

Orchard Manor School Newsletter

December 2020



Dear Parents and Carers

Wow what a term! Despite the ongoing pandemic we are delighted to be able to share with you our final newsletter of 2020, packed full of the fantastic things our young people have been doing.

In September, we were extremely grateful and excited to welcome back all of our young people to school full time. The majority of pupils re-integrated back into school really well and have really enjoyed being back in school following, for some, a long time not coming to school due to the first lockdown.

This term has been full of activities including lots of sport and Life Skills. Classes also engaged with activities for World Mental Day where we raised funds for Young Minds, and Remembrance Day. This term we have had our first ever virtual parents evening which proved a huge success and we received some lovely feedback from parents - thank you!

Following a vigorous application and selection process, nine new prefects from Year 11 have been appointed

and we are looking forward to seeing them supporting around the school next term. Congratulations to you all!

As Christmas gets closer, classes have been decorated and the Christmas decoration competition has been very competitive. Unfortunately there was no pantomime trip this year, however classes have been able to watch a virtual show - 'oh yes they did!', which was enjoyed by all. We have also had Christmas jumper days on both the Upper and Lower site with the traditional Christmas lunch. It has certainly been a festive couple of weeks!

Finally, I would like to say a huge thank you to all of our pupils and families for your support this term, especially as things have been a bit different. Your continued support is really valued and we can't wait to welcome everyone back in 2021!

Stay safe, have a wonderful Christmas and best wishes for the New Year!

Mark Rose — Executive Principal

Contact during the Christmas holidays:

As a school, we may be required to conduct contact tracing during the first week of the Christmas Holidays. Due to this, we have set up an email address for a direct point of contact from **Friday 18 December to Thursday 24 December 2020** which will be checked daily. This email address will only be active during this period.

If your child tests positive for Covid-19 during this period, please email

christmas@orchardmanor.devon.sch.uk immediately.

If your child tests positive for Covid-19 at any other time please email admin@orchardmanor.devon.sch.uk

It is important that you do this as soon as you can.

Thank you for your support with this matter.

New School Prefects

This term we asked our Year 11 students if they wanted to apply to become our new Orchard Manor School Prefects. The applicants were to complete a formal application form, get two references from staff and attend an interview.



We were extremely impressed with everyone's application and interviews, so much so, that everyone who applied was successful and they have already received their prefect badges. They are all looking forward to commencing their role next term as our new Orchard Manor Prefects.

Well done to Ash, Ashton, Cody, Jack, Jak, Morgan, Maggie, Malin and Tierney.

**The Year 9 and 10
Immunisation Clinic will be
held at school on the
27th January 2021**



The Vaccination is for Diphtheria, Tetanus and Polio (DTP) and Meningitis ACWY (MenACWY). To consent (or decline) for your child to have this vaccination,

please follow the link below.
[https://
schoolimms.virginicare.co.uk/
dtp/2019/devon](https://schoolimms.virginicare.co.uk/dtp/2019/devon) If you are not
sure if you consented last year for

Year 10 pupils, please consent using the same link.

Thank you **Helen Stone— School Medical Officer**

Remote Parents Evening

We held our first ever remote parents evening and although very different from previous parents' evenings, once again the feedback from parents was overwhelmingly positive. Below are a few of the comments from parents that staff have shared.

I hope you find them uplifting! Working at OMS is at times challenging, but when we read comments from parents like these, it makes us reflect on the positive impact that all our staff all have on our pupils and their families. Thank you to all the staff for their ongoing hard work, I hope you enjoy reading the comments below.

Abigail Norris - PA to the Executive Principal

It was lovely hearing parents saying what their children tell them at home, especially when it's how much they've changed and how positive and excited they feel about going to school.

One set of parents said that they knew that this school was worth fighting for. The pupil was a tribunal case for them to come to here after being out of education for at least 2 years. The pupil has settled well in the school, made friends and is really happy to come to school. Parents said that he is like a different child and granny was moved to tears.

One parent/carer said they were really pleased with how well the pupil is doing in one subject, completing extensions regularly and making great progress.

All of the parents were really happy with the progress their children are making and how happy they are in school.

We had so many really positive conversations with lots of parents and carers during the parents evening.

A parent said "My child gets more out of 1 week at Orchard Manor School than she ever would have done in 52 weeks of her old mainstream school."

