

Orchard Manor School Newsletter

December 2019



Dear Parents and Carers

As Christmas is fast approaching, it provides me with an opportunity to reflect on what has been a successful first term. We have seen many individual and whole school achievements, including the successful transition of our new starters, a refreshed curriculum and a greater range of meaningful accreditations alongside lots of reward trips and fun filled activities for all of our pupils. I would like to thank all of the staff and pupils for their hard work this term, it is greatly appreciated and makes Orchard Manor a wonderful place to be.

The school has been decorated by pupils and staff, with Christmas trees in classes, communal areas and the residences. Everyone is feeling very festive. Last week, we had a Christmas lunch and everyone wore their Christmas jumpers! The whole school pantomime trip to Torquay was Snow White and as always, it was great fun and pupils thoroughly enjoyed themselves. We also had Christmas productions on both sites and a disco which was a huge success.

Star, our therapy dog, has made great progress during her first term at school. She now has a full timetable across lots of classes, helps out in Thrive sessions and supports Post-16 students with their travel training. Star has also been doing offsite training where she has visited a hospital, library and airport; and of course, she is getting involved with all of the Christmas festivities.

There are exciting developments upcoming for 2020 to further improve our facilities. We are extremely excited to announce that we have been identified by Devon County Council for possible school developments that may include a new Sports Hall, a new vocational building, a new roadway to link the two school sites and improvements to the upper school dining hall.

Other developments which are coming in 2020 include a low and high ropes course, mountain bike trail, den building area, sensory garden and the development of the lower school outdoor play, exercise and outdoor music equipment.

We have also just prepared a hard standing to support our Post-16 pupils to start a car washing enterprise and will be shortly purchasing barista equipment to support a further enterprise development.

Thank you to all of you who took part in the Parent Questionnaire at the end of the summer term and a summary of which has been included in this newsletter. The results and analysis will be sent out to all you via email. Your feedback is valued and has been used to inform our ongoing school improvement.

Here is just a small illustration of the wonderful things you have said about our school:



All that remains is to say that we wish you all a great Christmas and a Happy New Year and we look forward to welcoming our pupils back on Tuesday 6th January 2020.

Mark Rose — Executive Principal



A big thank you to our furry green visitor today:

The GRINCH

for pulling the winning number out of the Christmas stocking for our amazing Christmas Hamper Raffle.

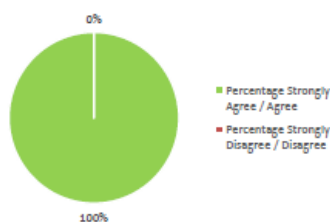
We raised a fantastic

£121.44 for the PSFA

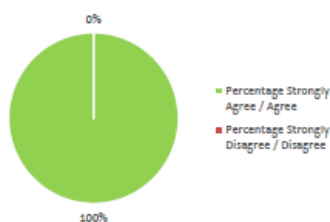
Thank you to all of you who bought tickets. We hope you have a fantastic Christmas and a peaceful and happy New Year.



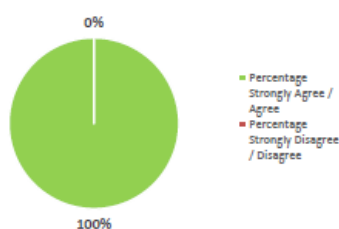
1. My Child is Happy at Orchard Manor School



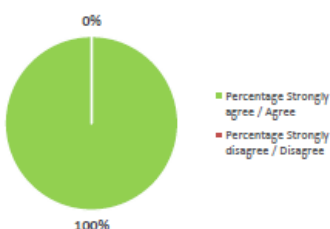
2. My Child Feels Safe at Orchard Manor School.



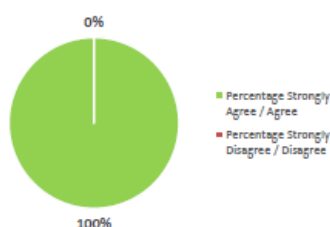
3. My Child Makes Good Progress at Orchard Manor School.



