



## BALCARRAS SCHOOL

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Dear Parents,

I hope the new term has started well for you and your children. It was nice to have some warm weather last week although typical that it should begin only once the Easter holidays were a memory. During my visits to Balcarras over Easter I was impressed to see so many students engaging in revision sessions with their teachers. The dedication of the students and the teachers is quite remarkable. I wish them all well as we begin the process of getting ready for the exams.

### Opening of the new Music School

The opening of our fabulous new Music School will take place next Wednesday. Our guests of honour are Jo Whiley and Julian Dunkerton. The new block is a great addition to the school and underlines our commitment to the arts generally.



### New School Interview

Balcarras was invited to interview on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> April by a seven person selection panel established by the Local Authority. Our delegation consisted of me, Rosi Shepherd, Chair of Trustees and Neil Baxter, Deputy Head. We were 'grilled' for over an hour and a half. The interview went well although we won't find out the result until late May or early June. As soon as I have any information I will let you know.

### Learn to play Bridge

I play a lot of cards with my children at home and I've been persuaded by the former head Chris Healy and my PA Nicki Harrington that I should take up Bridge. Therefore I am going to the taster session run by the Cheltenham Bridge Club on Thursday May 10<sup>th</sup> at 1.30. It would be great to see lots of students take up the opportunity...see the flier attached to this newsletter.

### Success in Swimming

I've grown rather attached to the Webb Shield which is awarded to the winning boys open relay team at the Cheltenham Schools Swimming Gala. It took Balcarras 109 years to win the trophy but now we can't get out of the habit. We followed up our win in 2016 by retaining the trophy in 2017 and on Tuesday this week Theo Cannon, Oliver Jones, Cameron Lewis and Callum Bates stormed to victory once again. It means that the wonderful Webb Shield (having left my office on Monday evening) is now back where it belongs.

Well done to the boys above and commiserations to the girls who came a close second in their event. Well done also to all of our competitors in the gala. Full results have not yet been released.

### Lawn Tennis Association Regional Award

I am delighted to announce that Balcarras has been awarded the Regional Education Award by the LTA for our provision in tennis. Our extra-curricular provision for tennis excellent and we benefit enormously from our collaboration with Charlton Kings Tennis Place run by Simon and Ruth Thomas. Along with another seven schools, colleges or universities we now go forward to selection for the national award....fingers crossed.

### Art Exhibition

I'd like to pay tribute to all of the Year 11 students who exhibited their work art work at the GCSE Art exhibition this week. The standard was truly remarkable. I was showing a visitor around the school on Wednesday and she assumed that the exhibition was of A-level work. My thanks to all of the teachers in the Art department for guiding the students so well. The A-level Art, Photography and Textiles Exhibition will be on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> June at 7pm.

### Study Leave

Study Leave for Year 11 begins on Friday 11<sup>th</sup> May. We wish all of Year 11 well over the exam period.

### Year 10 Exams

Year 10 are on exams next week....good luck to them.

### Jamnesty

The Sixth Form Amnesty group put on a wonderful evening of music last Friday to raise funds for Amnesty International. It was a student led event with Yosra Soliman and Lizzie Oates doing a great job of coordinating and comparing the evening. Well done to them and everyone else involved.

### Malawi Update

Our link with Malawi continues to go from strength to strength. We have worked with a school in Malawi to develop the classrooms and facilities of a school in a very deprived community. The Headteacher at our partner school has recently visited to see how the work is progressing, and he is very impressed with the changes that have been made. Alongside this, the five students that we are sponsoring through their secondary education are coming towards the end of their first year, and all of them have had a great year at school.

Our summer term non-uniform day on 22nd June is going to be Malawi Day. The canteen will be serving some delicious dishes inspired by the tastes of Malawi, and students will learn more about the link that we have with Malawi in tutor time. Money raised from this non-uniform day will go towards the excellent work that the link is doing, and the continued educational sponsorship of students.

Mark Constance, Head of Year 12

### DofE Expedition Year 10

Just a reminder that Year 10 DofE pupils will be involved in their practise expedition on May 19th and 20th. Letters with all the details and kit lists should have come home via pupils. Deadline for replies by April 27th please. Can I remind both pupils and parents on the mobile phone policy for this which is **NO phone use at all unless for expedition emergency** and only one phone per team is allowed. Failure to comply with this rule or any use of social media during the expedition will result in pupils failing their expedition.

Vicky Bull, DofE Coordinator

### Hockey success!

Congratulations to Harriet GS Williams who was awarded player of the season for the Clifton Robinsons Hockey Team!