One parent was really pleased with the positive feedback from so many teachers. Their child has settled in really well over the last year or so, building positive relationships with staff and pupils.

Outdoor learning was mentioned on several occasions as adding real value to the opportunities their child has at school and giving them a wide experience.

The parents I spoke to were appreciative of how difficult the current COVID situation is and how hard this must make it in school and of the work done by teachers.

New Staff

We would like to say a big hello to our new staff who have started this half term, and to those who will be joining us in the New Year: We welcome Alan Burke, Freya Lamoon, Louise Pym and Charlotte Cook who are all Upper Site TAs and Sophie Bridger who has joined as a TA on the Lower Site.

WELCOME TO THE TEAM!



Sadly we say farewell to Sam Tyler and Sophie Harvey

who are off on new adventures. We thank them for their hard work and wish them well.

In January we will be welcoming new TAs Jamie Bristow and Sophie Whittaker on the Upper Site and Tracy Cross who is joining our fantastic Cleaning Team. Finally, Lisa Paget is our new EHCP Manager. Welcome to the OMS family, we are all looking forward to working with you!

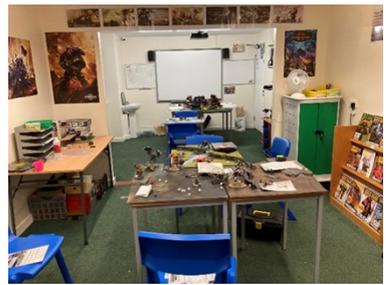
Ali King — Human Resources



Our Two Year Anniversary!

This half term sees Orchard Manor celebrate the two year anniversary of the Warhammer Club! And to celebrate this we have relocated to the more glamorous and

spacious Penthouse suite in Merton. This provides improved facilities as well as views over the MUGA and onto the school field.



Thanks to the new accommodation, we have seen our membership rise and every lunchtime the room is packed with pupils either building models using snips and plastic glue, painting them with the finest of brushes and pigments or playing games in order to dominate the Galaxy!

The game of Warhammer is a well established game, starting in the 1980's and it now has its own chain of shops (called WARHAMMER), our local shop being situated in Exeter. We have in the past spent many afternoons there on a reward trip and the friendly staff there are amazing!

If anyone is unsure of what Warhammer is, or would like to find out more, please pop into the Warhammer room that is located on the top floor of Merton during lunchtime, or feel free to come and find me, Mike Muir, in the science lab who runs the club.

Mike Muir — Science Teacher



Red Class and Alice in Wonderland

The theme for Red Class this term was Alice in Wonderland, which culminated in a fantastic tea party in the last week of term. They made their own hats with cardboard and decorated them beautifully, and each had a playing card tucked into the headband. The tables were decorated with fantastic columns of teacups, spotted mushrooms and talking flowers.

The Mad Hatter would have loved it! **Alex Swan — Red Class**





First of all, I would like to thank everyone very much for their amazing support in fundraising for the Forest School.

After sharing the GoFundMe link on the last newsletter I was overwhelmed when the donations started to pour in at the rate that they did. Since then it has been shared everywhere, including being on Heart Radio News and BBC Spotlight. As well as receiving lots of messages from family and friends of the students affected, the donated amount has reached an incredible £3,595 - An astonishing amount!

We have had lots of ideas from the students and staff alike of how and what to rebuild, from wood cabins to tree houses. The enthusiasm has been brilliant.



The site is starting to look like Forest School again. We have replaced the canopy, with the help from students to put it up. We were also, very kindly, donated a shed from Sheds Direct Devon. This was put up and painted

with the help from our Post-16 staff and students, a big thankyou to them.

The replacement tools have been coming in and the students are now able to get back to learning how to use them and doing Forest School activities.

We have also spoken to a couple of contractors about developing some of the ideas that the students have had and are now preparing a proposal for some structures to be introduced to the forest that I'm sure the students are going to love. Watch this space!

This term, alongside the usual fun and games we have, we have been getting very festive and creative. The students have been making some stars out of twigs and some mini



wreath decorations.



We have also been making our trees come to life with faces using halved golf balls that the students painted. Finally, Teal Class and I have been experimenting with baking bread on an open fire with sticks. We are looking forward to doing lots more activities with the rest of school in the new year.



