



# ORCHARD PRIMARY SCHOOL

## NEWSLETTER - NOVEMBER 2019

Dear Parents,

It was lovely to speak to so many of you at the recent parent' evening, and to get such positive feedback about the school and how well your child is progressing. We strive to do our very best at all times to ensure that our pupils are happy and motivated. Thanks also for your support with homework. The 'menus', with their more purposeful and wider ranging task lists, are proving to be a lot more popular with both children and parents - hopefully it's enabling us to get the home-school balance right for you.

We've been having a massive push on 'Keeping Safe' this month. There's lots of information below about the work we've done in school which we hope you will find useful in any follow up discussions at home.

Warmest regards

Fiona Shields & the Orchard Team

### E-SAFETY DAY

To promote the safe and positive use of digital technology, pupils participated in a special e-safety discovery day on 29th October, launched by an assembly led by Mr Patching and followed up with a number of practical sessions.

A reminder that our E-Safety Parental Support Booklet, which contains lots of useful information about keeping children safe online, as well as a 'low-down' on some of the most popular websites with youngsters, can be downloaded from the e-safety page on the school website.

It is important for parents to note the following legal minimum age for account holders:

13 years old: Twitter / Facebook / Instagram / Snapchat

16 years old: Whatsapp

Therefore, no pupils at Orchard Primary School should be account holders for any of the above social media sites.

This website is brilliant-[www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk)

It has some particularly good resources about Live-streaming - Live streaming is becoming one of the most popular online activities for children and young people. Apps such as Musical.ly, Live.me, Periscope and YouNow are all growing in popularity and other well established apps such as Facebook are also adding live streaming functions. #LiveSkills resources from CEOP concentrate on the specific risks children and young people face whilst live streaming.

### DOGS TRUST ASSEMBLY & WORKSHOP

Sarah Saunders, from Loughborough Dogs Trust led a special assembly to educate pupils about responsible dog ownership and safety around dogs, encouraging pupils to consider scenarios they may find themselves in at home with their pets, as well as dogs they may encounter whilst out and about.



The assembly was followed up by a special workshop for Y5 and Y6 pupils which aimed to encourage learners to consider and implement a more compassionate, realistic understanding of what is safe and appropriate behaviour around other people's dogs, as well as the dogs they share their homes with.

### KEEPING SAFE AT HALLOWEEN AND AROUND FIREWORKS ASSEMBLY

PCSO Suffolk and members of Donington Fire Service visited school to present an assembly about considerate behaviour on Halloween night, and how to stay safe around fireworks.

### ANTI-BULLYING WEEK

As part of National Anti-Bullying Week, pupils took part in a number of special anti-bullying/kindness activities during a special theme day on 12th November. To join in with the National Anti-bullying Alliance campaign, pupils wore their 'Odd Socks' in order to express themselves and celebrate their individuality.

## Y5 RESIDENTIAL VISIT TO WHITEHALL

Year 5 pupils had a wonderful time at Whitehall and returned to school exhausted, but full of excitement about the amazing activities they had participated in during their 3 day residential.

Thank you so much to the staff who accompanied the children. It was very much appreciated.



## Y5 OUTDOOR LEARNING MORNING

Pupils in Y5 had a wonderful time at Nottingham Trent University as they undertook a variety of outdoor learning experiences.



## SCHOOL COUNCIL CHRISTMAS CAKE SALE

To raise funds for School Council, we are inviting pupils, parents and carers to bake cakes for a Christmas themed cake sale on **Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> December** during break-time. Cakes will cost 50p each.

## CHRISTMAS JUMPER DAY/CHRISTMAS DINNER DAY

We are inviting pupils to wear a Christmas jumper/ cardigan/top to school on **Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> December** to celebrate Christmas lunch day. (Pupils should wear their usual school shoes, trousers, shorts, skirt etc.)

## HOLIDAY REQUESTS OR REASONS FOR PUPIL ABSENCE

We pride ourselves on our honest and open communication with parents regarding our Leave of Absence Policy. Whilst a large proportion of holidays in term time will not be able to be authorised, we do not currently issue fines. However, I would politely urge parents to be 'up front' with school about why their child is absent for any reason, as youngsters have a wonderful ability to 'drop parents in it' when they tell school staff or their friends where they've been for a day or two!

## CHILDREN IN NEED

A huge thank you to everyone who took part in our 'Spots & Stripes' day for the BBC's Children In Need appeal on Friday 15th November, and to School Council and Mrs Parker for organising the day.