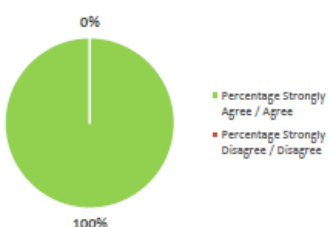
4. My Child is Well Looked After at Orchard Manor School.



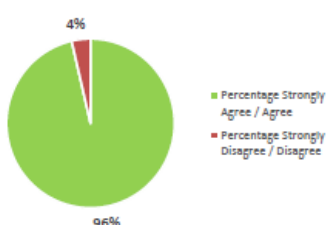
5. My Child is Taught Well at Orchard Manor School.



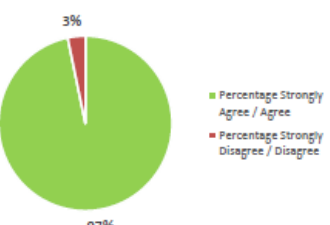
6. Orchard Manor School Makes Sure Pupils are Well Behaved.



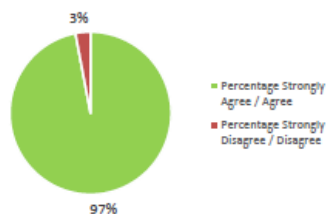
7. Orchard Manor School Deals Effectively with Bullying.



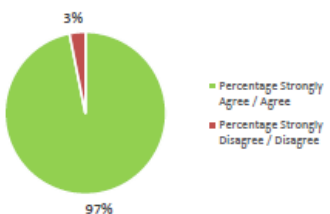
8. Orchard Manor School is Well Led and Managed.



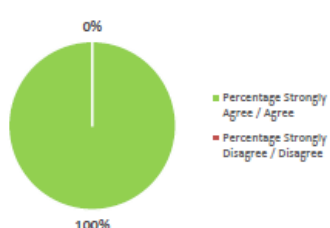
9. Orchard Manor School Responds Well to Any Concerns I Raise.



10. I Receive Valuable Information from Orchard Manor School about my Child's Progress.



11. I would Recommend Orchard Manor School to Other Families.



Parent Questionnaire Feedback

The feedback collected from parents from our survey was fantastic: it was overwhelmingly positive, and includes some constructive areas for us to focus on for further improvement. In total 63 parent responses were collected in July from the Year 11 Leavers Event, Parents Evenings and from Lower School Sports Day.

The full report will be sent to you and can also be found on our website. Here is a summary of :

What You Said and What We Have Done

More Communication with Parents

- We use our website, newsletters, phone, Tapestry, Class Dojo, Home School diaries and ParentMail has been introduced for SMS, texts emails and online payments/donations. We are seeking your views on how we can further improve.

Better IT Provision in Class

- We have invested in high speed internet and we are investing in 1:1 devices for all pupils.

More social interaction outside school

- We have compiled a list of groups and organisers who offer social opportunities. This list is available on the website.

Improve facilities for students

- We have plans to develop high-low ropes, a mountain bike trail, den building area, outdoor play equipment and sensory gardens.

Parent Support Groups

- Parent networking opportunities have been organised. Information about these events will be shared shortly.

Monday start to be the same as the rest of the week

- An explanation of the reasons for this start time is in the full report.

Can students have homework?

- This can be arranged. Contact your child's teacher/tutor who will be able to help.

Monitor Pick Up and Drop Off parking and speeds

- We have made changes to our systems and will continue to monitor and review.

Can expensive out of house visits be reduced?

- Activities are planned to practice social skills and prepare pupils for their next step. Some are costly and some have little or no cost.

OMS still feels like 2 schools

- We are one school and our staff team is working hard to provide opportunities and support pupils across the school.

Exciting Developments for 2020!

