



ORCHARD PRIMARY SCHOOL

NEWSLETTER - APRIL 2021

Dear Parents,

As we start the Summer Term, I would like to praise our children for being exceptional on their return to school, both from the Easter break, as well as Lockdown 3. We have been so very impressed by their positive attitudes, their excellent conduct and huge enthusiasm for learning. Pupils have had a wonderful time reconnecting with their friends, playing and having fun. Orchard staff are so proud of each and every one of them.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all children, staff, parents and governors for the part that you have all played in ensuring such a successful return to school again this term; you have all been amazing, thank you. So much. We would also like to warmly welcome nine new children to the school who have joined us in recent weeks. We hope that you will be very happy here at your new school.

Best wishes

Fiona Shields & the Orchard Team

COMIC RELIEF

Thank you to parents and pupils who donated money for the Red Nose Day appeal. The pupils looked fantastic wearing their rainbow of clothing items in honour of NHS staff and as a symbol of hope. In total, the school raised £285 - well done everyone.



EASTER RAFFLE

Thank you to Mrs Daft for organising a fantastic Easter raffle. Thanks also to all of the local businesses that donated chocolate and to Mrs Mercer for helping out! We were inundated with items (the picture is 1 table out of 4!) which was absolutely fantastic. £674 was raised, which will go towards whole school enrichment events next year. Brilliant - thank you.



STAFFING UPDATE

After many years teaching at the school, Mrs Sheldon and Mrs Cotterill have decided that retirement really isn't for them! So, instead of becoming ladies of leisure, we are absolutely delighted that they will remain at Orchard, working as a job-share next year in Year 5. As a result, we have appointed a super teacher, Mrs Wood, who will be teaching in our Y3/4 class. (Mrs Godsell will move to Year 4). Due to school expansion, we have also appointed the very talented Miss Sheldon, who will be working in our 'new' Y1 class.

CHROMEBOOKS—A BIG THANK YOU!

We cannot begin to express what the Learners' Trust donation of a class set of Chromebooks means to our School. The donation was beyond our expectations and has meant that we have achieved not only our year one, but also our year two curriculum IT expansion plans.

A very special 'Thank you' to Matt Duffell for answering our school plea, putting the school forward for a donation, sourcing and delivering these items and enabling our IT provision to meet the needs of our growing school.

The equipment donated will allow us to reconfigure our IT provision and create new small group work spaces within school for boosters and interventions. The portable equipment also enables us to utilise IT to enhance learning in the classrooms on a daily basis and fully integrate its use into everyday school life.

CREATIVE CURRICULUM NEWS

We wanted to really celebrate in this newsletter, the fantastic work that pupils have been undertaking since the full re-opening in March.

In Upper Key Stage 2, pupils have been very busy finding out about the wonderful landscapes of Africa and vast array of life that can be found there.

Continuing the work started during home learning, they have researched and compared lifecycles of different life forms. They have thoroughly enjoyed their class reading book, 'The White Giraffe', which has poaching as a central theme - this has linked beautifully to their work finding out about conservation projects and has provided the inspiration for their stop motion animations.

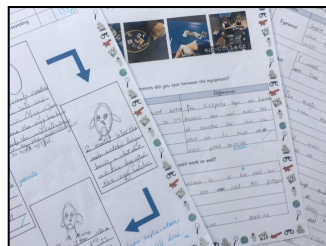
Classroom displays are filled with the vibrant colours of Africa, showcasing the children's wonderful silhouettes and animal prints.



Key Stage 1 have been having a great time so far during their Adventure is Out There topic. So far, they have explored the sea, land and air before blasting off into space! They have been learning about some historical figures such as Robert Falcon Scott, Christopher Columbus and the Wright Brothers.

They have also been mapping out the continents and oceans as well as thinking about where we would like to explore in the world.

Comparing the polar equipment from Robert Falcon Scott's expedition to equipment you can find today, the children were shocked by the thin clothes and reindeer sleeping bags. It was a pretty unanimous vote for not visiting Antarctica – the children did not like the idea of frostbite either!



In science lessons and in line with British Science Week, KS1 have conducted a number of investigations linked directly to explorers. When learning about Christopher Columbus they experimented with how much weight could be added to a paper 'ship' before it sank! They also looked how to rescue a frozen explorer from a block of ice. Over the next few weeks pupils will be exploring the lives of Amelia Earhart and Neil Armstrong.

