



# ORCHARD PRIMARY SCHOOL

## NEWSLETTER - FEBRUARY 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

On behalf of all of us at Orchard, I would like to thank you for your support and positive engagement this half term. We have had a busy and successful six weeks and the children have continued to thrive, impressing us with all they do. I hope you find this week's parents' evenings useful and have a wonderful half term break.

As always, if you have any questions, comments or concerns, please let us know.

Best wishes, Mrs. Caldwell and the Orchard Team

### NEW WEBSITE!

Our fantastic new website has finally been launched. The finishing touches are still being made, but after months of hard work, we are so proud for everyone to see it.

Thank you to Mrs Daft and Mr Battle for the many hours of work they have put in to developing this. Please do take a look and let us know what you think!

<https://www.orchardprimary.org>

### CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH WEEK

The theme for Children's Mental Health Week (9th-13th February 2026) is 'This Is My Place', which focuses on the importance of belonging and encourages the adults, services, and systems around children and young people to help create inclusive, nurturing environments where they feel they belong and can confidently say, "this is my place".

As well as a special assembly today, pupils will take part in themed activities and end the week with 'Dress to Express' own clothes day to celebrate individuality.

### RSPB BIG BIRDWATCH



EYFS and KS1 took part in the RSPB's annual big birdwatch. They took their binoculars outside and were impressively silent as they waited for the birds to appear. Using their ID sheets, they counted how many different birds they saw and we sent our data off to the RSPB.

They saw blackbirds, robins, pigeons and even a pied wagtail!

### YOUNG VOICES



Our choir had an amazing night at Young Voices in January. They sang with confidence, joy, and incredible energy— it was a privilege to see them perform on such a big stage and make memories that will last a lifetime.

A huge thank you to our amazing PTA. Without their incredible support and generosity, this trip simply wouldn't have been possible for so many of our children. By funding the majority of the trip, they gave more pupils the chance to be part of something truly special.

### STORY TELLING WEEK

To celebrate National Storytelling Week, children took part in an assembly featuring renowned storyteller and the UK's first storytelling laureate, Taffy Thomas. We then had a lovely storytelling session where children got to buddy up with a different class and share a range of stories with each other. It was lovely to see the different ages mix and enjoy reading together.



**REMINDER:** World Book Day Thursday 5th March - pupils are invited to dress up. See letter sent 5/2/26.

### WORLD RELIGION DAY



To celebrate World Religion Day, and reinforce our key messages of respect, kindness and tolerance, classes had a special themed afternoon in January. Through a variety of activities, pupils explored some of the key beliefs associated with Judaism, Hinduism or Islam.

### SPORTING NEWS - SPRING TERM A

Congratulations to all of the children who participated so well in the Sportshall Athletic Competition in January. Both teams finished well and we very narrowly missed a podium place! We are very proud of you. A group of children represented Orchard school admirably at the Change4Life festival at Charnwood College, experiencing a range of fun activities demonstrating enthusiasm and teamwork. Well done!

A huge well done to our Cross Country runners who took part in a County qualification event on Tuesday. 14 children qualified for the next round and we had 3 medal winners. Fantastic work all of you!



### SAFER INTERNET DAY

At Orchard, we will be using Safer Internet Day on 10th February to address key online safety concerns and to encourage pupils to discuss and respond to online issues.

Hopefully work in school will spark a conversation at home about the safe and responsible use of technology.

Parents may find the following websites useful:  
[www.saferinternet.org.uk](http://www.saferinternet.org.uk)  
[www.saferinternet.org](http://www.saferinternet.org)  
[www.childnet.com](http://www.childnet.com)  
[www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)

You can also visit our E-Safety webpage: [Orchard Community Primary School - E-Safety](#)

### DIARY DATES

Mon 9th & Thurs 12th February - Parents' Evenings  
Mon 9th—Fri 13th February—Children's Mental Health Week, including Friday 13th—Dress to Express  
Tuesday 10th February - Safer Internet Day  
Monday 16th—Friday 20th February - School Closed  
Friday 6<sup>th</sup> March - Active Sports KS2  
27<sup>th</sup> March – End of Term. Spring Progress Checks.  
Thursday 5th March - World Book Day  
Thurs 12th—Friday 13th March - Beaumanor Residential  
Friday 13th March— Timestableathon  
Friday 13th March - PTA Mothers' Day Tea  
Tuesday 17th March - World Poetry Day/House Rap Battle  
Friday 20th March - Comic Relief  
Friday 20th March - PTA Spring Disco  
Wed 18th to Fri 20th March - Y5 Whitehall Residential  
Friday 27th March - School Closes

### COMIC RELIEF

Red Nose Day takes place on **Friday 20 March**, and this year's theme is 'Take Yourself Funny for Money'. To raise funds for Comic Relief, children are invited to 'Dress Themselves Silly'. They can wear whatever they want, backwards, inside out, clashing colours, odd socks ... anything goes! We would kindly ask that a donation of 50p is brought into school to support this national charity event.

