



ORCHARD PRIMARY SCHOOL

NEWSLETTER - OCTOBER 2025

Dear Parents,

It continues to be a hugely successful Autumn Term at Orchard. Lots of children have been praised and rewarded for their excellent 'behaviour for learning', and our for following our 'Respect' rule. Staff have been outstanding in their determination to deliver exciting and impactful learning experiences and wider curriculum opportunities for pupils. As always, thank you for your ongoing support, especially with upholding uniform standards, and completing home learning tasks. It makes such a difference.

Warmest regards - Fiona Shields & the Orchard Team

FOREST SCHOOL

We are thrilled to share an update on the incredible learning and growth happening at our Forest School. In the last few weeks, pupils have been busy with a wide range of activities, including:

Creative Construction: A popular activity has been den-building, where children collaborate to build shelters using natural materials like branches and leaves. This has fostered teamwork, problem-solving, and communication skills.

Sensory Exploration: The mud kitchen has been a hive of activity, with children creating "gourmet mud dishes" and developing their imagination through messy play.



Nature's Mysteries: Pupils have become keen investigators, going on scavenger hunts for mini-beasts and different types of leaves and plants. This has helped them observe the changing seasons and understand the local ecosystem.



As the seasons change, our outdoor classroom will provide a unique and inspiring setting for children to develop confidence, resilience, and a deep connection with the natural world.

ZEN DEN

Huge thanks to the PTA for helping to fund our latest refurbishment project—the creation of 'The Zen Den'.

As well as providing a space for whole group teaching, this room also provides a bespoke environment tailored to the needs of children within our specific school community.

PTA funding enabled us to purchase furniture, décor, and most importantly essential nurture and SEND resources. So huge thanks to all of you who have bought Film Night and Disco tickets, attended the Summer Fair, purchase raffle tickets etc. It's so very much appreciated.

OUR NEW EYFS CLASSES

Our wonderful Foundation Stage children have settled very happily into their new routines and are thoroughly enjoying exploring their inside and outdoor classrooms



PHONICS SESSION FOR PARENTS.CARERS

Mrs McGravie will be running two phonics and early reading sessions for EYFS and Y1 parents on Thursday 9th October. Workshops will take place at 9.00am and 4.30pm. Parents of children in Year 1 and Year 2 are also welcome to attend if they would find it useful. Please Dojo the EYFS teachers directly if you would like to attend a session, indicating which time slot you would prefer.

EUROPEAN DAY OF LANGUAGES

We celebrated European Day of Languages with a special KS2 French Theme Day on 25th September. C'était une journée fantastique!

HOMEWORK MENUS: A MASSIVE THANK YOU!

Taking pride in completing homework says a lot about a learner's attitude. Thank you so much to all those parents/carers who have ensured that their child's homework is completed to a high standard. Thank you also to those parents who regularly hear their children read and sign the diary (KS1). Your support at home makes such a difference.

KNOWLEDGE ORGANISERS

A Knowledge Organiser is a go-to document for a unit of work: each one identifies the key information that children need to have learned by the end of a 'topic'. It also acts as a tool to support children in retaining and retrieving knowledge for life-long learning.

We have developed our own Knowledge Organisers to support the delivery of the curriculum. Please visit the website to see Knowledge Organisers for each class (class pages.)

PTA FILM NIGHT

Another fantastic film night was had by all! Thank you to the PTA for putting the refreshments together.

ROCK KIDZ

To remind pupils of the importance we place on developing 'character', we had 'Rock Kidz' join us for the day. There was dancing, jumping, singing, more jumping ... the message about kindness, respect and consideration came through loud and clear!



MP VISIT

Year 6 enjoyed a lively Q&A session with our local MP, Amanda Hack, who was invited to Orchard to discuss the importance of democratic participation for young people. Pupils asked Amanda some great questions about how she became an MP and what her job entails. Amanda provided some useful advice on how to prepare speeches in readiness for the School Council elections.

PUPIL LEADERSHIP COUNCILS

Recent elections have resulted in Oliver being voted President of the School Council, and Billy, Vice President. School Council members have also been elected by their class and are already busy making plans for the year!

