sup>st</sup> March	Big Schools Football League Night	The Triangle	4:00 - 5:00pm
Tuesday 6 <sup>th</sup> March	Netball Tournament Yrs. 4/5/6	Triangle	1:00 - 3:00pm
Tuesday 13 <sup>th</sup> March	Football Tournament Yrs. 4/5/6	Warden Park School 3G	1:15 - 3:30pm
TBC (Possibly wk beg Monday 19 <sup>th</sup> March)	A Celebration of Movement Years 3/4/5&6	TBC	TBC
Tuesday 27 <sup>th</sup> March	Tag Rugby Tournament Years 4/5/6	Warden Park School 3G	1:15 – 3:30pm

We have organised a skipping workshop to visit us in school during February, more details to follow, with the intention of taking part in National Skipping Day on Sports Relief Day on Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> March. Maybe a skipping rope could be included on Christmas lists this year? Time to get those skipping ropes out and get practising as skipping is great exercise for all the family!

All that remains is to wish all of you a very Happy Christmas and best wishes for the new year.

Lucy Dunsby