



# BALGREEN PRIMARY NEWSLETTER

## February 2024 Newsletter

Welcome to the February version of our newsletter. A lot has happened in the last few weeks as you can see from the information below.

### Signage



One of our amazing parents has helped us in providing some of the new signage around our school to welcome visitors to Balgreen. We have used some of the more common languages spoken here in school within the sign.



### Care experienced training

We have several families who are care experienced and in response to this we had training on the January inservice day from the Educational Psychologist who supports our school. This training ensures we are consistent in how we are supporting care experienced pupils and understanding the journey they have been through and how this may have impacted on them.

### Class Reps

We are looking to see if any of our parents and carers in P1a, P2b and P3b are interested in being their class rep. This means that you support the cascading of information on the class WhatsApp group to ensure communication is shared effectively, or being a point of contact for other parents to raise concerns or issues. If you are interested in filling this role then please let the school office know and we can let the Parent Council know.



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## Clothing Bank

In our school car park beside the gate is our clothing recycling bank. This is there permanently now and allows you to donate any clean clothing in a sealed bag. This recycling bank is emptied regularly and all donations are weighed and the school then receives a donation for every kilogram of clothing. If you are having a clear out then please think of us!

## New staff

We have added to our staff team of support staff and recently appointed three new pupil support assistants. Miss Scobie and Miss Allan have previously worked in our dining room/breakfast club and are now working in Primary 5b supporting the learners there. Mr Bridgeford is working in Primary 3a. We are in the process of recruiting for staff to work in our dining room/playground at lunchtime and in our breakfast club.

There are two new counsellors joining us in Place2Be and we welcome Fiona and Dorothy to the team who will work alongside Nick Ball, who leads the Place2Be service.

We said goodbye to Mrs Edgar, our depute headteacher who retired in December 2023. As an interim replacement we are looking to appoint an acting principal teacher from within our existing school staff to support the senior leadership team from now through to June 2024. In June we will know if we can appoint this post on a permanent basis. We are appointing a principal teacher rather than a depute head as our projected roll is due to drop over the next five years, and staffing in schools is based on school roll. Appointing a depute head just now may result in us having to declare this post surplus should our roll decrease.

We welcome back Mrs Kyles, the transition teacher, who has returned from maternity leave. She is prioritising working with the Primary 7 pupils and their imminent transition to high school.

## Parent Consultations

We have had our highest uptake in terms of bookings for Parent Consultations. We have 82% of you booked in for slots to meet with teachers on the 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> February. Thank you for this and we look forward to seeing you then. If you have missed the cut off dates on the booking system you can contact the class teacher directly who may be able to accommodate you and book you manually into any available slots that they may have.

## Lost property

We have had a record amount of lost property and need your help in ensuring we can match up lost property with your child. Please name everything so we can reunite children with their missing gloves/hats/scarves/jumpers/cardigans/jackets/shoes. If it is not claimed within three weeks we will recycle it in the clothing bank. You are more than welcome to come and have a look on the table in the corridor/by the front door to see if you can find any missing items.

## Budgets for 2024-25

You will be aware of the savings needed across the council that sees a deficit of £20 million, with £8.2 million of those savings needed across education. There are a number of savings that are being discussed by the education committee and we will keep you updated as to what these savings are and how they will affect us here at Balgreen.



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## Snacks

We are seeing more and more pupils arrive in school without a snack and are asking that you provide one for your child to eat at break time. We do get donations of fruit as well as donations from the food waste charity 'Tummies not trash', but these are not on a regular basis. Please send in a snack such as a cereal bar, crackers, vegetables, fruit, dried fruit, popcorn or rice cakes for your child to eat at breaktime. Please avoid chocolate, sweets or unhealthy snacks. We have several pupils and staff who have nut allergies so please avoid sending in products that contain nuts. It can be quite a long morning for those who have had breakfast prior to the start of the school day to wait until lunchtime arrives so a snack helps feed their bodies and minds. The website [Healthier snacks - Food facts - Healthier Families - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#) has some helpful ideas for healthy snacks.

## Breakfast Club

We have places at the moment in our breakfast club which operates daily in our school huts Monday-Friday. Pupils can arrive from 7.30-8.50am and pupils receive a healthy breakfast as long as they arrive before 8.30am. Places for the club can be booked for the Breakfast Club via ParentPay.

## Scots Night



We had an amazing evening that saw pupils from every class perform brilliantly in front of a sell out audience.

Our comperes Elise and Clara were amazing and did an amazing job leading the event.