### Lost Property

To ensure the return of lost property can you please make sure all items of clothing are clearly marked, including trainers, rugby/football boots. It would be helpful if all PE bags are marked/labelled as well.

## Young Enterprise

This year's Balcarras Young Enterprise team, Vegankind, created the "Be Good Brownie Mix" and on 2<sup>nd</sup> May, are competing at the area final at Wootton-Under-Edge. Earlier this year, they attended a trade fair at the Pittville Pump Rooms which was extremely successful, with the team winning 'Most Ethical Company' and 'Best Product Development' and coming runner up in another two awards. In addition to this, at the end of May they are attending VegFest, one of the largest vegan festivals in Europe, to sell and promote their product. They are currently working hard on getting their product into as many shops as possible and would be grateful of any support available.

Boxes are available to buy at the price of £3.99 by emailing: [vegankindye@gmail.com](mailto:vegankindye@gmail.com) or completing the order form attached to this newsletter and handing it in at reception.

Luke Perry, Young Enterprise

## Ski Trip 2019

The party size will be limited to 50 due to availability of seats on Norwegian Air. There are only 12 places left on the trip. Once all 50 places have been filled, a reserve list will be set up. The deadline for the deposit of £170 to secure a place on the trip is Monday, April 30<sup>th</sup>. The first of eight instalments of £140 then needs to be paid by Monday 28<sup>th</sup> May.

If a slip has been returned asking to be included on the trip but no deposit has been paid then your place may be taken by someone else if the deposit has not been made by next Monday (April 30<sup>th</sup>).

Pupils who wish to participate can obtain an application letter from Mr Dean in 6B1. Those who have already paid a deposit will be contacted by Mrs Davis in the finance office regarding an instalment schedule.

Malcolm Dean, Ski Party Leader

## Balcajazz at the Jazz Festival

Balcajazz will be playing on the Free Stage in Montpellier Gardens on Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> May between 10.30 and 11am. Please do come along and support if you can; this is the first time Balcajazz has played at this event and it would be great to see some familiar, friendly faces in the audience.

Helen Chong, Director of Music

## Music Success!

Congratulations to the students listed below who have recently passed instrumental exams:

### Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music, violin exams:

Beth Charles	Grade 1 Pass
Joe Jasat	Grade 2 Merit
Julian McGee	Grade 3 Merit
Kashvi Mulchandani	Grade 3 Merit
James Watt	Grade 7 Pass

### Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music, singing exams:

Ellie Bee-Stephens	Grade 3 Pass
Amena Ireland	Grade 3 Merit
Ella Blackwell	Grade 3 Merit
Grace Tyler	Grade 5 Merit
Louis Barrett	Grade 4 Distinction

### Trinity singing exam:

Leah Springham	Grade 6 Distinction
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### Trinity Jazz Clarinet exam:

Ben Partridge	Grade 8 Distinction – an amazing achievement!
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### Rockschool guitar exams:

Oscar Mercati	Grade 7 Merit
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### Trinity Rock and Pop guitar exams:

Matthew Trowbridge	Grade 5 Distinction
Frankie Mercati	Grade 2 Distinction

Helen Chong, Director of Music

## Lesson Times – Summer term 2018 – Early Finish

As in recent years, we are going to move the timings of the school day while the main examinations are taking place. This has the wonderful benefit of meaning that, on Monday to Thursday, the school day will finish a little earlier – to the undoubted delight of pupils!

From **Monday 14<sup>th</sup> May** to **Friday 15<sup>th</sup> June** the times of the day will be:

Monday - Thursday		Friday	
08:50	Warning bell for registration	08:50	Warning bell for registration
08:55 – 9:00	Registration (am)	08:55 – 9:00	Registration (am)
09:00 – 10:00	Lesson 1	09:00 – 10:00	Lesson 1
10:00 – 11:00	Lesson 2	10:00 – 11:00	Lesson 2
11:00 – 11:20	Break	11:00 – 11:15	Break
11:20 – 12:20	Lesson 3	11:15 – 12:15	Lesson 3
12:20 – 13:20	Lesson 4	12:15 – 13:15	Lesson 4
13:20 – 14:15	Lunch	13:15 – 13:50	Lunch
14:15 – 14:20	Registration (pm)	13:50 – 14:10	Registration (pm)
14:20 – 15:20	Lesson 5	14:10 – 15:10	Lesson 5
15:20	End of school day	15:10	End of school day

Before 14<sup>th</sup> May and after 15<sup>th</sup> June, the school times will be as they are now.

