



Dear Parents and Carers,

I am delighted to be sending home our first newsletter of the year. So much has happened since my previous one, which was published on the website in July! It is my intention that our newsletters provide you with important information and reminders about upcoming events for your child, as well as clarifying our expectations, and sharing with you some of the wonderful events that are going on at our school. Please do read them carefully and contact us should you have any queries. We take pride in getting back to parents very promptly.

School Calendar

Your child brought home a paper copy of our school calendar last week. Please make sure they have given it to you, as it will be a useful source of information about what is coming up for them over the year. There may be some changes to the calendar, and we will make sure you are well informed in advance, particularly of any changes to trip dates.

COVID update

I hope that your child has noticed a sense of 'normality' since they joined us. We are no longer required to put pupils into bubbles, wear face masks or indeed isolate if there is a close contact. However, please be reassured that we are not complacent and good hygiene is encouraged. We are ensuring that classrooms are well ventilated and hand sanitizer is available. The school is also being regularly cleaned during the day, with additional ventilation at breaks and lunchtimes. All children using school transport are advised to wear a face mask and I am pleased that so many have done this very sensibly. Your child is welcome to bring their own hand sanitizer to school should you feel it appropriate, and we would be grateful if you could remind them of the importance of washing their hands during the school day.

Pupils should be doing Lateral Flow tests twice a week. These are available from school.

Remote Learning

If your child is unfortunate enough to contract COVID and is well enough to work from home, their teachers will provide work for them to be able to keep up with the curriculum. The teacher will select the most appropriate way to do this.

Work could be:



- A task set on the schools VLE (the children will be taught how to access this over the next few weeks).
- Joining a live lesson remotely via Teams.
- or their work may be emailed to them on their school email address.

For practical subjects such as PE work may not be set.

It is important that you keep the school fully informed during this absence, particularly about their return to school date.

Friday 24th September Ice Breaker Disco

A huge thank you to our PTFA who have arranged an Icebreaker disco for the pupils on Friday 24th September between 7-8:30pm in the school hall. The entrance fee for each child is £2.50 and we would like you to please pay on SCOPAY.

Parents are also warmly invited to attend, and you can socialise in the Sixth Form common room whilst the child enjoys the disco. Just for this event the PTFA are asking you to bring your own drink (alcoholic and soft). Please provide your own drinking vessel, we will be doing our bit to reduce plastic and save the planet!

Due to the catchment area for THSL it is anticipated that parking may be required for parents at this first event at Balcarras. If visitor spaces fill up, please note that the staff car park will be available, accessed from Balcarras Road.

For further information and a message from the PTFA Committee please see the website.





The High School
Leckhampton

Thursday 30th September Open Evening 6-8pm

**Open Evening
2021**

The High School
Leckhampton

**Thursday 30th September 2021
(at Balcarras School)**

6.00pm - 8.00pm

**Headteacher's address at
6.00pm and 7.00pm**

**SCHOOL TOURS AT 9.15 EACH MORNING FROM
MONDAY 27TH TO THURSDAY 30TH SEPTEMBER
PLACES LIMITED. PLEASE EMAIL THE SCHOOL TO BOOK.**

thsl@balcarras.gloucs.sch.uk www.hsl.gloucs.sch.uk
01242 545136

We will be holding an Open Evening at Balcarras on this evening. The school will close to pupils at 1:20 (end of period 4) when buses will collect them, so that teachers can get prepared for the evening. We will be speaking to the pupils about the evening as we get nearer to the date, but we would be very grateful if as many pupils as possible could attend the evening to act as helpers and tour guides for prospective parents. **You are also very welcome to attend, and it would be great to see as many of you as possible, particularly as we were unable to hold a similar event last year.** I am really looking forward to the evening and think it will be a wonderful celebration of our new school and our future at Farm Lane!



School Photos

The school photographer is in school on Wednesday 15th September and Thursday 16th September 2021.

We will be taking a photo of the whole school on Wednesday 15th, with individual and sibling photographs on Thursday 16th.

Please email THSL@balcarras.gloucs.sch.uk if you wish a sibling photograph to be taken.

Communication with school

Up to this point we have been using parental email addresses from your application forms and adding contacts as advised by you. Now that the school is open, it is much more efficient for us to use our contacts in BROMCOM (the school information management systems).