We are in the privileged position of getting to see how amazing and talented your children are on a daily basis and it was very exciting for them to get to showcase their talents in front of friends and family. Thanks to our amazing Parent Council who supported the evening through selling snacks and organising an amazing raffle.

## Bus passes

You will be aware that children in Scotland are entitled to a free bus pass. These can be applied for through the library service. We would actively encourage you to apply for a pass for your child as this reduces the cost of any trips your child takes part in. Applying for them is fairly easy so please support us by applying for your pass now.

## School Trips

We are now starting to plan a number of trips for classes across the school and when we are, we will often ask you to see if you or a family member can support the trip by accompanying the class/classes. There are specific ratios of adults to children and while we do have a number of pupil support assistants within the school, the majority of these pupil support assistants are working 1:1 with pupils



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with high levels of need. We need your help in supporting trips to ensure we are supporting all children on planned excursions.

## Cauliflower card sales

Through your support we made an amazing £489.50 which goes towards school funds. While some pupils designed Christmas cards, other pupils celebrate other events seeing every pupil given the opportunity to design a card for them and their families. Thank you all for your support.

## Balgreen Tunnel Mural Project

We have been approached by the community engagement team for the Edinburgh Art festival who are looking to work with a variety of community partners to design and create a mural to go up in Balgreen tunnel. We have only just been invited to be part of the project but we will keep you updated about it.

## Green fingers and generous hearts- transforming our school garden

We're calling on our wonderful school community for volunteers to lend a hand with our school garden project on Tuesdays and Thursdays. This initiative, led by our dedicated grandparent and gardening enthusiast, Dave, aims to transform our overgrown garden into a vibrant, green oasis for our students. Whether you're a seasoned gardener or a novice willing to learn, your contribution, even if just for a few hours on a one-off basis, everyone who can help will make a significant difference.

In addition, we're facing a challenge with clearing the garden waste, as the council does not provide this service for our project, making it a costly endeavour. Therefore, we're reaching out to anyone with connections to tool and plant hire companies like Jewsons, who could assist us in securing a discounted or free industrial woodchipper. This equipment is essential for managing and disposing of branches, enabling us to create beautiful pathways and enhance the garden's usability.

Your support in any form will be greatly appreciated and will help us make our garden project a success. Please reach out to the Parent Council via [info@balgreenpc.org.uk](mailto:info@balgreenpc.org.uk) if you would like more information or can support.

## March Madness at Balgreen: The Big Change Battle is here!

Heads up, Balgreen families! This March, we're rolling out a fundraising idea that's not just fun but filled with coppers, silver sabotage, and a prize that'll have the winning class jumping for joy. Yep, our Parent Council is behind the wheel for the Big Change Battle, where each class competes to collect the most coppers. But, watch out for those Sabotage Days – when slipping silver coins into another class's stash could turn the tide of the battle!

So, start hunting down those coppers wherever they might be hiding. And hey, maybe keep a few silvers on the side for a bit of playful mischief! It's all about having a giggle, teaming up, and thinking strategically. Bottles will be arriving in classes at the end of this month.

Ready, set, save those coppers (and plan your sabotage!) for a great cause. Let the games begin!

## Parent Council

Our next Parent Council meeting is taking place on Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> March and is an in person meeting in the staff room at 7pm. We look forward to welcoming many of you to the meeting. Some of our key post holders have recently moved on so if any of you would either like to support the council



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through taking on a more formal role, to offer support to future fund raising events or simply to bring some ideas on how to further develop our school please come to the meeting.

## Key Dates for this term

Thu 8 <sup>th</sup> Feb	Primary 6 School Camp meeting (for Jan 2025)
Fri 9 <sup>th</sup> Feb	Pupils break up for mid-term
Mon 19 <sup>th</sup> Feb	All resume
Thu 22 <sup>nd</sup> Feb	Parent Council Run Glow Disco 6-7pm P1-3 and 7.30-8.30pm P4-7
Tues 27 <sup>th</sup> and Wed 28 <sup>th</sup> Feb	Parent Consultations 4-7pm
Tues 12 <sup>th</sup> March	In person Parent Council meeting (changed from Tues 5 <sup>th</sup> March) 7pm
Fri 15 <sup>th</sup> March	Red Nose Day
Mon 18 <sup>th</sup> March	P7 at the Risk Factory
Thurs 28 <sup>th</sup> March	Last day of term
Tues 16 <sup>th</sup> April	All resume