It has been a very strange term for all of us in Forest School starting with the devastation from the fire to slowly watching Forest School come back to life. The resilience and patience of the students has been inspirational and their compassion and comradery heart-warming.

The community spirit shown, not just by the students but by all those who have supported us, is exceptional, and at a very difficult time for us all which makes it even more so. I'd like to thank you all once again and I am very excited about what the future holds for our Forest School site, hopefully more details will be available in next term's newsletter.

Thanks again, **Chris Leeds—Forest School**



Safeguarding Tips and Hints for the Festive Period!



Whether trying out new games, sharing family pics or live streaming lunch, this December we will probably be spending more time online playing and socialising. Here's a guide from Thinkyouknow.co.uk to how

you can support your child to be safer online this season. Just click on their logo here →





Plum Class

What a rollercoaster this half term has been for the amazing pupils of Plum Class. Having completed two weeks of home learning in the middle of the half term, the staff team are incredibly proud of how well the pupils have done at home and the engagement with the online lessons. Having returned to school, the class have settled back into routines really well.

This half term we have had a lovely time exploring our 'Paranormal Topic'. We have read and explored the language structures used within Bram Stoker's Dracula before writing our own Spooky Vampire stories. In our Forest School and Horticulture we have helped to dig out a new pond, look after animals and make some amazing Christmas wreaths.

Peter Smith—Plum Class

Inter Class Board Games!

As part of our end of term celebrations, 10 NJa and 9 JWo joined forces to play an intense game of Monopoly joined by Catherine and encouraged team working skills and sportsmanship.



A tense game of Uno Flip was also going on simultaneously as Kelly Winsor attempted to educate us on the more extreme and unpredictable version of this popular game. It was great to see different year groups working so positively together. **Nina Jarram —Yr 10**

Foodbank Donations from OMS



As part of their ASDAN Personal Development Project, 10NJa led by their tutor Nina Jarram and Teaching Assistants Kelly Winsor and Jess Greenwood, visited a local food bank in Kingsteignton with donations collected from the Upper Site.

The food was collected during Christmas Jumper day organised by 10NJa. Pupils were encouraged to come to school festively dressed and contribute non perishable goods. These were then delivered to HITS foodbank which is a local food bank charity supporting local families in our area and helping them to enjoy Christmas in these difficult times.

We would like to thank all of you in our school community who supported this worthy cause and would like to take this opportunity to wish you and your families a safe, healthy and Happy Christmas .

Best Wishes 10NJa



Santa's Visit

Santa had a very good trip to Lower School to give out chocolates to the students with the help of his special Christmas Elf "Grumpets".





Hi this is 7EMC And our classroom Christmas cabaret!

The children were very enthusiastic about decorating and have their fingers crossed to win the best dressed Christmas classroom award!



We have also been studying A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens in class and even dedicated a display about his works and his life.



Merry Christmas from Mr Tyler and Class!



Food Technology

This term has been packed with tasty and healthy dishes.



Year 7 students started with comparing homemade scones and shop bought scones. We didn't have much debate



about whether the cream or jam went first as there is only one correct way to do it !!!!



The class then made potato wedges and breaded chicken or Quorn. They made some great choices of spices and



seasonings and cooked it in the oven to make a meal that was much lower in fat as it was homemade.



Great fun was had making Christmas cakes and then decorating them. The results were stunning and I am sure they will be enjoyed over the Christmas break.



8CG1 completed a small project on pizzas, they looked at



the packaging to find the nutritional content and also to follow cooking instructions. The class also made their own pizzas, first with a scone base and later on with a bread



dough base. The class also made

some beautiful bread rolls and some Christmas decorated chocolate cakes.



9JWO have made Toad in the Hole, fajitas, macaroni cheese and homemade turkey burgers.



The year 10 students are working towards the BTEC Level 1 in Home cooking skills and have a very busy half term making so many dishes and working on the theory of healthy eating and Food Safety



and Hygiene. This is just a selection of the dishes that they have made. Sausage rolls, pasta bake, curry and homemade flatbreads, egg fried rice, stir fry noodles with chicken and cashew nuts, sausages and mashed potatoes, coleslaw, to name a few.