### PTA FILM NIGHT

237 children stayed after school to enjoy Film Night in January. They loved their popcorn treats and time with their friends. Thank you so much to the PTA for organising the event and providing yummy snacks, and to the school staff for supervising the children - film night is always popular!



### EYFS LEARNING ADVENTURE



As part of their '999 Emergency' Learning Adventure, EYFS had a very exciting week with visits from an ICU nurse, a paramedic with her ambulance and 2 police officers with their motorbikes.

An enormous 'Thank You' to the members of our parent body who gave up their time to bring learning to life so memorably for our pupils.



## REMINDERS

**Book Bags** - Please can we remind parents that children in KS1 and Lower Key Stage 2 should only be bringing Book Bags into school, not large rucksacks please. We don't have enough room for large bags in the cloakrooms.

**Dogs** - A polite reminder that for Health and Safety reasons, dogs cannot not be brought onto the school site please.

At home-time, if you are a parent/carer who waits with your dog on Grange Drive, please could I ask you to stand in an area away from the school gates so that pupils who are frightened of dogs don't have to walk directly past them. Thank you so much for your understanding.

## PARKING AROUND THE SCHOOL SITE

As always, please could we request that parents follow the Highway Code and show courtesy when parking outside school. We have again had reports of unsafe parking. The safety of our pupils is paramount. Thank you for your understanding.

## LOCKDOWN DRILL

Next half term, we will need to practice our lock down procedure. This is what we would do in the event of an intruder to the site or if we needed the children to come indoors due to adverse weather or chemicals outside.

We have carefully considered the procedure and how best to explain it to the children. The children will not be alarmed or given reason to worry but will be told what to do if they hear a different 'alarm' to the usual fire alarm. Just as we practice the fire drill but do not expect a real fire, so we need to practice the lockdown procedure. The advice is that the procedures should not be shared on-line for security reasons.

We acknowledge that the likelihood of anything happening at Orchard is very low, but have a duty of care to the children. If you have concerns, please speak to Mrs Shields or Mrs Caldwell.

## SCHOOL OFFICE REQUEST

The school office is always exceptionally busy. We would therefore be exceptionally grateful if parents could assist us by returning paperwork or making bookings by the deadlines requested. It just helps things to run more smoothly our end. Thank you.

## READING, READING, READING!

**As you know, the one thing we would urge you to do with your child at home is to encourage them to read. Admittedly, they might not *want* to read at home, but it is so very important. Please create a time and a place where this can happen at least 4 times a week ...**

Children in EYFS and KS1 have a Home-School Reading Diary which needs to be with them in school on a daily basis please.

As well as taking home a phonetically decodeable reading book, EYFS and KS1 children will now be able to choose a book from their class 'Lending Library'.

Whilst KS2 pupils don't have a reading diary, ALL children should be taking a reading book home with them each night.

## LUNCHBOXES

To provide a safe and healthy environment for all pupils, we would like to remind you that lollipops are not permitted in school lunchboxes, even on special occasions. This decision is made both to support our healthy eating policy, and to ensure the safety of all children, as they can pose a hazard for both choking and injury.

We aim to promote nutritious eating habits and encourage you to provide alternatives for snacks and lunchbox treats. We have seen an increase in sugary brektime snacks in plastic wrappers; resulting in more litter on the playground. We would appreciate children being sent with fruit or vegetables in a named tub for a morning snack, that is separate to their lunch.

## SEND LOCAL OFFER

The Leicestershire Local Offer gives children and young people with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) and their families information about help and services in Leicestershire.

The Local Offer brings together in one place information about health, education and social care for:

- children and young people from birth to 25 years old who have SEND
- parents and carers of children with SEND
- professionals working in health, care and education
- providers of services for children and young people

You can find out more about the Local Offer on the Local Authority website: [What is the Local Offer | Leicestershire County Council](#)