



ORCHARD PRIMARY SCHOOL

NEWSLETTER - OCTOBER 2026

It has been a positive start to the new academic year at Orchard. We are delighted to see so many children coming into school each day ready to learn, showing courtesy, good manners and respect towards one another and the adults who support them. Our 'Respect' rule continues to be at the heart of our school culture, and it is lovely to see children demonstrating this in their words, actions and attitudes. As always, there is still room for improvement for some children, and we will continue to work consistently with pupils to help them understand our expectations and make positive choices. We have high expectations because we know that our children are capable of achieving them.

A huge thank you goes to our exceptionally hard-working staff team. Every day, they are going above and beyond to provide our children with high-quality learning, exciting opportunities and the care and support they need to thrive. Their commitment, energy and dedication are very much appreciated.

Finally, thank you to our parents and families for your continued support. Your partnership makes a real difference.

Warmest regards - Fiona Shields & the Orchard Team

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!

PTA FILM NIGHT

A huge thank you to our fantastic PTA for their Film Night contributions as well as all the time, energy and enthusiasm they give to support our children and our school. From organising fun events and activities to raising valuable funds that directly benefit our pupils, their contribution makes a real difference to life at Orchard. If you haven't been involved before, please consider joining in — whether you can spare a little time, help at an event or simply come along and support one of our activities, every bit of support makes a difference!

PHONICS SESSION FOR PARENTS/CARERS

Mrs McGravie will be running two phonics and early reading sessions for EYFS and Y1 parents on **Wednesday 7th October at 4.30pm & Thursday 8th October at 9.00am**. Parents of children in Year 1 and Year 2 are also welcome to attend if they would find it useful. Please contact the office if you would like to attend a session, indicating which time slot you would prefer.

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.



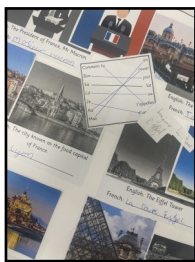
KEY STAGE 2 - SPARE OUTDOOR SHOES REQUEST

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.

EUROPEAN DAY OF LANGUAGES

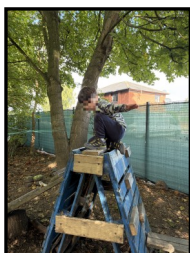
We celebrated European Day of Languages with a special KS2 French Theme Day on 24th September. C'était une journée fantastique!



FOREST SCHOOL

Our Forest School is a special part of life at Orchard, giving pupils the chance to learn, explore, create and challenge themselves in the great outdoors.

From building dens and developing practical skills to exploring nature, getting muddy, working as a team and learning how to manage risk, Forest School provides experiences that simply cannot be replicated in the classroom. It encourages children to become more independent, resilient, curious and confident, while developing a genuine appreciation for the natural world.



Forest School also provides wonderful opportunities for children to develop our Orchard Character Values, particularly Teamwork, Respect, Independence and Perseverance. Children learn to solve problems together, overcome challenges, take responsibility for themselves and others, and celebrate their achievements.

We are fortunate to have such a fantastic outdoor learning environment and a dedicated team who make these experiences possible. We are excited to continue developing and expanding the opportunities available to our children throughout the year.

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. We raised more than £475 for the charity. The competition was strong but well done to Redgate House who were named overall winners! Most importantly, we raised vital funds for Macmillan Cancer Support so thanks all.

PUPIL LEADERSHIP COUNCILS

Recent elections have resulted in Harriet being voted President of the School Council, and Reggie 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 – April and Freddie H

Wheatcroft – Chester and Harriet

McCleans – Reuben and Ada

Coppice – Fred and Georgie

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 12th October. Pupils can purchase books after school; books will also be available in the hall 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 third in the tournament.

Our Y5/6 girls' team won a fantastic silver medal a week later! The girls showed fantastic teamwork, determination, skill and sportsmanship throughout the competition.

We are incredibly proud of both teams — what a fantastic achievement for Orchard!

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

TIMES TABLE ROCKSTARS

We are having a massive push on all pupils learning multiplication facts this year. Children have Times Table Rock Stars (TTRS) login details and should be using this programme **regularly** at home please to support their maths learning. On Friday 6th November, we will be having our annual House Timestableathon—more info to follow. However, we'd really, really, *really* (!) love your support in helping your child to improve their rapid recall of multiplication facts this year.