As part of the SEN strategic review, the local authority, Devon County Council, is looking at increasing the number of special school places across the county. The great news for us is that Orchard Manor School has been identified as one of the schools where capacity can increase. To enable this increase in role, we are being supported with the development of the facilities at Orchard Manor School.



The proposed Link Road and Sports Hall

The proposed developments are:

- a new Sports Hall building
- a new vocational building to support construction and mechanics
- a new roadway to link the upper and lower schools to further improve the school's collection and drop-off system
- improvements to the upper school dining room

The plans for these exciting developments have been developed and it is hoped, subject to planning and confirmation of funding, the work for the planned developments will start in 2020. We will be inviting parents and members of the community to a pre-planning information event on **Wednesday 22nd January 2020** to give everyone the opportunity to find out further information about the developments, see the plans and ask any questions. Details of this will be sent out to you all after the holiday.

We are all extremely excited about these proposed developments which will further improve the facilities that we are able to offer to our pupils at Orchard Manor School.

Mark Rose—Executive Principal



Christmas Cakes Galore!

There has been a buzz of activity in the Food Tech classes over the last couple of weeks as students have been making and decorating Christmas cakes and moulding cake toppers out of icing and marzipan. They will all be finished in time to take home for the festive period. We have had some pretty amazing bakers this term - here is a sample of their efforts. Well done everyone! They look fantastic!

Amanda Metcalfe—Food Tech Teacher



Wellbeing Questionnaire



As part of our Wellbeing at Schools Award, we are very excited to be sending out some questionnaires for Staff, Pupils and Parent/Carers to complete, which will help us better support Mental Health and Wellbeing at Orchard Manor. These will be coming to you early in the new year so do look out for them.

In addition we will forward you the information about the Wellbeing at Schools Award itself, and what we hope to achieve here at Orchard Manor in the coming months. The Wellbeing Team at Orchard Manor wish you a very happy and joyful Christmas and New Year. **Bryan Webster - Assistant Principal Curriculum & Wellbeing**

Date for your Diary!

We are planning a series of talks throughout the year for Parents and Carers which we hope you will find useful. Our Safeguarding Lead, James Watson, will be presenting on Internet Safety and how you can keep your family away from the hazards it can present, and we are very lucky to have Penny Weekes, Clinical Specialist OT, who will be talking about the Teenage Brain and how it develops.

Tuesday 4th February between 12:00 -2:00 pm for Parents and Carers of Children in Years 3 and 4

As well as being informative, we hope it will be a great opportunity for you to meet other parents whilst enjoying a light lunch. More details will be sent out nearer the time, but for the moment, please keep this date free in your diary! Thank you!

The OMS Pastoral Team



BBC Spotlight!

Sam was invited for a tour around the BBC Spotlight Studios in Plymouth.



We watched the 6 O'Clock News broadcast — live from the control room, met the presenters, and went behind the scenes to see the amount of work that goes into producing the magic of TV at the BBC! Sam looked really good sitting in the presenter's seat and we really enjoyed our tour. It was a really interesting evening.

Chris Heard Senior Care Officer

Our Year 7 Osteologists

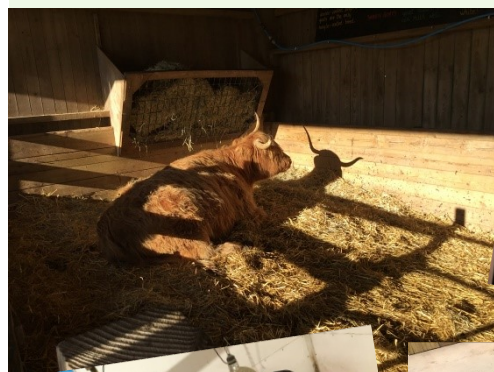


Year 7 classes studied fascinating facts about the human body this term. In particular, pupils looked at the function of each bone and how the skeleton is essential to our movement along with our muscles.

One fun activity involved creating an articulated hand model from cardboard, string and straws - showing how the bones and tendons work together to help our hands move.

