



# THE BALFOUR BUGLE

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**Issue 1- November 2025**

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Hello everyone! We are the Balfour Bugle, the new school newspaper, keeping you entertained and giving you a deeper dive into what goes on in and around Balfour!

Our team consists of 6 students, (year 11 – year 13), all of whom are working hard through writing and editing intriguing, engaging and creative articles. From interviews with students/ teachers, information on exciting activities and even jokes, the paper will cover a wide range of different topics hopefully, at least one of which will be of interest to you.

We meet regularly to discuss future ideas on how to further improve the paper and encourage more readers to pick up the paper. We are open and welcome to feedback, for any sections/areas that you believe would be of interest. We also hope to get as many people as possible involved in

the newspaper, so if you want to be involved let the team know.

Thank you so much for this opportunity, and we hope you will love delving into our first volume.

- *The Balfour Bugle team!*

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## ***Sir Graham Balfour Open Evening***

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A quick summary into everything you might have missed!

Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> September 2025: a spectacularly successful evening jammed with all you need to know about our school. The event put on for us was not a product of sheer luck, but through great determination and thoughtfulness by our staff, which we greatly commend.

*Now onto the events...*

A warm welcome by our Headteacher, Mr Mason; a brief introduction to the staff; salutations from our Year 11 Head of Years and deputies. Visitors then explored the school freely, with the opportunity to learn about a multitude of subjects. Here is a summary of what they could have witnessed throughout the school:

Heading into the expressive arts department, enthusiasm awakened within those who partook in the Drama games! Music swooped in and provided visitors with a chance to become one with the instruments and tune into their inner Mozart – *or perhaps their inner Dave Grohl* – creating a cacophony of fun. Drawing the department to a close is Art, observing our Y11's course work, as well as our A-level students' creative minds.

Further on, English invigorated participants in an exercise of wits, spanning a plethora of well-renowned novels, while also gifting visitors with a personalised bookmark. Over in Maths, demanding tasks left many with bewildered faces.

Hundreds piled into the science classrooms, dazed at the live dissection – *yuck!* The masses were also tested in their microscopy skills, tackling the concept of electricity,

harnessing elemental powers by altering the colour of fire (All in a day's work).

History awaits, where they grappled with past events, important figures and pivotal moments in the past.

Personality was quizzed and our behaviours examined in psychology. Budding entrepreneurs were established in business, an introduction to trade. Maps, oceans, mountains and countries, geographical knowledge is put to work for some handsome rewards. Philosophical debates round out our excursion in humanities with Religion and World Views.

Hacksaws and Bridge building, Design and technology & engineering bring out the Bob the Builder from within. Food fanatics swarmed to the displayed biscuits followed by a delicate feasting. The world of needle and thread put those willing to work to create intricate plaited fabric wall art and swirling ribbon banners. Complex algorithms were run in Computing, executing commands, like print (“Hello world!”) while also squeezing AI for amusing images using prompts.

“Hola” and “Was gehts?” were overheard, streaming from the department of languages, strenuous linguistics were required to

accomplish the tiring translations. Finally, within the sports hall, our body's strength and condition was established while also meeting the PE staff!

**Overall...** the night was one to remember, certainly staying with those who managed to attend. We hope to see you once again next year!

- *Marcel M*



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## ***Mr Trenbirth's Joke Corner!***

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What do you call two monkeys that share an Amazon account?

*-Prime mates!*

Our vacuum cleaner is getting old.

*-It's just gathering dust.*

Why is Peter Pan always flying?

*-Because he Neverlands!*

Why can't you trust an atom?

*-Because they make up everything!*

What do you call two octopuses that look the same?

*-Itenticle.*

How do you tell if a vampire is sick?

*-See if he is coffin.*

What did the tomato say to the other tomato during the race?

*-Ketchup!*

Why do seagulls fly over the sea?

*-If they flew over the bay they would be bagels*

Why do people say "break a leg" when you go on stage?

*-Because every play has a cast*

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## ***Student / teacher spotlight***

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In this part of our school newspaper, we're going to dive into the lives and experiences of students and teachers alike. Today's subject (drum roll please) .....

**Mrs Wallbank!!**

If you don't know Mrs Wallbank already (which would be a surprise), she is an extravagant and passionate English teacher who has a vibrant,

caring personality. She's always there when pupils and other teachers alike need her, as well as being a lovely person to have a talk with.

Mrs Wallbank was inspired by her own mother, who was a teacher herself, and from three years old she was enamoured with teaching her own toys and playing schools. Following her early childhood passion, she began studying at Florida State University on a teaching course. She did, however, diverge her course of study to English literature, a subject she was particularly passionate about. After completing her English literature course, she went on to pass the teaching requirement in the United States.

However, when she moved over to the UK, she had to re-qualify due to the qualifications in the USA not being recognised in the UK. She finished her re-qualification around 2017 and before arriving at our exciting school, taught in 3 schools in and around Staffordshire.