Year 11 students have been working hard on planning for their BTEC level 2 Assessment and have made a variety of dishes to practice for this, including stir fry vegetables and rice with seared steak, Mexican stuffed cabbage leaves with a peanut sauce, chicken pasta, and halloumi burgers

Amanda Metcalfe—Home Economics

PE Newsletter Update

Despite the limitations that COVID has given to the sporting world in general, Dan and I have continued to try to develop PE and School Sport at Orchard Manor.

Curriculum: This half term there were some changes to the curriculum, and some classes started to use Handball as the focus game for the Invasion Games work. This was a new game to many and has been popular. It is a mixture of basketball and netball but played with a smaller ball, that is easier to catch and throw. In addition to this we have been lucky to have a coach from Devon Cricket working with several of the classes. Initially the pupils learnt the skills and rules of Table Cricket and then moved this onto developing "full size" cricket skills and enjoying many an adapted game.



Sports Leaders: Two of the Sports Leaders have continued to deliver sessions to the Upper Site Year 6 and 7 pupils. They plan the session and then deliver it each week. This half term they were rewarded by also delivering in front of Mr Rose, who presented them with their highly sought after Sports Leader Sweatshirts.



This Girl Can: Despite COVID interruptions (!), two This Girl Can groups have started during lunchtimes on the Lower Site. One group have had the opportunity to access the Cricket Coach for their session and the older group have had great fun playing Benchball type games. Yoga is requested to start the new year!

Upper Site Boccia Competitions: Last week all of the tutor groups took part in a Boccia competition. After many exciting games and a three-way final, the eventual winners were 11 ACA. There were some fantastic examples of the "power of sport" with for example; Year 11's coaching their younger opponents and advising them what shots to make.

There is going to be a different termly competition for tutor groups and part of this was also to present a trophy to the pupil who had performed excellently throughout which went to a girl in Year 10.



There was also a Respect trophy awarded to the pupil who demonstrated the best sporting attitude, which went to one of the Year 7 Boys which was fantastic.



Not to miss out, there was a staff Boccia Competition for the Upper Site, and despite



names being pulled randomly from a bucket Dan and I managed to be in the same team and "stormed" to victory with Nicola Jones joining in the last half and taking the glory too! Get ready Lower Site staff! You will have a chance to compete after Christmas.

Youth Sports Trust Lead Inclusion School: We are delighted to be awarded the Lead Inclusion School for PE in Devon. This means that we will be working with many schools and other staff from across Devon to be visionaries for what high quality, meaningful and inclusive PE and School Sport should look like for every child.

The work is around empowering teachers to be more inclusive in their practice, provide meaningful competition and pathways for young people and raise aspirations and provide inclusive leadership opportunities for young people.

Holiday Fun: Active Devon are running a Festive Family Activity Challenge which runs for the next 3 weeks, but you can join in at any time and set your own goals as a family. It would be great if any families would like to take part. There is a link to give you more details. Please have a look and let Dan or me know how you get on. It is free!



www.activedevon.org/festive-family-activity-challenge/

Look after yourselves at Christmas and don't eat too many mince pies!

Catherine and Dan—PE

Artwork for the Walls

The very talented 7EMC have been upgrading our room by designing unique displays for our classroom to cover up the walls below the windows. The artwork looks fantastic and the children are very proud of the results. Lots of other staff and students have complimented them on their designs.

Sam Tyler—Teacher



Online Panto!

As you know, we usually run a whole school trip to the theatre to see the Christmas Panto, but with “you know what” still around, we had this instead.



Jack and the Beanstalk was sent to us to watch (as many times as we wanted) by the Panto Online Team via a link straight to our classrooms.

The whole production lasted about 1 hour 20 mins and included the brilliant panto, plus four extra programmes. The teachers timetabled it into their lessons within their bubbles during the last week of term. Everyone really enjoyed it—including the treats, it was nearly as good as going to the real theatre.

It was filmed outside (in the garden of ex-Blue Peter Presenter Peter Duncan—for those of you who can remember that far back!) and was full of songs, dance and puns!! (not as good as mine though!) and it was really fun. The students loved it.

We even sent out the link to pupils who were home self isolating—so no one missed out. It was a lovely way to spend an afternoon.

Right then... that's it from me - **Oh no its not!!!**

... What do you call a three legged Reindeer? ... Eileen!!!

Bryan Webster
— Assistant Principal



Guess the Christmas Song!