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 £1 donation (bucket collection at drop-off), on **Friday 30th 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 13th 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 already this term 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 start at 50p. You will be able to purchase items from the school office at the beginning and end of the day and payment can be made by cash. 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 Wednesday 11th November.

ANTI-BULLYING WEEK 2026

Anti-Bullying Week 2026 will run from Monday November 9th to Friday November 13th. The official theme for the week is "Break the Silence", and it is coordinated by the Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA). The theme aims to encourage young people to start conversations, speak up, listen, and take action together against bullying.

To join in with the ABA campaign, pupils are asked to wear their 'Odd Socks' on Monday 9th November in order to express themselves and celebrate their individuality!

REMINDER: PARENTS' EVENINGS - Monday 12th & Thursday 15th 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 ...

SCHOOL DINNERS: Could we politely remind parents that meals **must** be booked on Relish at least 24 hours before the meal is taken. Payments are due before the meal is taken, please ensure that you are regularly checking balances and topping up on School Money/Eduspot.

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.

REMINDER: GETTING IN TOUCH ...

If your child is absent from school due to illness or has a medical appointment, please contact the school office directly by phone or email to let us know. If your child is unwell, please provide details of their symptoms or what is wrong, as this helps us monitor illnesses within school and support your child appropriately. You can also leave a message on our answerphone if you are unable to speak to a member of the office team.

For queries or appointments with staff: We are *always* happy for you to share vital educational or pastoral related matters with us. For any questions specifically relating to your child's class, or any concerns that you wish to raise, we would ask that you **email the school office** who will forward your email correspondence to the relevant staff. My work email is available for use where you feel that a concern needs to be escalated.

If you would like to discuss a confidential matter with your child's class teacher or another member of staff, please make an appointment through the school office, to either meet with them or to receive a telephone call after 3.15pm.

To pass on quick messages or queries, you are welcome to phone the office, speak with the TA/teacher directly at drop off/home-time, or speak to myself, Mrs Caldwell or Miss Farrar.

For urgent or serious issues: Please phone the school office to ensure a timely response.

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.)

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

Tuesday 6th October - Y3 trip to the National Stone Centre

Wednesday 7th October - Y4 trip to the National Stone Centre

Thurs 8th October - Phonics: Parent Workshops

Parents' Evenings - Mon 12th October (3.30-6.30) & Thurs 15th October (4.00-6.00)

WB 12th October - Book Fair

School closes Friday 16th October

Mon 26th October - School opens

Tuesday 27th October - EYFS visitors: Bird on the Hand

Prospective Parents Open Day - Tuesday 27th; Wednesday 28th & Thurs 29th October all at 9.30am

Friday 30th October - Halloween Dressing Up day

Tues 3rd November - prospective EYFS Stay & Play 3.30-4.15pm

Wed 4th November - KS2 Maths Workshop for Parents

Wed 11th November - Remembrance 'Discovery' afternoon

Anti-Bullying Week and Odd Socks Day - Monday, Nov 9th to Friday, November 13th. (Odd Socks - 9th)

Friday 13th November - Children in Need

Wed 2nd December - Y2 Scootability & Y6 Gearing You UP workshops

Thurs 3rd December - Year 2 Tamworth Castle Visit

Thurs 3rd December - PTA Festive Film Night

Friday 4th December - Year 1 Tamworth Castle Visit

Mon 7th December - Santa Dash

Tues 8th December - KS1 Carol Concert

Wed 9th December - EYFS Nativity

Thurs 10th December - LKS2 Carol Concert

Thurs 10th December - UKS2 Christmas Enterprise Scheme

Friday 11th December - Panto & Ice Cream Sale

Mon 14th December Choir: Carols in the Community 5-6.30pm

Tues 15th December - Christmas Jumper Day (Christmas Dinner)

Christmas Parties (afternoons bar EYFS): Mon 14th KS1 Wed 16th LKS2 Thurs 17th UKS2 Fri 18th a.m. EYFS