



# Balcombe

Church of England  
Primary School

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



## NOVEMBER NEWSLETTER

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

### From Mrs Millbanks

Dear Parents,

This academic year, one of our key focus areas is improving children's vocabulary and maturity in writing. Alongside specifically chosen writing tasks, our intention is to get the children reading a wider range of literature to expose them to new words and phrases. We hope that our children are already reading daily at home for pleasure (and in most cases believe this to be true) but after Christmas we will be starting a couple of new initiatives to further promote reading stamina.

With this in mind, if you are clearing out quality books at home in preparation for Christmas present additions, please keep us in mind.

We would love any good quality books you no longer need to be brought in for our library at any time, but specifically ask that if you are getting rid of more recent titles, you keep one or two of them at home until January, when we will contact you again regarding something new we will be starting.

Also, I can't stress enough just how important it is that all of our children are reading at home



and discussing texts with an adult – even for just 10 minutes a day.

### Parent Support

Thank you very much to those parents who help in school, either on a regular or ad hoc basis. We really do value and appreciate your support and because of it, are able to continue to provide the exciting learning opportunities and resources to your children. Obviously for those parents who work, being available during the school day is not usually possible, but we really need your support too.

We are grateful that most of you make the time at weekends and evenings to attend PTA events, e.g. the Christmas Fair and Quiz night, but the number of people who are actively involved in organising such events is dwindling each year, to the extent that the future of Balcombe School PTA beyond this academic year is looking uncertain. Please, please, please give some consideration to joining this very worthwhile core group. The meetings are in the evening, and few and far between, with most communication done by email. If a few parents would be willing to join, and perhaps take on one event during the year, it would make a huge difference to the group, the school as a whole and your children as individuals.

If you are interested in finding out more, or prepared to join and get stuck in, please either speak to the current co-chairs, Lucy Chettleburgh and Vikki Cripps, or a member of office staff. Go on... you know you want to!

## Mobile Phones

It has come to my attention that a number of our older children are bringing mobile phones to school. I totally understand why parents of children who are now in year 5 and 6 and thus allowed to walk home alone, may wish them to have a phone, however I have told the children that the phones are not to be used on school premises. I have also asked that they take responsibility for finding somewhere safe to store them during the school day.

If your child is bringing a phone to school, please be extra vigilant about the filters that are set, as it is my understanding that some children, whilst on the way to school, have been attempting to access inappropriate material through their phones. Although this is officially outside of my remit, I am conscious of my responsibility to safeguard all of our children who may be walking with them.

Thank you for your attention and support in this matter.

## New Staff

At the beginning of this academic year, the school received a kind donation from a member of the community to be used for supporting our children with additional needs. I am pleased to tell you that we have successfully recruited a Special Needs Assistant who will be working with individual children and small groups across the school.

From Monday 12<sup>th</sup> Nov Mrs Elaine Bugden will be here each day during school hours, initially for the rest of this academic year. We look forward to working with Elaine.

As you know Mrs Kingsland who was our cook, is now working as a Teaching Assistant in Lake, and from the laughter that can be heard on a daily basis, would guess that she is enjoying her role.. Chartwells have now appointed Mrs Nicola Antino who has already started with us as Kitchen Manager. We are pleased to welcome Nicola to our team.

## Breakfast Club

Our Breakfast Club is now in full swing and is being well



supported. Most mornings the children can be seen playing games, taking part in sporting activities, chatting, dancing, drawing, engaging in role play ...to name but a few. On Friday mornings we have Toby, who many of the children know from SCS, running a sports club alongside Breakfast Club. You can sign up to Breakfast Club to take advantage of this - at Breakfast club prices!



Here's what some of the children think about Breakfast Club.

*"It's very enjoyable because you can play football, tennis and other sports."* James

*"You get to see people you don't usually see having fun. It's the most sugary thing ever."*

Reece.