Cathy Duggan TA





A Christmas visit to Pennywell Farm

On Tuesday 10th December Beech and Yellow Class went to Pennywell Farm and had a fantastic day out in the winter sunshine.



We all thoroughly enjoyed the day seeing all the different animals, watching the nativity play and having a visit with Santa.



I think the miniature pigs were a big hit for all the pupils. I wonder how many children put one on their list for Santa?



We hope you all have a lovely Christmas and we are looking forward to seeing you all next year!



Julie Macfie-Jones — Yellow Class

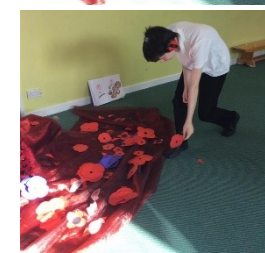
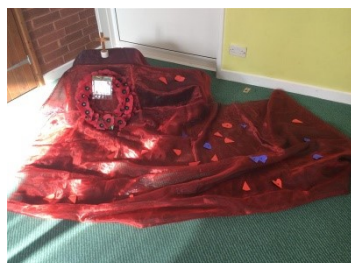
Remembrance Day 2019

Remembrance Day was marked across the school in assemblies and in lessons. Pupils and staff wore their poppies with pride.

In the Lower School hall a Remembrance display was set up so that all the children could place a poppy that they had made as a memorial to those who gave their lives in war.

We met in the hall and had time to reflect on the sacrifices made and observed a one minute silence after which we listened to The Last Post and Reveille on a CD by the Royal Marines.

It was a very moving occasion and all who took part understood the solemnity of the moment.



Janet Haley—Pine Class

Sports Update



This half term has continued to be busy with Lower Site pupils benefiting from Exeter City Football training on a Friday afternoon. We would all like to thank Exeter City for their involvement in this project as many pupils have really enjoyed taking part. Exeter City will not be back with us next term but we hope they may join us again in the Summer term.

We have also been really pleased to have Steve Pritchard from Devon Cricket joining us on the lower school site for Table Cricket sessions.

Pupils from Post 16 and Pine class have all enjoyed learning how to play the game and they have been taught the rules and scoring system used. We are hoping to enter a team into one of the tournaments coming up in the new year.



A massive 'Thank You' must go to Steve who is leaving Devon Cricket this year. He has been working with pupils from our school for the last 5 years and we wish him luck with his future ventures.



On the Upper Site we have had our Basketball Club for Key Stages 2 and 3. Pupils have been learning how to play the game and every week we have had competitive matches with teams being chosen by staff and pupils. This year we have also had pupils involved in time keeping, scoring and officiating.

At the end of the season we will be presenting medals

for three categories:

Top Baskets Scored, Most Improved Player and Good Sporting Behaviour

Next half term we will be setting up circuit training to try and burn off some of the Christmas excess and encourage positive attitudes to healthy lifestyles.

Some groups will be trying out Archery and New Age Curling while others will be trying Volleyball and Dodgeball.



For those pupils who are really keen we have the 'Sport Relief Mile' Event coming up.....so get your trainers out.....get running!! and see how many miles you can achieve next year.

All that remains for me to do is wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.



Fran Fox—PE Teacher



Children In Need Day 2019

Thank you to everyone who got involved with the Children in Need day on 15 November 2019. We had some amazing costumes and make up and lots of Pudsey ears and jumpers.



We have raised a fantastic £108.20

Well done everyone and a huge thank you to you all.



Halloween Preparations!

Post 16 worked really hard planning and preparing for a Halloween party.

Everyone made decorations, food and thought of ideas for games. The afternoon was a success and all involved had an amazing afternoon.