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10
- 11
- 12
- 13
- 14
- 15
- 16
- 17
- 18
- 19
- 20

Answers: 1. We wish you a merry Christmas, 2. Jingle bells, 3. Away in a manger, 4. Rudolf the red nosed Reindeer, 5. O little town of Bethlehem, 6. O Holy night, 7. I wish it could be Christmas everyday, 8. All I want for Christmas is you, 9. Last Christmas, 10. Little Donkey, 11. Rocking around the Christmas tree, 12. Fairytale of New York, 13. White Christmas, 14. Little Drummer Boy, 15. Step into Christmas, 16. Walking in the air, 17. Jingle Bell Rock, 18. Let it snow, let it snow, let it snow, 19. Silent Night, 20. Joy to the World.

Thanks Josie Parkin — Speech and Language Therapist

Peach Class Updates



This half term in Peach Class we have been looking at different celebrations. We have enjoyed sensory stories, story massage and



attention autism themed around all the celebrations.

The celebration we learned about first was Guy Fawkes and bonfire night, followed by Diwali the Festival of Light. We created lots of lovely art work around fireworks and we enjoyed making and eating firework



cookies too. To acknowledge Remembrance Day, the pupils each made a poppy



wreath. We had a special Remembrance Day Attention Autism session before we laid our wreaths on the cenotaph in Dawlish.

For Hannukah, we read the story of the Macabees, lit candles on a menorah and made beautiful Star of David sun-catchers.



Pupils and staff were very excited when we began our Christmas celebrations, a very sensory season. We

enjoyed decorating our classroom to make it look festive. The pupils have been counting down the days with their Santa Advent Calendars, growing Santa's beard each day.



Nic Donald - Peach Class Teacher

Gold Class News



In Humanities we have been studying Asia. We have also been researching on the internet to find out some key facts about the many

countries that make up this vast continent, from the Arabian Gulf to Japan and China. As part of our studies we learned about some important Chinese traditions and made our own dragons and fortune cookies.

In art we have been painting in the style of the Russian artist Kandinsky who was interested in how colour can affect our mood. Kandinsky, who was painting at the end of the nineteenth century, was one of the first abstract painters. We have also been looking at another abstract artist called Jackson Pollock. Jackson Pollock was an American artist painting in the 20th Century who experimented with the different ways you can apply paint, not only by using a paintbrush but



also by dripping, splashing and pouring paint onto a surface. We used some of these painting techniques to make our own firework art.

On 11th November, we remembered those who lost their lives in war. We read the poem *In Flanders Fields* by John McCrae and thought about those soldiers who died on the battlefield. Then we made drawings and paintings, and wrote messages to show that we are grateful to those



people who died so that we can be free to live in peace.



As the season of advent is here, we are getting ready for Christmas. Part

of our preparations have been making sweet treats and cards for our families and we have decorated our class with a Christmas tree and a nativity crib.



HAPPY CHRISTMAS TO EVERYONE FROM GOLD CLASS!

Christina Beards— TA Gold Glass

Our Fence Christmas Tree!



Lower School students have each designed and decorated their own Christmas bauble to put on the fence in the shape of a Christmas tree. It is about 2m tall and looks amazing. All the baubles flutter in the wind which makes it come alive like the leaves on a tree.

Well done everyone! It looks really Christmassy!

Becky Higson—Teal Class

Functional Skills Maths Passes

We are so pleased to announce that several Year 11 pupils did brilliantly in passing Functional Skills Maths Level 1 and Level 2 exams this term. Well done to everyone!

Justin Luscombe — Head of Maths

EXAMS—Key Dates

GCSE Mocks Week 12 – 14 January 2021
English Functional Skills - Entry Level Assessments
February 2021

Maths Functional Skills – March 2021
Summer Exam Season 26 May – 2 July 2021
Results Day 27 August 2021

Jo Potts – Exams Co-ordinator

Teal Class Updates

I have enjoyed doing the bread and eating it and the rest tasted so good and not bad. The chocolate white bread was great! **Luke**

I loved making my flat bread. I loved cooking on the fire. I was annoyed when Becky put it in the wrong tray the first time, but the second time it turned out great. I liked tasting the breads best.

Ben

I have enjoyed reading books on the Oxford Reading Buddy and earning pennies. I have read 29 books so far.