Pupils have been super busy in LKS2. Their topic of Raiders and Traders moved on to the 'Vicious Vikings', which has included the children making Viking long ships, dragon heads to scare the locals and the creation of a computer game to steer a Viking ship through a maze. If evil, terrifying creatures are your thing, then their stories of Beowulf and the monster Grendel will have terrified you! They have now begun their thought provoking topic of 'Where the Forest Meets the Sea' and have already discovered some fascinating facts about Rainforests and how important it is that we preserve this amazing environment.

So far this term, everyone in EYFS has been getting outside even more than usual and learning all about the things that are living and growing 'In the Garden'.



Last week, 5 glittering golden beans appeared in the classroom and after planting they have grown into a huge beanstalk! We've got potatoes chitting on the windowsill and sweet-peas and runner beans planted in home-made pots.

Mr Maguire has built a raised bed so the children can grow salad and veg and later on in the term pupils will learn all about some of the tiny creatures who share our outdoor space.

RSE & EVERYONE'S WELCOME

In PSHE, we have started to deliver lessons from our new Relationships and Sex Education scheme, as well as the 'Everyone's Welcome' programme. The RSE scheme of work is located in the Curriculum section of the school's website should you wish to view it.

THE GREAT BUG HUNT 2021

This is an exciting competition for primary school children that takes you outside to explore the bug world! What will you find? Identify a local habitat, explore and discover the bugs that live there, draw them and record your findings – it's that simple! Entries should be sent to www.schoolscience.co.uk/bughunt by June 10th 2021.

REMINDER: TIMINGS OF THE SCHOOL DAY

Arrival times remain staggered: Group 1 (Classes 6,8,1,2,4) should arrive between 8.35-8.45am; Group 2 (Classes 7,5, 3, 9) should arrive between 8.45-8.55am; EYFS pupils are able to now enter school between 8.45-8.55.

In the afternoon, gates will be opened 5 minutes before the first collection of EYFS pupils at 2.50pm. Group 1 classes are released at 3.00pm and Group 2 at 3.10pm.

BREAK-TIME SNACKS - KS2

Please could we remind parents that pupils should only be bringing fruit or vegetables for a snack to eat during break-time. As a general 'healthy eating' rule (and to reduce the problem of litter) they shouldn't be having anything that comes in a wrapper. E.g. chocolate bar, brunch bar. Thank you.

DATES FOR THE DAIRY

Monday 3rd May - School closed (Bank Holiday)

Tuesday 4th May - School Photographer

Friday 28th May - School closes for half-term

Monday 7th June - School opens

Friday 25th June - Annual reports sent out

Monday 5th July - Remote parent consultations to discuss reports if required

Friday 9th July - School closes for the Summer

Monday 23rd & Tuesday 24th August - INSET days (school closed for pupils)

Wednesday 25th August - School opens to pupils

COVID TRACK & TRACE FOR MAY HALF-TERM

A reminder that during the holidays, school is still required to support the NHS Test and Trace process, and fulfil necessary contact tracing responsibilities when notified of any positive Covid test cases.

Therefore, please would you ensure that you inform us of a positive case if symptoms have occurred within 2 days of your child being in school. Updates need to be sent via Dojo to Mrs Daft (or emailed to school@orchard.leics.sch.uk if you can't access Dojo). A Dojo to the class teacher is also very useful.

Further information as to what steps to take should you or your child develop symptoms during the holiday can be found at <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>. Thank you for your help in keeping all in our school community safe.

SUMMER EVENTS

At this present time, we are unable to confirm what may be possible re: activities that usually take place in our Summer calendar. In truth, because of the advanced planning/notice required, and the school's Covid risk assessment, it is highly unlikely that community events such as sports day, the summer fair, school disco and new Reception parents' meeting will go ahead in the current circumstances.

School Covid cases over the Easter break have been stark reminder that as a school, we must remain exceptionally 'Covid conscious' in order to safeguard the welfare of staff, pupils and their families. Please be assured however, that for Y6 pupils in particular, we will ensure that their final weeks with us are magical ones, and that all pupils have a super final term packed with fun and exciting activities.

TRAFFIC ISSUES

Please could I remind parents about the importance of parking and driving considerably near the school during drop off times. I would also request that parents drive slowly and with extreme caution along Grange Drive. The road is very busy at peak times, and with a number of children walking home by themselves now, we want to make sure that all pupils remain safe. The safety car has been a visible presence in the last fortnight to assist us as part of the 'Keep Clear' scheme.

For parents/carers collecting from the KS1 playground at home-time, please could I ask that the area around the exit gate is left clear please to reduce congestion. Thank you.