Neil Baxter, Deputy Head

## Summer Fete – Monday 7<sup>th</sup> May 2018



We would like to advertise this **Summer Fete** to all staff, their families and friends.

It will be held on the **Balcarras front playground on May 7<sup>th</sup>** (the May Day Bank Holiday) from 11am until 2pm.

There will be lots going on including: table top sales, summer fete games, live music, food and drink and lots more. Please come along to show your support of the girls in Year 11 (Imogen, Grace and Ellie) who are doing a superb job of putting this all together independently to raise money for their Expedition to Africa next year.

If you would be interested **in having your own stall** to sell things, or you know someone who would, then please let the girls know or email [pkb@balcarras.gloucs.sch.uk](mailto:pkb@balcarras.gloucs.sch.uk)

Hopefully it will be a lovely sunny morning!

Pippa Baker, Teacher of Maths

## Online Payment System – important changes

The Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard is improving the security of their systems and so from the 30<sup>th</sup> June 2018 all websites that accept card payments will no longer allow users of Windows XP and Windows Vista to use their websites. WorldPay are implementing this change on **30<sup>th</sup> April 2018** which means parents using these versions of Window will no longer have access to the Tucasi Online Payment System from 30<sup>th</sup> April 2018.

This change is outside of Tucasi's control and is not limited to Tucasi Online Payments.

Sue Davis, Trips Co-ordinator  
[sed@balcarras.gloucs.sch.uk](mailto:sed@balcarras.gloucs.sch.uk)

### Activities week payments

\*\*\*Activities week payments are shortly due:\*\*\*

Year 7 are due to pay Tuesday 1st May

Year 8 are due to pay Wednesday 2nd May

Year 9 are due to pay Thursday 3rd May

It is more efficient to pay online. If you need advice on this, then please email [sed@balcarras.gloucs.sch.uk](mailto:sed@balcarras.gloucs.sch.uk) otherwise, cash or cheque please. If you are unable to pay online, please send in cash or a cheque payable to Balcarras School on your child's allotted payment day as per your invoice.

Any other queries, please contact: Lyn Massey on [ljm@balcarras.gloucs.sch.uk](mailto:ljm@balcarras.gloucs.sch.uk) or telephone 01242545114.

### Reporting Absence

Parents of pupils in ALL year groups 7-11 should report an absence either by leaving a message on the Attendance Office voicemail (option 1 on the phone menu). Or direct dial on 01242 545114, or by emailing [absence@balcarras.gloucs.sch.uk](mailto:absence@balcarras.gloucs.sch.uk) or [ljm@balcarras.gloucs.sch.uk](mailto:ljm@balcarras.gloucs.sch.uk)

Parents should contact the attendance officer on the first day of absence and on any subsequent days. Any pupils arriving at school after registration must sign in at Reception, indicating the reason why they are signing in late.

Absence in **the Sixth form** should be reported directly to the Sixth form on direct dial 01242 545118 or by emailing [sixthformabsence@balcarras.gloucs.sch.uk](mailto:sixthformabsence@balcarras.gloucs.sch.uk)

Please note that any requests for holiday should be directed to the relevant Heads of Houses/Head of Sixth Form and not to the Headteacher.

Lyn Massey, Attendance Officer

### Balcarras is on Facebook!

Alongside our @Balcarras Twitter you may also now follow Facebook.com/BalcarrasSchool for updates and news about school life and events.



Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jonnie Burke".

Headteacher



## Learn to play Bridge

Further to the flyer in the last newsletter about Youth Bridge, we are going to have a "Taster Bridge Session" in school for pupils on **Thursday May 10<sup>th</sup> at 1.30pm for 30 minutes**. This will be a supervised session with members from the bridge club giving a short talk about the game and then the pupils will have the opportunity to play a bit of 'minibridge'. Mr Burke is going to go to learn too so bring your lunch and enjoy a new card game!

The idea is that this is an introduction to the game and anyone who is really keen may then like to go along to the CBC Youth Bridge (currently Sunday mornings) and join their attempts to build a county youth team! Details are on [www.bridgewebs.com/gloucestershireyouth](http://www.bridgewebs.com/gloucestershireyouth)

If any of your children are interested in joining the session, please email your child's name and Tutor Group to Nicki Harrington [njh@balcarras.gloucs.sch.uk](mailto:njh@balcarras.gloucs.sch.uk) so we can allocate a room depending on numbers.

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Order Form- VeganKind 'Be Good Brownie Mix' at £3.99 per box

\*please make cheques payable to VeganKind\*

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Class: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Cash or Cheque	Quantity	Total payment