When asked what she particularly enjoyed about the teaching profession, she described how she enjoys how every day, even every hour is unpredictable, bringing an exciting and challenging slant to the job. She specifically talked about

loving when she is explaining a concept to a student and they have a 'lightbulb moment', helping their confidence grow and improve. When asked about some struggles she experiences in the teaching profession, she talked about disliking the vast amount of marking and the time it takes to complete. Some teachers end up taking marking home with them, so this annoyance makes sense.

When I asked Mrs Wallbank about something she wanted parents to know and be aware of, she talked about the importance of revision and getting your child into revision techniques that are effective for them. Whether that is searching up some teachers on YouTube or TikTok and watching a few of their videos, so that they pop up on your feed every so often.

If you know Mrs Wallbank, then you will know she is a huge ambassador for reading. This was also brought up when she again asked to remind parents and students alike just how important reading really is. Not only can reading improve your vocabulary but it can also develop your structural and writing skills. It also very fun!! Highlighting this, Mrs Wallbank came up with a quote about her beloved reading, and as promised, I have Included it below,

“The more you read, the more you succeed”

A final few words from Mrs Wallbank were “Go Chetwynd!” and “Balfour is a great school with a variety of opportunities where students are encouraged to work together as part of a community” This is only the first student/teacher spotlight. Find out who’s next to feature on the spotlight in our next addition.

- *Holly Tams*

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## *Digging Deep in Krakow*

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Recently, a group of our Year 11 students took part in a trip to Krakow, a historical city in Poland. Whilst there, they explored a wide variety of historical sites, including Auschwitz, the Wieliczka salt mines and the former location of a Ghetto

established by the Nazi regime in 1941. As well as this, they received an in-depth tour of the city from a tour guide, discovering the city’s rich and interesting history. One of the most well-received parts of the trip was the visit to the Wieliczka salt mines. These mines date back to the 13<sup>th</sup> century and were a huge factor in allowing Poland to become the wealthy nation that it was during that period. Not only did students make their way down into the mine, exploring the tunnels that the previous miners would have used, they also had the exciting opportunity to witness the various chapels within the mine. These chapels were built by the workers of the mine, 130 metres down, and displayed various sculptures of historical figures made entirely out of salt! And they got to ride back up to the surface in a miner's lift, travelling at approximately 14 metres per second. You could certainly feel a breeze!





On the final day of their trip, students had the rare opportunity to meet a woman who was born within the Krakow ghetto in 1941. She described to the students the conditions that many faced within that Ghetto, told to her by her father after WW2, telling how her father worked within Oscar Schindler's factory, who then helped him to escape the Ghetto. She also described how her mother fled from the ghetto with her when she was only 2 years old and, to keep her safe, allowed a Polish couple to take care of her until the war was done. This meeting was a valuable opportunity for the students in attendance, acting as a unique experience to hear a firsthand account of what it was like during the Nazi occupation of Poland and allow them to truly understand the full extent of what many Jews and other minorities had to experience at the hands of Nazi occupation.

However, it wasn't all historical—students were able to explore the main square of the city each night, purchasing souvenirs from various stalls, experiencing the local culture, and even getting to take part in a dance circle on their final night!

This trip acted as a great experience, catering to both the historical side of the past, and the fun experiences of the present - if you didn't mind the walking.

Additionally, a huge thank you to Mr Martin, Mrs Johnston and Mrs Kearney for helping to organise and run this trip— and for making all the students got back home in one piece!

- *Holly Tams*



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## ***SGB Field Run***

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As much as the UK weather loves to persist with rain, a calm and breezy atmosphere greeted us for our second SGB Field Run, welcoming seventy-seven runners and ten volunteers, easily smashing the previous week's attendance. Competitors congregated upon the field, anticipating the sheer grit further ahead. Sweeping gusts combed the turfs, rattling leaves and the runner's strong spirits. A mild 17°C simmer baked the field accompanying the baby blue above.

*Right back to the action:*

15:35 - The signal was given and our determined racers headed out for personal improvements; running amidst the uproar of the crowd, everybody had completed this tremendous feat within their own times, but a remarkably special well done goes out to **Henry Morton** finishing first place with a phenomenal time of **12:46**



' Field run helped me feel me more confident overall!'

-Henry M

**Miss Cooper** led the staff with a very respectable time of **16:03**. All the following students and staff displayed great feats of resilience, smashing last week's times out of the park: *Oakley Edwards, Esme Spears, Selena Mosquera Vanegas, Alexander Filingham, Ewan Mullholland, Michael Lennon, George Shore, Spencer Allen, Antona Brown, Dylan Rogers-Guest, George Bagnall, Zayyan Nooh, Madison Smith, Harry Mackenzie, Daniel Stanton, Mrs Wallbank, Mrs Giles, Ms Clapton and Mr Underwood-Jones.*

OVERALL...

A super prosperous second field run; a view of a million grins; as the runners crossed over the finish (some, surprisingly, without shoes). A determined atmosphere drew out cheers among the crowd. That sums up our second SGB Field Run, jammed with hilarity as well as tenacity.