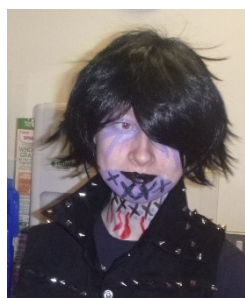
Kelly Rowlands - Post 16 Teacher



Jubilee House



Celebration has been the theme this term, and we have had an extremely busy time having fun and celebrating lots of different events. We have had a fantastic Halloween Monster Ball, hosted an 18th birthday party, held "Thank You" dinners for our teachers and we have been going to see lots of Christmas street performances such as The Spark Band and Orbital Diamond Ariel Performance in Exeter.



Scarlett also had her 14th birthday this month too, so we celebrated by going bowling and then out for dinner. We had another great evening with all of the houses when we had our Residential Christmas Dinner which was delicious!

We would like to wish you all a very merry Christmas and a happy New Year!

Helen Stone - Senior Care Leader Jubilee House

Birthday Celebrations in Gala and Spartan



Everyone from Gala and Spartan houses went out together to mark two birthdays and have an end of term dinner out. The birthdays were for one of the residents and one of the Care Officers. They went to the popular Buffet City in Exeter where they had an array of cuisines from across the world to choose from. The dessert trolley was a huge success as always — the most popular pudding was jelly — covered in sprinkles, cakes and custard! The whole restaurant sang Happy Birthday when the celebratory birthday cake came out. There were some very full stomachs at the end of the evening! It was really good fun.

Chris Heard—Senior Care Leader —Gala House



Painted Stones for Post 16



As part of our garden planning for the walled garden we have decided that we will do a painted stone pathway. We are hoping that everyone will contribute - all classes, staff, brothers, sisters, parents and carers too. We need lots!

We are looking for stones painted in plain colours, patterns, mandalas, cartoons or any kind of art work you like. Our only request is that they are painted with acrylic paint so when we varnish them to make them waterproof for the garden, the paints will not run.

Here are some examples for inspiration. All painted stones will be gratefully received in the post 16 building. Many thanks and we are very excited to receive your contributions!



Kelly Rowlands—Post 16



Work Experience for Post 16

Post 16 are successfully attending a variety of work placements to develop their vocational and employment skills.

Placements are sourced by working with the learner's interests and vocational referencing. So far, our learners have been working with animals, farms, cafe's, riding stables and therapy animals.

The variety of the work they have been doing can be seen here. Well done everyone!

Kelly Rowlands—Post 16 Teacher



Rural Skills at Orchard Manor— Autumn Term

During this half term the children have continued with many different projects. The weather has been tricky, as it seems to have rained every day for the last 7 weeks or so, but we have managed to get outside as much as possible and been involved in a number of fantastic projects as you can see!

Hedges

We have been given 150 hedging trees including Rowan, Holly, Field Maple, Oak, Silver Birch, Hawthorn, Crab Apple and Wild Cherry.



Wild Cherry



Crab Apple



Rowan



Native Hedging

The trees are supplied as one year old saplings and are only about 30 cm tall. The children have been busy planting them all in pots in the poly tunnel and then putting the filled pots into the bee enclosure where they can continue to grow.

Christmas Wreaths



On the school site we have 100's of trees, of many varieties, some of them over 150 years old. The woodlands were planted by the family who built the original house. We use Birch, Holly, Ivy and Fir to make Christmas Wreaths, and most classes now have one which they are all proud of, the children have helped make each one.

They are very simple to make – the birch twigs are twisted and tied together, and then small branches of the other greenery are weaved in, then fastened with

some more string. They look very rustic and smell amazing. They can be further decorated with ribbon and baubles.

Chickens

Our hens are still producing eggs every day, they seem very hungry, but they are eating the same amount as in the summer. They only come out of their shed during daylight hours.



Swanny, our rescue cockerel is fully back to health, with a beautiful show of feathers. They are handled every day, so have become very tame, and expect that anyone coming to see them will bring them something to eat.

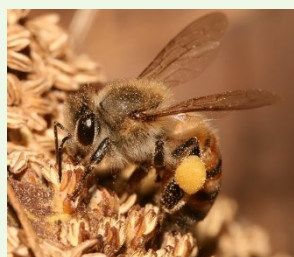
They mostly eat Layers Mash and Layers Pellets which is made especially for them. They also like corn and lots of weeds and plants. The children are very involved in preparing their food. Some of the classes have used the eggs in cooking lessons too.

