

June 22nd 2017

Dear Parents,

The sun has been shining down on Balcarras these last 10 days and the few areas of the school that are air conditioned have been in high demand. It's a very British thing to moan about the weather and normally I refrain from doing so but even I'm glad it's cooled down a bit. If you haven't heard we are now in full summer mode so students no longer need to wear their blazers.

Midsummer Music

We're all looking forward to Midsummer Music which is tomorrow (Friday 23rd June) doors open at 6pm and the music begins at 6.30. You can buy tickets from reception or on the door. It's a great school occasion (and the weather looks good for tomorrow) so please do come along and support it.

#MUSIC4BALCARRAS Funding campaign

I hope you got my letter this week announcing our funding campaign for music. The raffle is underway so please do buy a ticket(s). They are available from reception or the trips office as well as being sold at school events. Please see the end of this newsletter for further details.

Sporting Success

It's been an **unbelievable** year of sporting success. Since I last wrote to you we have become Gloucestershire Champions in Archery and Mountain Biking. Last week the Year 9 girls won the District Athletics with the Year 9 boys coming second. The last newsletter of the year is going to be a special bumper edition with all of our sporting success for 2016-17 documented.

Gloucestershire FA Teachers Football Championship

The staff football team are the inaugural Gloucestershire FA Teachers League Champions. Having won the Northern League competition (winning all 4 matches) they progressed to the finals held on Friday 8th June where they beat Downend School on penalties in the semi-final, before beating Linden Primary School on penalties in the final. It was a highly organised and disciplined performance. Congratulations to Player-Manager Luke Perry and his team.

The Sixth Form Football Team can now be even more proud of their performance in the annual staff versus teachers football match. This year the students were too strong for the staff running out winners 7-4.

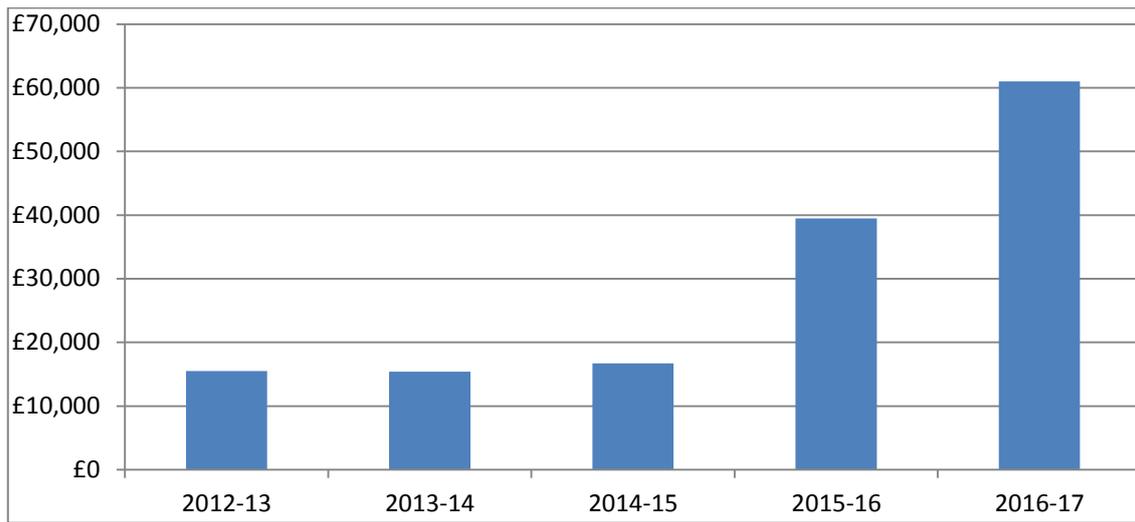
Attendance

As ever can I remind you all of the importance of attendance—it is crucial that it continues to be very high right up until the last day of term.

School Funding in the light of the General Election

I'm going to stop making political predictions because it has become impossible. I hope that, in the light of the general election result, school funding will remain high profile and I know that Alex Chalk has said that he will continue to push for changes to the new funding formula. We will continue to push for a real terms increase to the schools budget. In my view this has to happen and soon.

