

## NEWSLETTER - MARCH 2026

*Dear Parents and Carers,*

***As we approach the Easter holidays and reflect on what has been a busy school term, we would like to extend our sincere thanks to all parents for their continued support and understanding. We are so proud of our pupils for their hard work, progress and super attitudes, and to our staff, who have worked exceptionally hard to ensure that school continues to be a place that children learn, have fun and flourish.***

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

***Best wishes, Mrs. Caldwell and the Orchard Team***

### NEW WEBSITE!

If you haven't yet explored our fantastic new website, we'd love for you to take a look and share your feedback!

<https://www.orchardprimary.org>

While most sections are up and running, we are still finalising a few areas and looking at ways to make the site even more interactive and accessible for everyone. Watch this space for further improvements!

### RED NOSE DAY

Thank you to everyone for supporting our 'Dress yourself silly' Red Nose Day! We raised £152.55 for this important charity. We had some fantastically silly outfits—mismatched, backwards... what a great effort!



### WORLD BOOK DAY

The Orchard Book Swap was a great success!

So many of our children brought in a book to exchange for a new one, thank you everyone!

It was lovely to hear children recommending books to each other and even rediscovering books they had when they were younger.



### BEAUMANOR HALL RESIDENTIAL

The sun shone (and the wind blew a bit!) for Year 3 as they went on their first school residential to Beau-



manor Hall. We are so proud of them all. They tried lots of new things, worked as a team and supported and encouraged each other throughout the two days.



During the trip they went canoeing and took on the climbing wall, learning new skills and making memories with their friends!

### WHITEHALL RESIDENTIAL

We could not have asked for better weather for our Year 5 White Hall residential. The children spent three days in Buxton and had the most amazing time. Completing activities such as Rock Climbing, Zip Lining, Stream Scrambling and Rock Scrambling.

They challenged themselves to try new things and used their resilience, perseverance and teamwork skills throughout the week. We loved seeing their confidence grow with every challenge they took on. They got muddy, they got wet, they even stood under a waterfall! We are sure the memories will last a lifetime!



*Thank you to all of the Orchard staff who gave their own time to enable the children these opportunities*

## FIRE DRILL

We are very proud of all of the children for how calm and sensible they were during our recent fire drill.

## LOCKDOWN PRACTICE

The children were also brilliant 'silent ninjas' during the practice of our lockdown procedures. They all knew exactly what to do and we were so impressed by how mature they were about it.

These vital practices ensure that we all feel calm and confident should an emergency arise.

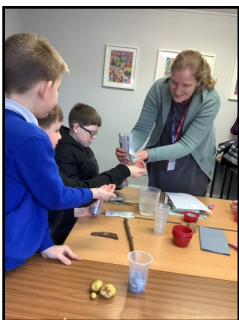
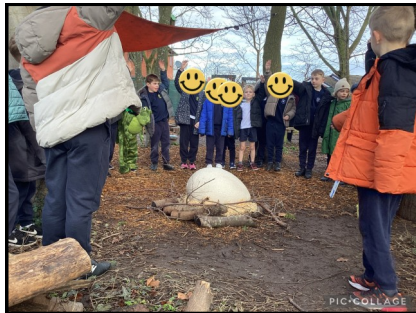
## SPORTING NEWS

It's been another busy half term of sporting success. Pupils from KS2 have been involved in a football festival, Quicksticks hockey, cross country and Orienteering events. We've had success across the board and pupils have really impressed us with their sportsmanship, effort and determination.



## INSPIRATION DAYS

KS1's dinosaur adventure began with great excitement after children discovered a mysterious dinosaur egg hidden in the wildlife area. We used the clues left behind to help us figure out which dinosaur might be inside the egg. We even had to dissect dinosaur poo to help with our investigation!



## YEAR 5 GARDENING CLUB

The Year 5 Gardening Club spent a fantastic afternoon with Katie Worth from the Soil Association. They gave her a tour of the school grounds and made a plan for future planting. She showed them how you can use seed packets to plan your gardening calendar and started them off with potatoes, peas and sweetcorn.

