

Orchard Manor School
John Nash Drive
Dawlish
Devon EX7 9SF



7th May 2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

I hope this letter finds you and your families well.

As we come to the end of another three weeks in lockdown, there is a lot of anticipation about what will happen next, with a lot of speculation around how lockdown will be eased. Due to this, there is a vast amount of information on the news and social media about when schools are likely to open and what this will look like. As things stand, there is no date for schools reopening and no information about how schools will be able to do so safely. We do however hope that we will have some further guidance from the government by Monday. We will share information with about how this will look for Orchard Manor School and for your child/children as soon as we can. As part of any plan for more pupils to attend school, we will have to carefully consider how this impacts our current risk assessment and how we can ensure more students and staff can safely access the site. For special schools, this may look different to any plans outlined by the government for mainstream settings.

75th Anniversary of VE Day

VE Day, otherwise known as Victory in Europe day is the day that signified the end of WW2. On the 8th of May 1945, Prime Minister Winston Churchill announced that the war had come to an end following the surrender from the Nazi German forces within Europe. However, whilst it would appear that the war was over in Europe, the war was still ongoing in other parts of the world. Later on what would become known as VE day Winston Churchill said: *"We may allow ourselves a brief period of rejoicing; but let us not forget for a moment the toil and efforts that lie ahead."*

Many soldiers were still being sent to fight in against the Japanese who had still not surrendered. Eventually when the Japanese surrendered on the 15th of August 1945 this bought a close to WW2 and this day would be known as VJ, Victory in Japan.

Why do we celebrate VE day?

VE day celebrates the end of the war but is also signifies a momentous day where people could return to the normal way of life. Where people could carry on living in peace and the country would be able to start to rebuild. Families could also be reunited and soldiers could start returning to their homeland.

How do we celebrate VE day?

In 1945 people lined the streets dressed in red, white and blue. A huge crowd gathered outside Buckingham Palace to cheer and catch a glimpse of the King other royals on the balcony of the palace. Parties were held up and down the country, licensed establishments (Pubs) were allowed to open for longer and other allied countries also celebrated in similar ways.

Today's VE day will look very different and people are coming up with their own creative ways of celebrating. Picnics in their gardens (Where possible), create bunting, virtual celebrations online between socially distanced families and share stories. As you can see from below, pupils have been engaging in VE Day activities at home including making paper chains, painting and researching about VE Day online.



Carrot Scones

The recipe below was created by Marguerite Patten OBE; she wrote many recipes during WW2 especially created because of rationing. Many sweet baking recipes used either parsnips or carrots to sweeten the recipe as sugar was rationed.

12 tbsps. self-raising flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
2 tbsps. softened butter (or margarine)
4 tbsps. sugar
8 tbsps. grated carrot
A few drops of vanilla essence

Pre-heat oven to gas mark 6 / 200°C. Grease a baking tray. Leave the butter out so that it become nice and soft to work with. This makes it easier to mix in the sugar. Beat these until they are light and creamed. Add in the grated carrot, a bit at a time. It will not look like the prettiest thing in the world – but stick with it. At this stage, leave the mixture for about 5 minutes to let the liquid start to come out of the carrots. Add in the vanilla. Slowly add the sifted flour. The more you beat, the more moisture the carrots will release to bind the mixture together. You will be left with a ball of sticky carrot flecked dough. Don't beat it too much as it can make the mixture chewy and hard so if you need to add a few drops of water you can. Pinch and roll the desired amount between your hands – you should get 12 scones from this recipe. Place on baking tray and sprinkle with a little sugar (optional). Cook in the centre of the oven for about 20 minutes. Once firm on top and at the sides, they are done. Remove from oven and cool. Enjoy – perfect with a nice cup of tea!

Domestic Abuse Support

It is certainly fair to say that little could have prepared us for what has happened over the last month or two and we are very conscious of the wide-ranging challenges that the current lockdown creates for us all.

I am sure you will all be aware through the media about the increased concerns regarding the additional risks that being at home creates for children and adults who are victims of Domestic abuse. I'm quite sure that you will have seen the broadcasts on television aimed at those who are victims of domestic abuse. Please be aware that if you are currently suffering in this way support and help for you is available. The current lock down rules do not apply in the same way and there are options available to you. We have been asked to open the school up as a place of safety for victims to make a phone call for help. If you need to do this please come to school and ask for Julie at reception. Let Julie know that you **'need a place of safety to make a phone call'** and they will take you to the Heads office/or another room where you can contact the appropriate help.

TALK

Every parent needs a little help sometimes, and especially during lockdown.

Action for Children are offering online parenting support for families with children aged 0-19. From where to go for help, to coping with challenging behaviours, to how to keep your children entertained at home - find advice and practical help here: <https://www.parents.actionforchildren.org.uk/>

Have a question about parenting? Action for Children's online coaches are available for free, confidential 1-1 live chat. We're here to listen and support you. Visit <https://talk.actionforchildren.org.uk/>

DiAS Ambassador Volunteer Project

Through the Ambassador volunteer project we have been signposting and sharing information from DiAS over the last few weeks and we would really like any feedback from you , whether you are a parent carer, an Ambassador Volunteer or a professional working with parent/ carers with children of SEND. What we need is feedback from anyone who has accessed the DiAS information we have shared.

We aim to keep producing helpful resources and signposting tools but we do need feedback to help inform the development work.

We really look forward to hearing from you, the link below will take you to a very short questionnaire form.

Please help us improve our service by letting us know if we are producing the information you want, in the way that you want, during Coronavirus.

Follow the link to the simple questionnaire.

https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=gzehjWjLPOS7S5I_d_1b-4Dk_c6IV_VHoF9yDf9qWdNUQ0NXOEYyUjBaMUVTRFhXM0c2TzZWRIAxC4u

New Lower School Play Equipment

We are excited to announce that the installation of the new lower school play and exercise equipment has started. Below is a sneak peak of some of the equipment pupils will be able to enjoy when they return to school...



Whilst we miss the way we normally work with all our students, the government advice continues to be that the safest place to be is at home. It's been great to have the support and patience of all of our families during this disruptive period. I hope that you enjoy the bank holiday weekend with your families, and as always, please reach out if you need any support and we will do as much as we can to support you.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Rose'.

Mark Rose
Executive Principal