Can I politely request that **12032@bromcomcloud.com** is added to your email safe senders list to ensure that you receive all school communication.

Our new direct dial phone number is now connected so please phone this for all matters relating to THSL: **01242 545136**

FireFly VLE

All information about our VLE (FireFly) have been uploaded to our website, you will be required to activate your account. Instructions on how to do this are available on the link below.

This will enable you to see your child's epraise points and information about their school day.

[FireFly Account](#)

Attendance and Absence



There is a strong correlation between excellent attendance and excellent progress (and enjoyment) at school. It is important that every child attend, every day unless they are unwell. If your child is unwell, please contact the school on the first day of absence and on each day of absence until they are well enough to return. On their first day back we ask that parents provide a written note in their planner.

Thank you very much for your support with school uniform. Despite some unavoidable issues with supply, the pupils are looking very smart indeed and there is no doubt that our uniform

Uniform

has already played an important part in uniting them as a community. Please can you continue to support us in maintaining the highest standards throughout the school year. We believe if the pupils are smartly dressed, then this helps them think and work smart! Many of the pupil have commented that they feel more grown up in their blazers and this is reflected in their mature and sensible behaviour.

If you have any issues getting items of uniform at any time during the school year, please do contact us directly. We have some stock in school that we can lend out.

PE Kit:

Many thanks for the enquires about PE kit.

We are still awaiting delivery of 26-28" tracksuit bottoms, so if you have ordered this size it will be with you shortly.

If you would like to change the size of your child's kit, please can you email el@balcarras.gloucs.sch.uk with the changes by **Tuesday 14th September**. For those parents that have already emailed the school with queries you do not need to email again.

Whilst your child is waiting for the correct size kit, please can they wear any dark top and shorts for their PE lessons.



Bus Transport

I would like to say well done to the pupils who have taken this in their stride over recent days. If you have any unresolved questions or concerns about bus transport please do let GCC know, their contact details are:

Miss Faye Williams (Mainstream School Transport Lead Officer) at GCC Transport Team

- **Tel: 01452 425543**
- **Email: faye.williams@gloucestershire.gov.uk**

The contract is being run by Eagle Line – they may also be able to help you with general enquiries.

- **Tel: 01242 820535**
- **Email: enquiries@EagleLineTravel.co.uk**



We will also pass on any enquiries.

Extra-curricular clubs

Please note that when clubs start, we will no longer be taking a register on the school bus at the end of the day, so please impress upon your child the importance of getting straight on the bus at the end of period 5 if they intend to take it home. We are asking teachers to finish their lessons at 3:20 and to escort their classes directly to the buses. We will hold the buses until 3:30, so every child will have plenty of time to board even if they are coming from the furthest corner of the school.

We have published our extra-curricular music and sport clubs on our website. Your child has also been offered the opportunity to get involved with choir. There will be a further list of subject clubs published next week. We hope there is something there for everyone and that each child joins at least one club. All clubs are being run jointly with Balcarras apart from our Choir, which is for THSL pupils only. It is great way to make new friends.

Musical Show Case - Lunchtimes - Monday 13th and Monday 20th September 2021

We are eager to hear the musical talent of our pupils, so would like to invite them to perform a piece of their choice to our Musical Director Amber Smith. This is an informal performance occasion, so they don't need to feel too nervous!

The pupils should sign up with their Tutor and remember their instrument on the following days:

- Monday 13th (lunchtime) Chelt and Isbourne
- Monday 20th (lunchtime) Windrush and Lilley Brook

Music Tuition

We are absolutely delighted that over a third of pupils have signed up for music tuition. Please direct any questions to Mrs Chong, Director of Music at Balcarras.

LAMDA, Public Speaking Tuition



This is a private club being run by Mrs F Crough. It is a fantastic opportunity for the pupils and a really important confidence builder. Please contact Mrs Crough for further information, her details are on our website.

First Day

We will be sharing a short film of our first day at Open Evening. We also captured some shots of the pupils with their Tutors and in Assembly:



We asked the pupils to share with us their career aspirations, here are just a small handful.

From Lilley Brook:





From Chelt:



From Windrush:



From Isbourne:



With warm wishes,

Helen Wood (Headteacher)

Newsletter 10th September 2021