Could I thank all of you who have been able to make a contribution to our gift aid campaign this year. Donations have topped £60K which is amazing. The table below shows the increases that have been made in recent years.



Your donations are absolutely crucial in providing funding to allow us to continue to invest in the school and to provide some of the 'extras' that we know are actually crucial to a school like this.

Sara Roylance

Science Fun!

Around 90 Year 1 & 2 pupils from Charlton Kings infant school recently spent time exploring some exciting experiments in the science department.

With Miss Taylor they looked at what you can do with the energy from sugar and made Jellybabies scream! Mr Duffy-Turner explored the question: What makes rockets fly? The infants made some rockets and saw them fly!



With Mr Niblett they examined the 'wonder of waves', learning how waves travel and how we hear sounds.



Mrs Atkin showed the infants what is inside fireworks with some explosive and colourful displays. A huge amount of fun was had by all and we look forward to inviting the infants back to Balcarras.

Simon Jones, Second in Science

Archery

This year's Gloucestershire School Games competition on Thursday June 15th ended with Balcarras and Archway competing for first position. It couldn't have been more tense as the result was dependent on the very last arrow shot by Balcarras. I'm delighted to say Balcarras kept their cool and once again came away with the gold medal. Well done to the team:

Ciara Barrett (701), Maddy Egan (10G1), Zara Kanani (12J), Cameron McIntosh (11O1), Jack Oram (9O2), James Pearne (9S2), Chris Picken (10O1), Bilaal Rashid (11S2), Zak Thurlow (9F1), Meg Unsworth (9F1), Ella Ustok (9O1) and Gareth Williams (12D).

Special thanks to the year 11's who competed even though they are in the middle of their GCSE exams.

Balcarras Bake Off 2017

Enthusiasm for the annual Bake off competition has continued throughout this academic year with all year 9 pupils cooking up some great creations. The final 12 battled it out in a sweltering kitchen, cooking a baked item containing fruit and / or vegetables and coping brilliantly with a "blind" technical challenge – revealed to them only 2 minutes before the start of the final cooking session.



Everyone produced some truly amazing food products, all worthy of being winners but after much deliberation from our judges, congratulations go to winner Genevieve Haseldon 9G1 and runners up Libby Watkins 9F2 and Blake Penwarden 9O1.

Well done to them and to everyone who has entered into the spirit of the competition across the whole of the year 9 - 2017 will go down as a most memorable and enjoyable Bake off season!

Gill Cozens, D&T (Food) department

Trip to Birmingham's Queen Elizabeth Hospital

A small group of us travelled down to Birmingham University hospital to experience work for nurses, medical scientists and doctors who work there. We had a brief tour of various wards, including critical care and the cathlab where we witnessed a stent being put in to widen the coronary arteries and prevent heart attack. After that two medical scientists spoke to us about their careers, this was especially valuable as few of us were aware of medical jobs outside of being a doctor or nurse. This was followed up by a visit to the clinical labs where we found out a bit about the studies going on at the hospital and made some useful contacts.

Jess Shields (Year 12)

Cheltenham and District Athletics Championships

On Wednesday 7th June, our Year 9 Girls and Boys Athletics teams competed at the Prince of Wales Stadium, in the District Athletics Competition. Amazingly, the girls' team won and are now the 2017 District Champions! The boys also did extremely well coming 2nd overall. These are our best ever results at this competition. The pupils who competed put in some excellent performances and really were a credit to the school! If you would like to see photos/videos of our competitors, please follow the PE department on twitter (BalcarrasPE).



Year 9 Girls Team – Katie Castle, Esme Lea, Genevieve Hasleden, Esme Sullivan, Gemma Veal, Sophie Johnson, Sian Wiggins, Ella Banbury, Lily Carpenter, Karissa Patel, Maisie Carpenter, Kate O'Toole and Amelia Mortimer.