Bees

It's a much quieter time of the year for our bees, and some days they haven't been seen at all, they do not like the rain, and they stay inside when it is too cold. The hives will have reduced their numbers so that both have around 20,000 in each (in the summer this number can be up to 70,000). They have plenty of food to see them through the winter, the honey they made in the summer is harvested by us, but we leave them plenty, and this is topped up with fondant and syrup if they need it.



Fondant to feed the bees through winter



Bees are very clever at keeping themselves warm, and when inside the hive they are busy at work keeping the Queen safe. Just today, a milder, dry day, they were busy flying and foraging – this was the first time we have seen them for quite a few days.

Cont...



Pigs

Look out! After Christmas we will have pigs at Orchard Manor School. We're looking to have 6 Saddleback Piglets. They will live free range, be fed with pellets and will be able to forage woodland in their enormous pen, which is going through refurbishment in readiness for them.

General Maintenance

Lots of seeds have been planted and lots of cuttings have been taken. They are all safely growing in the poly tunnel and will really get going in the spring having had a huge head start in the warmth of the tunnel. In fact,

last summer we grew over 20 types of fruit and vegetables.

In 2020 we want to grow at least 20 varieties each of vegetables, fruit, herbs and flowers. The early start is very useful.

Fallen Autumn leaves have been raked, almost daily, and we will have an impressive amount of leaf mould next Autumn. The composter is working hard too, and has created lots of beautiful rich compost. Both compost and leaf mould, especially when mixed with chicken manure (of which we now have plenty!) make fantastic soil improvers – our crops should be amazing next year.

The children have enjoyed clearing the leaves, digging over the raised beds, and composting plants as they have died back for winter.

The cold will really begin in the New Year, and we will focus on looking after our wild birds, studying lifecycles of plants and animals in the garden, and waiting patiently for the first frog spawn!

Have a great Christmas and a happy New Year.

Cathy Johnston — Rural Skills Instructor



Outdoor Education with Purple Class

Purple Class had a superb day out with Danny, taking part in an outdoor education session. We went on a fantastic trip exploring the artificial caves at Haven Banks. We had a great time walking and crawling through the caves which have realistic stalactites and stalagmites. We had to wear

hard hats and waterproof shoes as it was quite wet in some places. We got stuck in with the fascination (literally!) We would definitely recommend a day out here and are looking forward to coming back already!

Sam Tyler — Purple Class Teacher



A Visit from Father Christmas and other Festivities

We have had a wonderful half term and in the run up to Christmas we have been getting involved with all sorts of festive activities from baking cakes to watching pantomimes.

Father Christmas has visited already and the Grinch came to see us too and tried to get up to mischief, we have been to see Snow White and the Dwarfs and we have been baking cakes and making cards and decorations. Here are a few pictures of what we have been getting up to!

Have a fantastic Christmas



THANK YOU!

A very special thank you goes to Jim who donated the most beautiful Christmas tree which we put in reception on the Lower Site. The children had great fun decorating it whilst eating mince pies and listening to Christmas Music. It was a lovely afternoon.

Christmas Tree Festival

Pine Class were delighted to be invited by Mary May (one of our governors) to take part in the Christmas Tree Festival at St Gregory's Church. We had a wonderful time making our own decorations for our theme 'Hand Made Christmas'.

Our visit to the church was a great success with the whole class helping to assemble and decorate the tree. The church sent us a lovely

message saying that everyone there had commented on the children's 'good behaviour and good manners'.