## POPPY COLLECTION

Thank you to all those pupils and parents who purchased poppies and poppy related items for the Royal British Legion collection.

## BOOK FAIR

Thank you to all those parents who purchased at the Book Fair. It was much appreciated. Thanks also to Mrs Farrar for running the Book Fair so efficiently. We sold just over £800 worth of books, and will now be able to order £200 worth of books on commission. We're going to go for some new atlases and non-fiction books to use in topic work.

## SEVERE WEATHER - SCHOOL CLOSURE

We sincerely hope we don't have to close the school this winter. It's not a decision we take lightly. It's always a last resort but sometimes it's unavoidable due to low staff numbers and compromises to pupil safety.

You will be informed of the decision to close school between 7.30-7.45 am. There are a number of ways you can find out if we've had to close the school or part of it:-

- School text messaging service
- On the website
- On local radio (Radio Leicester (104.9FM) Leicester Sound (105.4FM) Capital FM)

## FAMILY PHOTO DAY

Thank you to Mrs Lane for organising the family photo day in November. The funds raised will go towards providing exciting new resources for pupils.

## SEND INFORMATION WEBSITE PAGE

Our SEND page on the website has been updated to include a new booklet for parent 'SEND Support Explained'. Parents will also be able to find the school's SEND Information Report as well as the SEND Policy.

As always, if you have any questions regarding SEND provision, please don't hesitate to contact Miss Webster, the school's SENDCO, or myself.

## **HALLOWEEN DISCO**

The PTA's Halloween Disco proved to be a huge success, with all those attending looking spookily good in their wonderful costumes!

Thank you so much to the parents and staff who helped out on the night - it was very much appreciated.

## **WW2 DAY AT BEAUMANOR HALL**

Did you know that during World War II, Beaumanor Hall was instrumental in the effort to break the German Enigma code? No, neither did we, so it was no wonder that pupils in Classes 7,8 and 9 had a fantastic Inspiration Day as they were transported back as evacuees to WW2.

As well as learning all about rationing and experiencing life in an air raid shelter, pupils also got the chance to decode secret messages, rather like the ones solved at Bletchley Park. 'The best day ever!' is how one pupil described the visit!



Thanks also to those parents who have visited school to bring in WW2 artefacts, and to share their relatives' stories about the war. The children have been utterly fascinated.

## **CHRISTMAS FOOD BANK COLLECTION**

If you would like to donate any items to the local branch of the Long Eaton & Sawley Christmas Foodbank Collection, please send them into the school office during December. Let's help to make a difference together.

## **REPORTING A PUPIL ABSENCE**

Please could I remind parents that whilst it is helpful for you to report your child's absence to the class teacher via Dojo, the official procedure is through the school office. It is vitally important that office staff are notified of any absence. We have a new telephone answering service, which will hopefully make this easier, as out of hours messages can now be left.

## **PARKING & DRIVING NEAR SCHOOL**

I frequently communicate to parent/carers about issues relating to inconsiderate parking and reckless driving, but really would like you to take a moment to contemplate how we would all feel if one of our children was injured.

We continue to get frequent complaints about poor parking from our neighbours, and reports of people driving too fast in the area around the school and putting the children's safety at risk.

To maintain positive and respectful relationships, I prefer not to confront parents/carers who park inconsiderately. I also don't have jurisdiction re: asking drivers to move their cars and therefore can only appeal to everyone's better nature in not wishing to see a child involved in a car accident. Please could all drivers be mindful of this when approaching or leaving school. We also politely request that cars are not parked over residents' driveways, as this again, causes bad feeling within the local community and tarnishes the school's reputation.

The PCSO is aware of our concerns and will be monitoring the area.

## **GOVERNOR NEWS**

Rather than send out a separate Governor newsletter, we have decided to add a section to the newsletter outlining what the Governing Body has been doing. Here is a very brief summary:

The school's Full Governing Board has met once so far this term; Committees have met up twice. The first meeting of the year is always largely taken up with reviewing key safeguarding practices, policies, agreeing the new school development plan for and setting out our ambitions for the next three years.

Governors on the Teaching, Learning and Assessment Committee discussed last year's assessment information, the school's Self Evaluation Form and developments since our last OFSTED inspection. The Management and Finance Committee have focused on the Pupil Premium Strategy Report, the Sports Grant Impact Statement, and the internal financial audit report.

There have been visits to school by several governors this term: one to attend a SENDCO meeting, another to visit EYFS, and other visits to meet prospective parents during our Open Days. Further meetings have been arranged.