Year 9 Boys Team - Joe Efthymiou, Matty Alberquerque, Cameron Lewis, Edward Burgess, Zak Long, Jacob Harris, Olivier Mathis, Jack Park, Gus Bygrave, Alex Veal, Aarran Baxter, Luke Burden, Henry Perks, Max Hemming, Will Cook, Freddie Wolfe and Joseph Harvey (G1).

Overall Results

Year 9 Girls – 1st Place

Year 9 Boys – 2nd Place

1st Place Winners

Gemma Veal – 800m

Katie Castle – 100m (New Record – 13.01 seconds) and Long Jump

Matias Albuquerque – 100m

Alex Veal – 1500m B

Lily Carpenter – Shot Putt

Luke Burden – Discus (New Personal Best)

Sian Wiggins – High Jump (New Personal Best)

PE Department

Sixth Form Uniform - Year 12 Parents/Guardians

A letter went out on Friday 16th June about the sixth form uniform. The letter was a reminder of the uniform policy and to inform parents that there will be an official 6th form jumper to be purchased from the school at a discounted price for year 12's of £10. This will be the only jumper they can wear to school although plain black or grey cardigans are also acceptable. We would also request that only dark coloured socks should be worn - not white sports socks. Many thanks for your support with this.

Higher Education Information Evening 28th June 2017 5.30pm-6.30pm for Year 12 Parents/Guardians

A letter went out on Friday 16th June about this event. It is an opportunity for Year 12 parents to attend a meeting about their sons/daughters final year of school and provide information about the application process for further education such as university and apprenticeship places. The new sixth form jumper £10 and lightly worn polo shirts £4 (in case you need an extra one) will be available to purchase at this event. We hope to see you there.

Dance Fest

Following last week's House Dance competition the highlights evening will be taking place on Wednesday June 28th in the hall at 7pm. The students have been working really hard to produce an evening of incredible talent that will take you on a journey from the New Zealand Hakka to French ballet and beyond.

Tickets are available from reception in advance or on the door. Refreshments will also be available on the night. We look forward to seeing you there, it promises to be a superb show!

Wednesday 28th June @ 7pm in the hall

Dance around the world

£4 Adults
£2 Concessions
£2 Students

Countries visited include:

- France
- Spain
- Ireland
- India
- Russia
- And many more!

The highlights of this years House Dance competition

Tickets available from reception or on the door

Pippa McGlade

Year 8 Parent's Evening

Mrs Alison Springer will be available at Year 8 Parents' evening on Thursday 29th June in the vestibule outside the Hall to discuss reading, books and any other related topics.

Book Return Day 2017

As in previous years, we have again set aside time on Wednesday June 28th during which Year 11 and Year 13 students are to return all textbooks to school. The event will take place in the sixth form common room, between 2.30pm and 3.30pm. All students are expected to return all their books at this time, and invoices will be issued for non-returned items, so this might be a good opportunity to encourage your son or daughter to clear up their rooms in order to find all those stray textbooks!

Chantelle Bailey, Data Manager

VACANCIES

Receptionist – Part-Time

We have a vacancy for a part-time receptionist to work 11 hours a week – Thursday mornings and all day Friday, term-time only from September 2017. Application form and further details are on our website or by contacting Nicki Harrington, PA to the Headteacher on 01242 515881. Closing date: Monday July 3rd, 9am.

Catering Assistant Required

FIXED TERM CONTRACT SEPTEMBER – MARCH

20 hrs per week 10.30am – 2.30pm

£7.50 per hour

Be part of a dynamic and friendly team providing catering for 1500 pupils, staff and hospitality events. Basic knowledge of preparation and cooking of food is required; however, training will be given including the Food Hygiene Level 2 qualification. Other duties will include serving, handling cash & cleaning. A DBS check will be required before the position can be confirmed.

Please email kitchen@balcarras@gloucs.sch.uk or telephone Ian Cole on 01242 545115 for further details and an application form.

School timings

From now on the school will revert to normal times for Monday – Thursday.