## PTA MOTHERS DAY TEA

The PTA hosted a lovely afternoon tea in the hall. Thank you to everyone who attended, we hope you enjoyed your cake and mothers' day gift. Thank you as well to those who baked, set up and washed up at the end!

## DIARY DATES:

Friday 27th March - School closes

Monday 13th April: School opens

Tuesday 14th April—Year 4 Swimming Starts

Friday 17th April : House Rap Battle (rearranged)

Monday 4th May: Bank Holiday

Thursday 7th May: Class Photos

WB 11th May: KS2 SATS Week

Friday 15th May: PTA Rainbow Bounce

Thursday 21st May: Sports Day

- KS2 AM

- EYFS + KS1 PM

Friday 22nd May: School closes

Monday 1st June: School opens

Tuesday 9th June: EYFS Trip to Bluebells Farm

Friday 12th June: Colour Run

17, 18 & 24th June: Stay + Play

Friday 19th June: PTA Fathers' Day Breakfast

Thursday 18th June: Annual Reports sent out

Tuesday 23rd June—Year 3 Trip to Matlock

Wednesday 24th June—Year 4 to Matlock

Thursday 25th June: Whole school transition morning

Friday 26th June: PTA Summer Fair 3.15-4pm

Friday 3rd July: PTA Summer Disco

Monday 6th July: Y6 Leavers' Assembly

Tuesday 7th July: SATS results; school closes

## FOREST SCHOOL

We have now completed two terms of Forest School, Mrs Shearsby, Miss Kucharska and Mrs Astle have completed all of their training (a huge thank you to them, the training has been a massive commitment) and the children are enjoying the most fantastic sessions in our beautiful school grounds.

We have learnt new things, explored the wildlife, built dens and swings and climbed trees.

We've perfected our rope tying skills, planted seeds and foraged in the woodland.

Thank you as well to the parents who spent time doing jobs in our Forest School area. It made such a difference and means the area is ready for more fun and learning!



## PTA DISCO

Thank you to everyone who attended the Discos and to all of the helpers for their time! We had a great night and saw some fantastic face paints and hair colours! Thank you to our wonderful PTA for organising this, the children really enjoy it.

## REMINDERS

**Supervision after school** - a polite reminder that once pupils have been dismissed by school staff at the end of the school day, their health and safety, and behaviour, are the responsibility of parents and carers. Please be mindful that children should not be climbing on fences or playing around the gates or near the road. Likewise, the KS1 trim trail should not be used by children before or after school please, for health and safety reasons.

**Dogs** - For health and safety reasons, dogs cannot be brought onto the school site please. Thank you.

*At home-time, if you are a parent/carer who waits with your dog on Grange Drive, please could we 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 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 and a very near miss with a child. The safety of pupils is paramount. Thank you for your understanding.

## SCHOOL OFFICE REQUEST

The school office is always exceptionally busy. We would therefore be 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.

## SCIENCE WEEK

To mark science week, all children took part in a special science activity, based around a question that was linked to their learning adventure. We saw pupils in KS1 exploring how dinosaurs built their nests—building their own pterodactyl nests outside!

## SCIENCE COMPETITION—with the Elms/ Trent College

We are excited to launch our 2026 STEAM Competition! All children from Reception to Year 6 are invited to design and build their own roller coaster at home.

Children should use their imagination and can include elements of Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Maths in their creation.

Projects can be made from any materials (max size 40cm<sup>3</sup>)

Deadline: Monday 4th May

Prizes will be awarded for each year group, with winners going through to a grand final at Trent College

We hope you enjoy getting creative together at home!  
*Orchard Entries to Miss Hudspith please!*

## 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.**

All children have a Home-School Reading Diary which needs to be with them in school on a daily basis please. It really helps if you can record when you have read with them at home, or the older children can record their home reading themselves.

As well as taking home a phonetically decodeable reading book, EYFS and KS1 children are also able to choose a book from their class 'Lending Library'. Perfect for bedtime stories!

## 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 breaktime 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](#)