

Update from the Head

I hope you all had a lovely Easter. I spent a few days in Anglesey, which is lovely, and then went to London to watch Leeds in the Quarter Final of the FA Cup. We almost snatched defeat from the jaws of victory, as only Leeds could, but somehow scraped home on penalties. Now onto the semi-finals! After our impressive win against Manchester United at Old Trafford I am starting to dream!

It's been a very calm and positive first week back. The site looks lovely; the Cherry trees are a picture and the tulips in the quad are in full bloom. New life springs up around us and I have to say it cheers the mood.

This week marks the start of our long examinations season with Year 10 sitting mock exams. They have been superb all week. The exams halls will be busy now right up until the end of June. We wish all of our pupils all the best as they begin final preparations for GCSE and A level exams.

Thank you for your Donations

Once again, many thanks to everyone who donated during our 40 for 40 campaign. Thanks to a last minute donation of over £600, we reached the target of £40,000 in two days—remarkable. We have already had several meetings about spending the money...more info to follow. See article

here: <https://www.balcarras.gloucs.sch.uk/news/?pid=3&nid=1&storyid=1462>

Lessons from Auschwitz

On Monday breaktime I met with the 6 Year 12 pupils who visited Auschwitz Birkenau last term as part of their involvement in the *Lessons From Auschwitz* project. It was fascinating to chat to them about their experience. We also discussed ways they could share their insights with other pupils at the school. My thanks to Mr Leatherbarrow and Miss Crowley for supporting the pupils during this project. Making sure that each generation continues to learn about the horrors of the Holocaust is absolutely crucial.

Trip Meetings

There have been two pre-trip parents meeting this week for the Food trip to Sorrento and the History trip to Berlin. They were both very well attended and went well.

Gold Duke of Edinburgh

28 pupils are now in Dartmoor completing the practice expedition for their Gold Duke of Edinburgh. My thanks to Mr Pearce for organising.

Parent Forum

On Thursday we had the latest parent forum. About 20 parents of pupils in Year 7, 8 and 9 joined us. It was a very interesting discussion which covered all sorts of topics from mobile phones to support for pupils with special educational needs. My thanks to those parents who came along.

GASSL

Today I represented Balcarras at the Gloucestershire Association of Secondary School Leaders. It is a meeting I always enjoy—it is great to catch up with colleague heads and swap notes about the job. The meeting was dominated by discussions over government proposals on SEND reform and the funding linked to them. I think its fair to say there was a mixed response!

Latest Music Video

The latest Balcarras music video has been released. Jasmine Went in Year 12 performs Bach's Prelude in D Minor and it is sublime. Listen at this link:

<https://www.balcarras.gloucs.sch.uk/news/?pid=3&nid=1&storyid=1460>

Well done to Sophie

Congratulations to Sophie Massey in Year 7 who won the Gloucestershire Photographer of the Year award. The photograph called 'Lemon Drop' is shown below. It looks like it would go well in a nice G&T!

Well done Sophie. See article here: <https://www.balcarras.gloucs.sch.uk/news/?pid=3&nid=1&storyid=1459>



Sporting Highlight of the week

The Balcarras Golf Team are County Champions again! They won the Gloucestershire Schools Nett Championships by 7 shots with The High School Leckhampton in silver medal position. This is the fourth year running that we have won the Gloucestershire Championships. Balcarras now go forward to the English Schools Championships held at Woodhall Spa in July. I've got a funny feeling we are going to win it!

See article here: <https://www.balcarras.gloucs.sch.uk/news/?pid=3&nid=1&storyid=1461>



In of the news the Year 11 Girls Football Team have made it through to the semi finals of the Gloucestershire Championships. Well done to them.

Right the first week of the term is done. Now time for the weekend. I'm going to cook something really nice for dinner tonight. I hope you have a nice weekend.

Dominic Burke