Some excellent progression throughout the past weeks, we all hope to see you there next week! You never know, you could always set that new record.

- Marcel M

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## *Guys and Dolls: Auditions*

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We had amazing turnout at the Guys and Dolls auditions on the 6th of October, with over 60 students auditioning for singing/acting roles and over 15 auditioning for dancing roles! Everyone worked incredibly hard and conducted themselves well during the auditions, so well done to all who tried out! However, it was not a quick process. Mrs Kearney, Mr Field and Mr Tunstall met prior to the auditions to discuss the audition song and monologues that they would be watching our actors, singers and dancers perform. After settling on these and announcing the auditions to expecting students, the resources were put onto Office 365 for all students to access and practice their performances.

The dancers of the group had to self-choreograph a short dance to one of the most famous songs of the show, "Luck Be a Lady". This dance, as well as the singing and acting performances were conducted in front of the panel of Mr Field, Mrs Kearney and Mr Tunstall. After deliberating together, callbacks were announced and took place the following week to make sure decisions for actors were suitable. Roles were then announced, and these can be found outside the drama classroom.

Throughout the entire process, Year 11 students offered support sessions for year 7 students during lunchtime, helping them to overcome any audition fear they had and to help them perfect their audition.

Auditions may be over but there are still opportunities to get involved later in the year: letters to get involved with backstage production will come out soon. Being part of our amazing school productions is not all about being on stage and standing in the spotlight—our performances would not be possible if it were not for our amazing backstage crew! With roles in set, props, lighting, sound, costume, makeup and

refreshments on offer, there is something for everyone to get involved in. If you are interested in making your debut in backstage, all are welcome to get involved and be part of our amazing backstage crew. They might not be in the limelight, but they are critical to making the performances possible.

- Holly Tams

## *Enrichment*

The enrichment programme timetable highlights the variety of activities available to us beyond regular lessons. Getting involved in these opportunities allows students to discover new interests, develop valuable skills, and build self-confidence. It also encourages collaboration and personal growth, which are important for our future both at school and beyond. Take a look at programme above to decide what you may enjoy partaking in!

Enrichment timetable Autumn Term 2025					
Day	Club	Year	Time	Staff	Venue
Monday	Mindful Mondays	All	Lunch 1.40-2.15pm	Mrs Williams	Rm 430
	Table Tennis	All	Lunch 1.40-2.15pm	PE Dept	sports hall
	Homework Club	All	Afterschool 3.15-5.10pm	Mrs Price & Mrs Corbett	Library
	Subject specific- Homework support	All	Afterschool 3.15-4.15pm	See subject teacher for info	Subject areas
	Netball	All	Afterschool 3.15-4.15pm	PE Dept	Field/ sports hall
	Football (Boys)	All	Afterschool 3.15-4.15pm	PE Dept	Field/ sports hall
	Art club	All	Afterschool 3.15-4.15pm	Mrs Paddison	Rm 53/55
Tuesday	Badminton	All	Lunch 1.40-2.15pm	PE Dept	Courts
	Biology revision	Y11B	Lunch 1.40-2.10pm	Miss Simmons	Science
	Duke of Edinburgh (drop in) – details to follow	DofE Students	Lunch 1.40-2.15pm	Mr Brookes & Mr Mapperson	Rm 458
	Homework Club	All	Afterschool 3.15-5.10pm	Mrs Price & Mrs Corbett	Library
Wednesday	Volleyball	All	Lunch 1.40-2.10pm	PE Dept	sports hall
	GCSE Chemistry and Biology revision	Y11	Lunch 1.40-2.10pm	Miss Brinsdon	Rm 424
	Choir	All	Lunch 1.40-2.10pm	Mr Samuels and Mr Field	
	Homework Club	All	Afterschool 3.15-5.10pm	Mrs Price & Mrs Corbett	Library
	Subject specific-Homework support	All	Afterschool 3.15-4.15pm	See subject teacher for info	Subject areas
	Rugby	All	Afterschool 3.15-4.15pm	PE Dept	Field/ sports hall
	Football (Girls)	All	Afterschool 3.15-4.15pm	PE Dept	Field/ sports hall
	Roleplaying game club- spaces very limited (Sign up required)	All	Afterschool 3.20-4.20pm	Mr Underwood-Jones	418
Thursday	Handball	All	Lunch 1.40-2.10pm	PE Dept	Courts
	Homework Club	All	Afterschool 3.15-5.10pm	Mrs Price & Mrs Corbett	Library
	Basketball	All	Afterschool 3.15-4.15pm	PE Dept	sports hall
	Field run	All	Afterschool 3.15-4.15pm	Mrs Haines	Field
Friday	Film Club	All	Lunch 1.40-2.0pm	Mrs Williams	Rm 430
	Table Tennis	All	Lunch 1.40-2.0pm	PE Dept	sports hall
	GCSE PE Club (coursework)	All	Afterschool 3.15-4.15pm	Miss Chapman/ Mr Smith	202