

Update from the Head

I feel like we are in the Christmas season now. We had the carol concert this week and hot on the heels of that comes the school production next week. Please do come along to what promises to be a wonderful show. As I write this update, I can hear the technical rehearsal going on in the hall. They are just on the battle scene and it sounds fabulous! Tickets available on Scopay. Mrs Davis will close ticket sales 48 before each night's performance. So, if you want a ticket for Tuesday you need to book it by Sunday.

Staff Art Event



We organise several wellbeing events for staff through the year. On Thursday 27th November Mrs Leach ran a print making class for interested staff. About 35 of us went along and spent two hours making our own Christmas cards. Here is a photo of me...a study in concentration!

Balcarras Trust Conference

Last Friday Balcarras staff went to the Trust's Annual Teaching and Learning Conference held at The High School Leckhampton. It was a great event. See article here:

<https://www.balcarras.gloucs.sch.uk/news/?pid=3&nid=1&storyid=1363>



House Maths



On Tuesday 2nd December the Annual House Maths competition took place featuring pupils from across Year 7 to Year 11. Several sixth formers helped to tun the event. The pupils faced a number team challenges and scored points for their house. It came down to the wire with Selvey piping Foley in the very last round.

House Maths results

1st Selvey 186

2nd Foley 185

3rd Graveney 179

4th Ottewell 131

Here is a photo of the winning team:



Staff Mince Pie Making



On Tuesday, as is tradition, staff gathered to make the mince pies for the carol concert. About 25 of us spent an hour creating mince pies all under the careful supervision of Cath Saunders.

Carol Concert



On Wednesday evening we had the Annual Carol Concert at Holy Apostles Church. It was a truly lovely event and I would like to thank all of those parents who came along—the church was packed. Thanks also to the staff of the music department who do such a wonderful job of inspiring and coaching the young musicians of Balcarras. I would like to thank Reverend Ashley Collishaw and his parish for allowing us to use their beautiful church and thanks also to the Balcarras PTFA who served mulled wine and mince pies in the church hall afterwards.

A huge thank you to Martin Burge & Co our sponsor for the evening, their support with this event enabled us to ensure that the technical support, staging and sound were all high quality, and the students had the best chance to show their skill and ability.

Collection for Open Door Charity

After the Carol Concert there was a collection for the Cheltenham Open Door Charity. We raised £631.91. Many thanks for your generosity.

Hockey Success for Balcarras



On Wednesday the Year 7 Girls Hockey team won the District Tournament winning every game without conceding. Today they are competing in the County Championships at Dean Close.

Rotary Young Chef Competition

Congratulations to Toby Bentley in Year 10 who won the first round of the Rotary Young Chef Competition. Apparently, his food was amazing. See news article here:

<https://www.balcarras.gloucs.sch.uk/news/?pid=3&nid=1&storyid=1366>



Year 7 Pupil Pursuit

On Thursday I followed the timetable of two year 7 pupils. I went into their lessons and just experienced life as a pupil for the day. By coincidence, in two lessons I ended up sitting next to pupils who are Chelsea fans. I must say I enjoyed talking to them about Wednesday night's football match. I got the impression they were less keen to talk.

Ski Trip Meeting

On Thursday evening the staff who are supervising the 2026 ski trip hosted a meeting for parents. I'm skiing again this year and I can't wait.

UCAS Early Entry

Notifications of interviews are coming in thick and fast. So far 12 pupils have secured Oxbridge interviews. Good luck to them and thanks to Mr Boughton and everyone in the sixth form for supporting them.

School Nurse Extended Service Consultation

Following the recent presentation to parents, on 25th November, from the school nurses, there is a questionnaire now open on the school website.

We would like to get some feedback from parents about this service. If you are not sure what is involved, there is a presentation you can read, also on the school website.

The questionnaire will close on 12th December.

Click [here](#) for the questionnaire and all the information.

<https://www.balcarras.gloucs.sch.uk/news/?pid=3&nid=1&storyid=1335&login=true>

Right, it is time for the weekend. I must say I'm in a more hopeful mood about Leeds after the win against Chelsea and I am looking forward to watching Leeds v Liverpool. Although I am reminded of the quote from the headteacher Brian Stimpson in the film Clockwise: "It's not the despair, Laura. I can take the despair. It's the hope I can't stand." We'll see.

Have a nice weekend.

Dominic Burke

BREAKING NEWS....HOLD THE BACK PAGE....

I have just heard from Miss Davies that the Year 7 Balcarras Girls team were runners up at the Gloucestershire Hockey Championships and so qualify for the Regional Finals being held at Millfield in March. Well done to the whole team.