However the **Early Finish Fridays** will change slightly and will be as follows:

Monday - Thursday		NEW Friday times	
08:50	Warning bell for registration	08:50	Warning bell for registration
08:55 – 09:00	Registration (am)	08:55 – 09:00	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 – 14:35	Registration (pm)	13:50 – 14:10	Registration (pm)
14:35 – 15:35	Lesson 5	14:10 – 15:10	Lesson 5
15:35	End of school day	15:10	End of school day

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,



Headteacher

Re-development of the Music Block: **#MUSIC4BALCARRAS Campaign: £40K Target**

Dear Parents,

June 19th 2017

As I'm sure you are aware the Music department is being completely re-developed this summer as the result of a quite remarkable gift we have received from a local benefactor. The new block will be twice the size of the original one with state of the art facilities. Balcarras is absolutely committed to the arts and we believe that music in particular plays a very special role in the life of the whole school, so we are delighted that we are able to invest so significantly in its future.



Whilst we have secured the essential funding we need to build the block and to provide all the basic fittings, we are now looking to raise additional funds to ensure that the music equipment we are able to put inside the building complements the impressive new environment. We are looking to raise £40,000 to enable us to buy the full range of equipment and resources that we need.

Balcarras PTFA

I'm delighted that the Balcarras PTFA have already committed £10,000 to this effort and that they have also agreed to make this year's Midsummer Music a special one off fundraiser for our campaign. The PTFA Charity Ball on Friday 13th October, as well as supporting Sue Ryder, will also be raising funds for the *#MUSIC4BALCARRAS campaign*.

To help hit our target of £40,000 we are launching the '#MUSIC4BALCARRAS' campaign. There are two ways you can get involved:

OPTION 1

A donation to our Just Giving campaign

www.justgiving.com/campaigns/charity/balcarras-school/music4baltarras

OPTION 2

Music Raffle Tickets £5 each

Buy a ticket in the Music Raffle. Full details over the page.

Music Raffle Tickets

From June 19th you will be able to purchase Music Raffle Tickets from the school. Each ticket costs £5 and you can purchase as many as you would like. Here are some of the prizes on offer

- £200 of Superdry Vouchers donated by Superdry
- 2 tickets to a Gloucester Rugby Home match(game of your choice subject to availability) donated by Dowdeswell Estates
- BeoPlay A1 Bluetooth Speaker with built in microphone and true 360 sound Donated by Bang and Olufsen
- A private dance lesson for two conducted by a star of Mamma Mia and ex Take That and Brit Award backing dancer. Donated by Tom Goodall
- 2 tickets to an Arsenal home match in the 2017-18 season
- 2 tickets to a Manchester United home match in the 2017-18 season donated by Dowdeswell Estates
- Clay Pigeon shooting lesson of 100 clays at Ian Coley Sporting Range. Donated by Richard Norton and Charles Russell Speechlys
- A Magnum of Champagne
- 2 tickets to a Cheltenham Town home match next season of your choice, subject to availability. Donated by Cheltenham Town FC
- 2 tickets to the PTFA Charity Ball on Friday 13th October (worth over £45 each). Donated by PTFA
- Three course meal for 2 at the Langton, Charlton Kings. Donated by the Langton
- Two club enclosure tickets to the Showcase meeting at Cheltenham Racecourse on Saturday 28th October 2017. Donated by The Jockey Club
- Voucher for a 4 ball at Lilley Brook Golf Club donated by Lilley Brook Golf Club
- Schooltogs Gift Voucher for £100 donated by Schooltogs
- £30 Voucher for Bar and Wok, Cheltenham donated by the Bar and Wok
- Afternoon Tea at The Daffodil, Donated by the Daffodil

PLUS MANY MORE

The draw will take place at the opening of the Music block in October.

How do I buy raffle tickets?

Each raffle ticket costs £5 each. You can buy as many as you like.

They can be purchased from the school reception or from the trips office and they will also be available at Midsummer Music and other school events between now and October.

Your help is very much appreciated

We would be very grateful for any help you can give the school in our campaign. Even in difficult times we are committed to the continuous improvement of the school and its facilities. Our ambition remains for this to be one of the very best schools anywhere in the country and we want the music facilities and opportunities to be nothing short of exceptional.