Congratulations also to our new House Captains, who have been elected by their fellow Housemates:

Redgate – Elisa and Ollie O

Wheatcroft – Penelope and Finn

McCleans – Brooke and Zak

Coppice – Isabel and Michael

Reading Ambassadors, Digital Leaders, Anti-Bullying Ambassadors and Sports Ambassadors are in the process of being selected and will feature on the website soon, alongside our fantastic School Council.

BOOK FAIR

The Book Fair will take place week commencing 13th October. Pupils can purchase books after school; books will also be available to purchase during parents' evening.

SPORTING NEWS

A fantastic festival of football saw the Orchard Y5/6 Boys' Team produce an excellent performance against strong competition, to come second in the final. We were very impressed with the boys' energy and enthusiasm.



Well done to our new Sports Ambassadors who have started to run activities at lunchtimes with pupils in KS1 and Y3/4.

MACMILLAN HOUSE 'BAKE OFF'

Thank you so much to the families who donated cakes for our House Teams 'Bake Off', or purchased cakes at break and after school. The competition was strong but well done to Redgate House who were named overall winners! Most importantly, we raised over £350 for Macmillan Cancer Support so thanks all.

TIMES TABLE ROCKSTARS

Children all have Times Table Rock Stars (TTRS) login details and should be using this programme regularly at home please, to support their maths learning.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS...

SCHOOL COUNCIL FUNDRAISER: HALLOWEEN DRESSING UP DAY

To raise money for School Council projects, pupils have asked to once again have a Halloween dressing up day. Therefore, for a 50p donation (bucket collection at drop-off), on **Friday 31st October**, children are invited to come to school in a Halloween themed outfit.

Please don't feel the need to purchase expensive costumes. It's basically non-uniform, so children who don't wish to dress in Halloween costumes can simply wear Autumnal/Halloween colours to school – grey, orange, green, red, black etc.

Could we request that pupils leave scary masks and accessories, such as sickles, cauldrons and broomsticks at home. We'd also ask that pupils don't wear face paint and put dye in their hair as these are further added distractions in the classroom.

Pupils who would usually wear PE uniform on a Friday should bring their PE kit with them on this day. Staff will have buckets for pupils to put their money into when they arrive at school. No change will be able to be given. Thank you.

CHILDREN IN NEED - NONE UNIFORM DAY

The BBC Children in Need appeal has been confirmed as **Friday 14th November**. For a donation of 50p, School Council members are inviting pupils to wear their pyjamas/onesies for school that day.

Pupils are also welcome to bring in a bear/cuddly toy to honour Pudsey! **Pupils who would usually wear PE uniform on a Friday should bring their PE kit with them on this day.** Staff will have buckets for pupils to put their money into when they arrive at school. No change will be able to be given.

LOST PROPERTY

Please could we remind parents to ensure that all school uniform and water bottles are named - we have a huge amount of un-labelled items in lost property which makes it near impossible to reunite these with their owners. Lost Property is located in the disabled toilet cubicle. Thank you.

PUNCTUALITY

Please could parents ensure that their children are in school for 8.45am. An increasing number of pupils are arriving at the school gates well after 8.50am which means that they are being marked late for registration. Your support with this is very important please as punctuality and attendance is being closely monitored this term.

ROYAL BRITISH LEGION FUNDRAISING

We will once again be supporting the Royal British Legion again this year by selling items such as poppy/remembrance themed key rings, snap bands, stationery etc. on our online shop. Products will range from 50p to £1. You will be able to order and pay for items via Eduspot—our School Money system. Office staff will then distribute items to pupils. A text will be sent out once products are available and the order page is live.

REMEMBRANCE DAY

To acknowledge Armistice Day, pupils will be taking part in a variety of special activities based on gratitude, hope and remembrance on Tuesday 11th November.

ANTI-BULLYING WEEK 2025

Anti-Bullying Week 2025 will run from Monday November 10th to Friday November 14th. The official theme for the week is "Power for Good", and it is co-ordinated by the Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA). The theme aims to empower children and young people to use their influence to speak out against bullying, support others, and create more inclusive communities.

To join in with the ABA campaign, pupils are asked to wear their 'Odd Socks' on Monday 10th November in order to express themselves and celebrate their individuality!

PARENTS' EVENINGS - Monday 13th & Thursday 16th October

Staff have worked incredibly hard to ensure that all pupils are supported to do their personal best and achieve the high standards that we set for achievement, behaviour and presentation of work.