Oliver



This half term we are in cooking lessons. We made bread. We had to look up on the computer for instructions and then write them down. Next we baked the bread. My favourite part about this was I got to make my bread into a turtle shape! I also got to try everyone else's bread. Eli's bread was my favourite. **Tyler**

I have worked hard at maths this term.

Harry

I enjoyed solving Crime Scene Day and found out who did it. It was Rob! We had to look at fingerprints and matched them to people. Rob confessed in the video to eating the chocolate bar. **Sam**



Lime Class!

Lime class have been busy with a range of Christmas craft activities, including making salt dough snowmen, Christmas tree decorations and Reindeer food (we used only edible ingredients to ensure the health and safety of Rudolph and friends!). Here are some photos of us at work. After all our hard work we had some well-earned milk and cookies!

**Jill Clements
Lime Class**





Gladstone have really enjoyed getting festive this half term, starting off with a trip to see the Powderham lightshow. We have been making paper chains and other decorations for the house and to really get into the spirit of things, we have been watching lots of Christmas films with home made popcorn.

We have also been smoothy making, home made baking and cooking, going on the bikes and going for walks. It has been really busy here! We have even set up our own hot chocolate area for an extra special Christmas warming treat.

Now that we are finally out of lockdown and into Tier 2, we managed to get out on a trip into Pizza Hut which we all enjoyed. We celebrated even more with the Gladstone Christmas Party, the Christmas jokes were classic, and the food was fantastic! Roll on Santa's visit! The new term brings us a fresh new look for our lounge in the new year, and we have been stripping wallpaper in preparation. We are wishing everyone a happy Christmas and a healthy happy new year. **Gladstone House**



Spartan have been testing out their hosting skills this half term, with the guys getting involved with cooking up delicious buffet style meals and inviting others within our bubble to join the feast. So far this has included authentic Indian and Chinese dishes, and the epic Spartan Christmas dinner.



We'll be looking to extend invites across the school in the new year when we're able to do so.

Spartan have started up the MandM Takeaway Coffee Service on a Tuesday after school. The guys have learnt the skills required to prepare delicious Barista style coffee using the professional machine installed in Bramley House, giving staff the opportunity to purchase a range of hot beverages and the money being put towards in-house activities.

In the new year we hope to include baked sweet treats (Spartan have an award winning cookie recipe...) and savoury snacks, combining the skills learnt in the kitchen and cafe to continue the development of this exciting enterprise"

Jubilee has enjoyed making the house look all Christmassy and having a birthday party for Scarlett with a rainbow birthday cake.

We went to the light show at Powderham Castle and we have had a very nice early Christmas dinner and all the time the Christmas Elf has been keeping us on our toes with his antics in the house.



Have a lovely Christmas and we look forward to seeing you all in the New Year.

Gala has celebrated 2 birthdays with cake and presents, we went out for a meal which was great especially as we have been locked down and couldn't go out for ages and we have been to have a look at the WaveWalker at the beach. In the evenings we have been playing hide and seek in the dark teamed up with Spartan House which is really good fun.



Our Christmas Buffet was fantastic. Mandy and Cathy made a fantastic spread. We had lots of fun and opened our Christmas presents. Have a good holiday and we will see you next year!





Four Seasons with

RURAL SKILLS



Spring

Spring is much welcomed after the cold winter and we impatiently wait for the daffodil bulbs to blossom and brighten up our flower beds.

Toads rest in the damp corners of the polytunnel and frogspawn fills the pond, later growing into tadpoles then into frogs — Mother Nature's own control for slugs, snails and flies. Early sprouting rhubarb, broccoli and ruby chard are ready to eat and we have an abundance of herbs. Last year's cuttings and seedlings thrive, giving us new plants for our garden areas throughout the grounds, and delicate blossom adorns the trees. It's a lovely time of year, with everything bursting into life and colour.



It's getting colder and coats and gloves are worn when we are out. We all cross our fingers for snow!



Our 150 gifted hedging trees are now healthy saplings— rowan, holly, field maple, oak, silver birch, hawthorn, crab apple and wild cherry are dotted across the site next to our 150 year old trees. We use birch, holly, ivy and fir to make Christmas wreaths in class. They smell lovely.