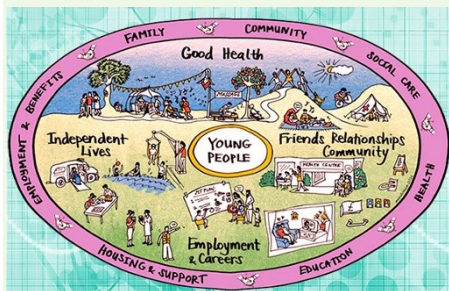
Our great morning was rounded off by a chocolate biscuit break. Thank you Mary.

Janet Haley—Pine Class





Preparing for Adulthood



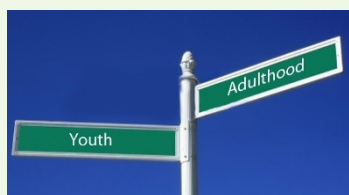
Planning for the future, experiencing life changes and getting skills and knowledge for independence is an important time in any young person's life. If you also have

additional support needs and receive support from social care, education and health services, it becomes a time of planning, exploration and agreeing a future direction. This can start from the age of 14.

Young people with SEND should have equal life chances as they move into adulthood. This should include paid employment and higher education, housing options and independent living, good health, friends, community inclusion and choice and control over their lives and support. Ultimately, young people want to have full lives with choices about their future and control of their support.

Devon County Council

The Preparing for Adulthood Team engages with young people, families, carers and the supporting agencies, to



empower young people to capitalise on the opportunities of adulthood, becoming as independent, self-reliant and confident as possible. The aim of the

Preparing for Adulthood team is to implement Devon's Preparing for Adulthood

Strategy, supporting young people who are likely to have needs for care and support into adulthood.

How do you get support from the Preparing for Adulthood Team?

If you are a young person between the age of 12 and 18, their parent or carer seeking support from the Preparing for Adulthood Team, you will need to complete the new web referral form. If you have already given consent and are known to our service, there is no need to fill out a form. If you aren't sure, please complete the form. Due to General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) changes, the school are no longer able to send direct referrals to the Preparing for Adulthood team, however we can make a referral on your behalf and you will be contacted by the service.

Preparing for Adulthood – Annual Reviews

If a referral is made to the Preparing for Adulthood service, and further information is required, a representative can attend your son or daughter's Annual Review in Year 10 or 11 and begin a process of assessment to work out what support could be needed in the future. If eligible, they will initiate the transition to Adult Services and you should receive contact from an allocated team around your son or daughter's seventeenth birthday; they will attend Annual Reviews during Post-16 education or training and beyond, working with you and school to access services and targeted support from social care that works for your family.

Further information can be found within the Local Offer pages: <https://www.devon.gov.uk/educationandfamilies/special-educational-needs-and-disability-send-local-offer/preparing-for-adulthood>

Parent Progression Project: is a County wide Project designed and coordinated by Exeter Community Initiatives. Working in partnership with Action for Children and Devon County Council, we provide universal support to parents wishing to learn new skills by retraining, access volunteering opportunities, gain work experience and find paid employment. The project will build on Exeter Community Initiatives strong base in Exeter and we will endeavour to replicate its knowledge of networks and relationships with local services where you live. We provide a range of support: 1-1 or group meetings to help you plan your first steps. Identify where you are and the distance you need to travel in order to reach your potential. Help you to realise your skills and the achievements

you have made already. Help you to discover your strengths and how you can do more. Help your confidence to grow. We believe that finding work is one of the ways to improve the wellbeing of individuals, help parents support their families and provide the opportunity to contribute to the wider community.

Are you thinking about a move towards work and finding the right job for you?

Our Parent Progression Team can help you unlock your potential. Phone or Text: North Devon: Sam 07966992296 or Immy 07541444713 Exeter, Mid & East: Jane 07547958156 or Helen 07395831708 South & West Devon: Sue 07999879367 or Sam 07395675075 or email: quiriesppt@eci.org.uk Web: parentprogression.eci.org.uk

Parent Progression Team Supporting your 'Journey of Change'



**Do you have a child under the age of 8?
Would you like support to access
training/volunteering and work?**

**Our team supports parents to learn new skills,
access volunteering, work experience and
find paid work.**