I therefore very much hope that when you attend your forthcoming parents' evening appointment, you are pleased with the progress your child has made so far this term, and impressed with the quality of their work.

If you have any concerns or queries about your child's progress, please do not hesitate to get in touch with your child's class teacher in the first instance, or myself if the matter cannot be resolved.

I would however, politely remind parents to phone ahead to schedule a visit where more in depth discussion may be required so that appointments don't run beyond the 10 minute schedule.

REMINDERS ...

WRAPPING UP WARM: The weather is turning so could all children please bring in a suitable coat for the colder/wetter months. Please make sure the coat is labelled with your child's name. Thank you.

SCHOOL DINNERS: Could I politely remind parents that meals **must** be booked on Relish by midnight each Sunday for the week in advance. Bookings for the entire half-term can also be completed. No late bookings can be taken - any meal orders placed after the deadline will not show up on our system.

MESSAGING VIA CLASS DOJO OR EMAIL: All school staff will be happy to respond to messages sent in by parents within 2 working days. However, please be mindful that staff are not expected to monitor or respond to messages out of their normal working hours (including Friday night, weekends and published school holidays). Please do not send absence/ appointment or collection messages via Class Dojo, a phonecall or email to the office should be made.

KEY STAGE 2 - SPARE OUTDOOR SHOES REQUEST

To avoid an increase in potential accidents on the Key Stage 2 playground due to 'overcrowding', we endeavour to use the field throughout the whole year, weather permitting. So that pupils do not trample mud and grass into school, pupils who would like to play on the field at breaktimes and lunchtimes will be asked to change into 'outdoor shoes' that should be kept in a bag on pegs.

These shoes should be different to both their everyday school shoes *and* the trainers worn for outdoor PE. They will get muddy! Trainers, old baseball /Converse boots, old shoes, wellies will be fine. Please ensure property is labelled.

REPORTING YOUR CHILD'S ABSENCE

A request from the office ... if you leave an answer message to report your child's absence, please could you tell us specifically what their illness is rather than 'poorly', this will help us to monitor patterns in tummy bugs, coughs, colds etc. Thank you.

MESSAGES TO THE OFFICE RE: HOME-TIME ARRANGEMENTS

Please could we request that unless you are unavoidably delayed in traffic at the last minute, that messages regarding a change in collection/home-time arrangements are received by the office by 2.45pm. Please don't send urgent messages re: collection via Dojo during the school day, as teachers cannot check tablets during the afternoon. Thank you.

GRANTS & BUSINESS LINKS

We are always looking at ways to generate more income for the school. Therefore, if you have any particular business links, or access to grants, which you think would benefit the school, please speak to Laura Thompson in the school office. Thank you.

DIARY DATES

- Thurs 9th October - Phonics: Parent Workshops
- Parents' Evenings - Mon 13th October (3.30-6.30) & Thurs 16th October (4.00-6.00)
- WB 13th October - Book Fair
- School closes Friday 17th October
- Mon 27th October - school opens
- Prospective Parents Open Day - Tuesday 28th October 9.30am; Wednesday 29th October 9.30am & Thurs 30th Oct 1.30pm
- Friday 31st October - Halloween Dressing Up day
- Tues 4th November - prospective EYFS Stay & Play 3.30-4.15pm
- Tues 4th November - UKS2 Inspiration Day: Dig for Victory - Beaumanor Hall WW2 Experience
- Tues 11th Nov - Remembrance 'Discovery' afternoon
- Anti-Bullying Week and Odd Socks Day - Monday, Nov 10th to Friday, Nov 14th. (Odd Socks – 10th)
- Friday 14th Nov - Children in Need
- Thurs 4th December - PTA Festive Film Night
- Mon 8th December - Santa Dash
- Tues 9th December - KS1 Carol Concert
- Wed 10th December - EYFS Nativity
- Thurs 11th December - LKS2 Carol Concert
- Thurs 11th Dec ember - UKS2 Christmas Enterprise Scheme
- Mon 15th Dec Choir: Carols in the Community 5-6.30pm
- Tues 16th Dec - Christmas Jumper Day (Christmas Dinner)
- Christmas Parties (afternoons bar EYFS):
- Mon 15th KS1 Wed 17th LKS2 Thurs 18th UKS2
- Fri 19th a.m. EYFS
- School closes Friday 19th December