

Orchard Manor School
John Nash Drive
Dawlish
Devon EX7 9SF



1st May 2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

I hope this letter finds you and your family well.

Our thoughts and best wishes are with all of our school community and their families as Coronavirus continues to impact many of us. During this challenging time, we need your support. Unfortunately, at this time there has been no guidance on when schools can consider opening their buildings to more pupils but as soon as we receive guidance, we will share our plans with you. I will continue to provide weekly updates which I hope you are finding helpful.

Remote Learning

As you know, we are working hard to provide learning resources for all pupils. This is looking different for different pupils and is ranging from packs activities, through to video conferencing, posted work and a variety of on line learning resources including videos on our website.

We know that not all of our pupils will be keen to engage in traditional school learning at home but our tutors, TAs and teachers will continue to stay in contact to support and encourage pupils to engage in learning opportunities from across our holistic curriculum which include wellbeing and life skills. If you need help in accessing resources then please contact your child's class tutor who will be happy to advise.

Free School Meals

We are continuing to use the government scheme to issue vouchers for pupils who are entitled to Free School Meals. Some parents/carers have stated a preference for school to send out the vouchers rather than the redemption codes. Please don't hesitate to let us know if you are experiencing technical difficulties and would prefer us to send out the gift cards rather than the redemption codes.

Also, we have found a considerable number of parents haven't registered their children for Free School Meals although they are entitled. You can check your eligibility on the link below or if you prefer you can chat it through with a member of our pastoral team. Please just email rschofield@orchardmanor.devon.sch.uk and let us know how we can help.

Link to check eligibility for free school meals:

[Families urged to check if their children are eligible for free school meals](#)

Technology

The government have publicised availability of devices for pupil use during this period of Distance Learning. The government have set a clear criteria for this and the school has had to submit information regarding this and the decision will be made by the LA rather than at school level. We will of course, keep you updated when we are. We are trying to support families who do not have the access to tech either through providing activity boxes or posting paper resources.

Parent Carer Forum Devon

Information about Parent Carer Forum Devon and how to get involved:

Parent Carer Forum Devon is an organised group of parents and carers of children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) within Devon local authority. Our aim is to make sure that services provided from education, health and care meet the needs of children with SEND and their families.

We do this by gathering the views of local families and then working in partnership with the local authority, education settings, health providers and other providers to highlight where local services, processes and commissioners are working well, or challenge when changes or improvements need to be made.

Parent carers can often pinpoint problems frequently experienced by families with children with SEND. The forum can then share this information with the local authority and local health services. This knowledge is useful to professionals as they plan services to meet needs.

Right now we are in unknown times, and education, health and care are needing to adapt and change their response in how to meet the needs of our children and families. It is really important to hear what's working well and also what is difficult right now, and through the forum's regular meetings and conversations with education health and care we can feed back the lived experience of Devon families during the COVID19 pandemic.

We look forward to hearing from you and hearing how things are for your child/ young person with SEND and your family, but meanwhile please join our Facebook group here; <https://www.facebook.com/groups/parentcarerforumdevon/>.

And you can sign up to receive our newsletter here; <http://eepurl.com/g0L6Mf>.

School Site Update

Staff have continued to maintain the horticulture site to ensure that it is in good shape for when pupils return. We are sure that pupils will be delighted to hear that the chickens and pigs are doing well and enjoying the increasing amount of sunshine we are having.

We are hopeful that the installation of the new lower school play and exercise equipment will take place in the next few weeks. We have been able to purchase this equipment due to a generous grant from The Clothworkers' Foundation. We can't wait for pupils to be able to enjoy the new equipment!

75th Anniversary of VE Day

A reminder that the bank holiday has moved to Friday 8th May 2020 to coincide with the VE Day Celebrations, meaning that the school will be closed. There is likely to be a range of resources/information available on the television and online about VE Day which pupils may be interested in accessing. Please be aware that due to the bank holiday weekend, calls from tutors, care and pastoral staff will likely take place earlier on in the week.

Safeguarding

If you have a safeguarding concern whilst the school is closed, please contact MASH.

Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub

If you are concerned about a child or young person and want to speak to someone, or if you are a child or young person worried about your own safety or that of a friend, contact the Devon Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) on 0345 155 1071

or OUT OF HOURS 0345 6000 388

email: mashsecure@devon.gov.uk

If you feel a child is in immediate danger please phone 999

Thank you for your continued support and patience. Please reach out if you need any support and we will do as much as we can to support you. We remain hopeful that we will be welcoming our pupils back into school in the not too distance future.

Best wishes,

Mark Rose

Executive Principal