*"We like dancing to the music. Mr Sitford isn't a good dancer, but he makes crazy hats!"*

Imogen, Maddie, Violette.

*"I really enjoyed making a giant paper aeroplane with my friends at breakfast club - this was super fun! I also like the fact that I*

*already know the staff who run the club; this makes me feel very comfortable."*

Isobel

*"Mr Sitford it really kind and makes me laugh.*

*He even made me a paper aeroplane!"* Freddie,

And here's what some of the parents think.

*"We like the fact that the club offers ad-hoc places; we have taken advantage of this a couple of times and gives us much greater flexibility."* Emma & Liam

*"My son loves breakfast club!"*

*"Thank you for providing a fantastic, nurturing environment which enables my son to go into school happy and ready for the day, with a full tummy!"*

We do still have spaces on most days. We prefer booking in advance, but are currently accepting ad hoc bookings. Email [breakfast@balcombeschool.co.uk](mailto:breakfast@balcombeschool.co.uk) to book your place or ask any questions. Terms and conditions, cost and more information can be found on our website, or click [here](#).



## Mill, Spring and Forest Exhibition of Work

Mill, Spring and Forest classes will be holding an exhibition of work in their classrooms on Tuesday 27th of November.

Classrooms will be open to parents from 9.05 until 9.45 am. Please come and see the fantastic work the children have produced over the term and chat to them about their learning. We look forward to seeing you.

## Spotlight on Staff

In order to encourage our children to write with purpose some of our older pupils were set the challenge to interview a member of staff to find their innermost secrets! The children have used their own style to share their findings.

Here is the next in the series.

### Interview with Mrs Couves by Lana.

#### Getting to Know You

Mrs Couves has the very important job of being teacher. She enjoys most the part where she sees people smile when they achieve something. What she doesn't like, though, is the paperwork.

In the past, Mrs Couves has been a waitress, unemployment benefit advisor and an insurance advisor. If she hadn't become a teacher, she would have liked to have been a yacht racer. At the weekends, Mrs Couves likes to go to the shops; do the housework; spend time with family and go for a lovely walk.

#### A Day in the Life Of

Mrs Couves usually arrives at school at around 8 a.m. When she gets into school, the first thing

she does is turn the computer on as it takes so long. She said her favourite part of a normal school day is the afternoon because you don't have to rush around as much.

At lunchtime, Mrs Couves does some marking, eats her lunch and drinks her tea. Mrs Couves finishes work at around 6 p.m. The first thing she does when she gets home is make a nice cup of tea because of the long, tiring day she has just been through.



### Favourites

Mrs Couves's favourite food is cake or pavlova (she couldn't decide!) Her favourite subject at school is English because she said, "I was never any good at it. I have a more logical brain, but now I love all the grammar I'm doing with Spring" Her favourite animal is a pig because they are so clever, cute and cuddly. Her favourite place to go on holiday is Cornwall, but she would love to go to Russia. Her favourite TV programme is Poldark (whatever that is!) and her favourite band is Beautiful South. Mrs Couves loves sport because she is competitive and she finds it relaxing.

**Fact:** Mrs Couves loves to be extreme (ish!) at sport all the time.

## Fundraising for School

Remember with Christmas just around the corner to join [easyfundraising](https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/balcombeprimary) and 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/balcombeprimary>

## Children in Need



Congratulations and a huge well done to all the children, especially Mill and Spring for planning and running such amazing stalls. The children raised £316.80 for Children in Need.

## School Diary

**Nativity Play:** Thurs 13<sup>th</sup> and Fri 14<sup>th</sup> Dec – a.m. (exact times to follow)

**Carol Service:** Mon 17<sup>th</sup> December - time to be confirmed, but most likely p.m.

**Last day of term:** Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> Dec 1:30 finish.

## 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 read the linked information letter which explains that any accepted applications for Free School Meals (whether or not your child takes the meal up) attract £1320 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.**

[LINK](#) to pupil premium letter