

Update from the Head

Friday 12th September

So much is going on in the school at the moment...it's a struggle to stay on top of things!

Another week of welcomes!

It has been another week of welcomes at Balcarras. On Monday I met with Beccy Andrews who is the new Head of Charlton Kings Junior School. I welcomed her to Charlton Kings and told her that we continue to be very keen to work closely together. Also on Tuesday Mr Leatherbarrow and the sixth form team began a series of break time catch ups for Year 12 pupils who are new to the school. Over 85 pupils have joined Year 12 from other schools, so the meetings took place throughout the week. Pupils were able to chat to the sixth form team and they received a free bacon sandwich!

Parental Engagement Meetings

The start of term is very busy with all sorts of parental engagement meetings. Last week Mr Leatherbarrow and the sixth form team met Year 12 parents and welcomed them to the Balcarras community. On Wednesday there was a presentation to Year 13 parents on higher education. Yesterday Mr Towers and I ran a meeting for parents of Year 11 pupils to explain how they will be supported. On Tuesday 16th September we will run a GCSE information evening for parents of year 10 pupils (7pm start).

Tonight we have the PTFA Icebreaker for Year 7 pupils and parents. See information below:



YEAR 7 ICEBREAKER DISCO
FRIDAY 12TH SEPTEMBER 2025

7.00 – 8.30 PM

BALCARRAS SCHOOL HALL

WE WOULD LIKE PARENTS TO JOIN US!

A PLATFORM TO MEET OTHER PARENTS FROM YOUR CHILD'S

TUTOR GROUP IN THE SIXTH FORM CENTRE (LICENSED BAR AVAILABLE - CASH/CARD)

PLACES MUST BE BOOKED VIA SCOPAY IN ADVANCE

CHILDREN £9 ADULTS FREE

Refreshments for children will be available

For further information please contact ptfa@balcarras-gloucs.sch.uk

Start of Extra Curricular

On Tuesday I went to the Balcarras gym (it is open to staff from 7.30). On my way in it was great to see so many Year 8 pupils at Badminton and I understand it has been busy each morning this week. We are now back up and running with extra-curricular provision.

On Monday the music department launched House music and on Tuesday Miss Went launched the 2025 School Production of The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe. Here is a photo of the launch:

Also on Monday Mr Butler launched Bronze Duke of Edinburgh to Year 10. 112 pupils were at the launch!

Launch of the Balcarras Music Channel

On Wednesday Mr Armstrong released a video to launch the Balcarras Music Channel. The music department want the Balcarras Music Channel to be a place where some of our superbly talented musicians can showcase their work. There are already a range of excellent videos to view but to mark the official launch the department has filmed 8 new performances. They will be released Friday afternoon over the next 8 weeks. For more information click here:

<https://www.balcarras.gloucs.sch.uk/news/?pid=3&nid=1&storyid=1286>

Year 7 Pupils on the BBC

On Thursday three Year 7 pupils, Milly Hurst, Matthew Boon and Zeke Jabbar were interviewed by Annabelle Martin from BBC Radio Gloucestershire for the Nicky Price show at 10am. I was also interviewed. If you want to listen follow this link:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/m002hxmh>



[Nicky Price - 11/09/2025 - BBC Sounds](#)

[Nicky's here with stories to make you smile, great music and daytime conversation.](#)

www.bbc.co.uk

The interview with me is about 12 mins in...but the best bit is with the kids from about 49 minutes.

I would like to thank Milly, Matthew and Zeke for agreeing to do it. They were brilliant!



Milly Hurst, Zeke Jabbar, Annabelle Martin (BBC), Matthew Boon and Mr Burke pose for a photograph shortly before their interview.

Welcome to GITEP Trainees

On Friday we welcomed the 6 trainee teachers who are joining Balcarras this term. I had coffee with them in my office and I even treated them to a biscuit.



Meeting of the Cheltenham Area Secondary Headteachers

Later today the headteachers of Cheltenham's state secondary schools will meet. We meet every half term to discuss education in the town and ways we can support each other. It is a meeting I always look forward to.

Session with Elevate Education

The Sixth Form team have been working with a company named Elevate. Elevate have offered the session below to the whole school community.

If you are interested in the event that Elevate are running then please sign up.

How to Get (And Keep!) Your Child Motivated
Tuesday 16th September 6:00-7:00pm (BST)

If you are interested follow this link

<https://go.elevateeducation.com/ukschoolwebinar>

Closure of the A40

It has been another very busy week for traffic in and around Charlton Kings. I made contact with Gloucestershire Highways last week and their reply is copied below in blue.

I hope you have a nice weekend. I'm going to watch Super Leeds at Craven Cottage.

Dominic Burke

Response from GCC Highways to concerns raised about traffic in and around Charlton Kings

Thank you for taking the time to contact Gloucestershire County Council regarding A40 Hambrook House. Your message has been received by our highways teams and your feedback has been noted. We genuinely appreciate your concern for the local community and we share that concern wholeheartedly.

Unfortunately, some vehicle drivers, including heavy goods vehicles are attempting to use local routes and rely on sat nav rather than following advertised diversion routes on the A435 and A436. This has been exacerbated by the highly constrained nature of the local highway network resulting in some discourteous and unacceptable behaviours on East End Road and Church Street.

Please be advised of the following:

- We have reinforced the diversion route with additional signage and traffic management.

- We have a comprehensive approach to signing on site, supported by large variable message signs, including additional signs to discourage HGV's.
- Our civil enforcement team will ensure that they have an enhanced presence on East End Road and Church Street in particular during school drop-offs and pick-up's.
- We continue to liaise with the local Policing team, along with our local highway management team and civil enforcement teams, with the aim to maintain a joined up approach to mitigate and where required undertake interventions/actions and or mitigation measures where required in support of the local community.
- We are identifying potential additional measures that may be implemented to alleviate these issues.

In the meantime, we encourage you to visit our dedicated web page, which is regularly reviewed and updated with the latest news on these works. You can find more information and stay up-to-date by visiting the link below:

Updates

We are updating our dedicated webpage so that updates on the works progress and any other key points of interest and Questions and Answers can be viewed.

<https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/major-projects-list/hambrook-bridge/>

- Enquires for general, community can we please ask you to direct these enquires to our Highways Stakeholder Management & Engagement Team highwaysstakeholder@gloucestershire.gov.uk
- For "Emergencies only" please contact our emergency service team who are available 24hrs a day 7 days a week 365 days of the year.
- For an Emergency Only Please Contact Number is 08000 514514