Lots of seeds are planted and cuttings taken, all potted up and safely growing in the warmth of the polytunnel. Last summer we grew over 20 types of fruit and vegetables all with preparation and planning from the winter before.

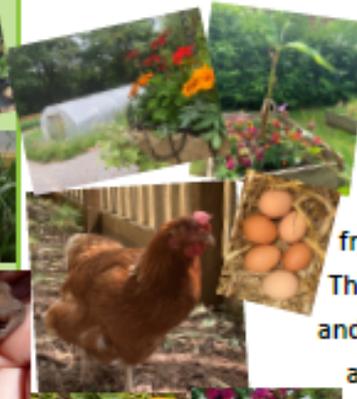
The children enjoy clearing the leaves, digging over the raised beds and composting the plants as they die back for winter. The cold will continue into the new year. We focus on looking after our wild birds, studying lifecycles of plants and animals in the garden, and we wait patiently for the first signs of spring. It will soon be the beginning of another full year in our Horticultural Area and we wait in anticipation for new beginnings.

Winter

Our crops continue to grow: potatoes, turnips, carrots, tomatoes, rocket, herbs, beans and sweetcorn all ripen in the hot sun. We tend the allotment, the raised beds, the Secret Garden and the plants in the polytunnel. The butterflies and bees love the wild flowers we sowed especially for them—poppies, cornflowers, larkspur, daisies and marigolds. Birds thrive all around us - thrushes, jays, wrens, magpies, owls and gulls. Our hens enjoy scratching around in the warm dust too. We have lots of insects here, as well as frogs, toads, and newts.

Summer

The children love pond dipping and mini-beast hunts, learning about nature first hand.



Harvest time! The polytunnel looks magnificent with runner beans and nasturtiums still growing, creating archways across the inside frame. We have cabbages, sprouts, kale and leeks and a bountiful crop of plump ripe tomatoes. The children enthusiastically keep the polytunnel watered and weed free. The weather has certainly become wetter though— rain coats and wellies all round!



The wormery is working well making compost, which will be used for planting the seedlings next spring. The organic compost made in our bins (helped by our chicken waste and the mechanical composting machine) has been used to mulch the flower borders. Work will soon begin on improving our Secret Garden with a better pond and a sensory and apothecary style planting scheme. Piles of swept leaves, pumpkin carving and our home grown harvest marks the end of another fantastic season here at OMS.

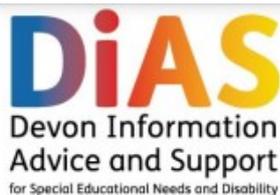
Autumn



We have a [Notice Board](#) section on our website which will give you community news and links .

Please note, although we pass on this information in good faith, we are not endorsing or affiliated to any of the parties involved.

Information, advice and support for children and young people



This guide tells you how DiAS (the Devon Information, Advice and Support service) gives help and support to children and young people.

Who can get Information, Advice and Support?

DiAS works with children and young people up to the age of 25, who need extra help. This may be because of special educational needs, a disability or health needs. You don't need to have a formal diagnosis, you don't need to have an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP), and you don't need to be in formal education to use our support.

The law says children and young people have the right to seek information, advice and support for themselves. We will support you as an individual; you can have a different person helping you to the person from DiAS who helps your parents or carers. You can also ask someone to help you get our support.

How can we help you?

- **Direct support.** Talking to you about your opinions and sharing these if you would like us to.
- **Providing information** resources and signposting to where you can get help.
- **Raising awareness** of how DiAS can help children and young people get their voice heard.
- **Listening to feedback** from you about what we do well and what we could do better.

How do we work with you? We...

- Work with the with you at the centre of things.
- Always respect your views.
- Listen to your views and help you share them if you would like to.
- Work in a way that you would like – we can be flexible to suit your needs.
- Offer you choices about how we communicate, and how you would like support.
- Work with other adults in your life (if you would like) to help you use our support.
- Travel to meet you in a suitable place – we work across all of Devon.
- Give you the information you need to make your own choices and decisions.

About DiAS - The service is :

Free—you don't have to pay.

Impartial—we don't make judgements and we don't take sides.

Accurate—our information is based on the law.

Confidential—most of the time, you can choose who we tell about what you have said. Sometimes it's helpful to talk to other people about what you tell us, but we will ask for your

agreement first.

There are a few times when we have to tell someone what you said:

- We sometimes tell our manager, so they can check we are doing a good job. Information about our meetings is stored on a database, but only people we work with see this.
- We safeguard children and young people— there are times where we have to share information to keep you safe. If we feel that you or someone else is being hurt or at risk, then we must tell someone. We have a safeguarding policy about how we promote children and young people's safety.

I'm not happy with the way you have helped me,

what can I do? If you are not happy with our support, then please tell us how we can make it better! You can make a complaint by contacting Sue, the manager of the DIAS Team; 01392 382080 or at devonias@devon.gov.uk If you are still not happy you can contact Devon County Council on 0808 168 3750 or at www.devon.gov.uk/haveyoursay/feedback-andcomplaints/

What sort of things can you help me with?

We can...

- Help you share your views at a meeting, such as a review of your EHC plan.
- Give you advice about what to do if a decision has been made that you don't agree with.
- Give you the facts and clear information, through our website.
- Tell you about other organisations and services that can help you.
- Tell adults about our work and how we can support you.
- Ask your opinion on what we can do better to help support other children and young people.

You can get help by contacting us...

Call us: **01392 383080**

Email us:

devonias@devon.gov.uk

Get in touch via the form on our website:

www.devonias.org.uk

On the form you can ask us to reply to you in a way that is good for you, like if you want us to text you. If you need help to contact us, ask an adult that you know and trust to contact us on your behalf. It may be that we can meet you to support you. We can also talk to your parents or carers if you want us to.

We have a [Notice Board](#) section on our website which will give you community news and links .

Please note, although we pass on this information in good faith, we are not endorsing or affiliated to any of the parties involved.

Department for Education Coronavirus (COVID-19) Helpline – Holiday hours

The Department for Education coronavirus (COVID-19) helpline and the PHE Advice Service (option 1) will be available over the holidays to answer any questions you have about coronavirus (COVID-19) relating to education settings and children's social care. These helplines will, however, close on the bank holidays, and have shortened opening hours on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve.

Phone: 0800 046 8687

Opening hours:

- 24 December – 8am to 4pm
- 25 to 28 December – Closed
- 29 to 30 December – 8am to 6pm
- 31 December – 9am to 4pm
- 1 January – Closed
- 2 to 3 January – 10am to 6pm

Until 24 December, the helpline opening hours are:

- Monday to Friday from 8am to 6pm
- Saturday and Sunday from 10am to 6pm

Please listen carefully to all of the available options before selecting the most appropriate option for your nursery, school, college or university.

Please select option 1 or 2 if you require specific advice on the action to take to respond to a positive case of coronavirus (COVID-19) in your setting.

This option will take you through to a dedicated team of NHS Business Services Authority advisors who will work through a risk assessment with you to identify close contacts and will inform you what action is needed based on the latest public health advice.

Please select option 3 or 4 for any other questions about coronavirus (COVID-19) relating to education settings and children's social care.



The Parent Progression Team is working in partnership with the Action For Children Children's Centres, to support parents across Devon who wish to have support to gain employment.



They take referrals for parents who have at least one child under the age of 8, who is living in their household.

They can help parents improve their job skills, work experience and work confidence. They do this by supporting them to identify and complete suitable learning and/or volunteering placements.

They complete a Work Star assessment and action plan with the parent, which helps them to create a plan of action for achieving their individual short term or long term work goals. They have regular telephone meetings with parents throughout the support period and can work with parents up to 4-6 months depending on need.

They can also support parents to improve their employability skills, such as helping them create a CV and prepare for interviews.

Please get in touch if you think this will be useful to you or have a look at the website.

Email: enquiriesppt@eci.org.uk

web site: <https://parentprogression.eci.org.uk/>

The team support parents who live within Exeter, Mid & East, North and South Devon.



SEN Magazine is the UK's leading journal for Special Educational Needs with useful and thought-provoking articles written by specialists in the field. Within this month's newsletter is an article on [Shoe fitting: Why the correct footwear is paramount for people with autism ...](#) "It's a lesser

known fact that most people with autism are quite sensitive to shoes. Yet, a lot of them are wearing footwear which either does not fit properly, or is actually causing them discomfort. As communication issues are also very common, it can be very difficult to ascertain whether someone is in pain when they walk. This can lead to expensive trainers, for example, literally being discarded on the streets or in garden bushes. "