

**Orchard Manor School**  
**John Nash Drive**  
**Dawlish**  
**Devon EX7 9SF**



26<sup>th</sup> June 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

I would like to start this week's update by saying a massive thank you for your understanding and support this week. I know that despite the many positive comments in our Ofsted report, you will have been as disappointed as us with the outcomes of the report. I have been overwhelmed by the number of messages we have received from yourselves. They have really helped us to maintain our perspective. Ofsted's views are important and we accept that we need to do some things better, but the report does not define us, rather informs our ongoing improvement. What is truly important is what we do on a daily basis to support your children. We are passionate and committed to continuing to ensure pupils enjoy their time at Orchard Manor School and leave well prepared for their next steps towards adulthood.

This week, we have continued our phased increase of pupils. We successfully welcomed some year 7 and year 10 pupils into school. Next week, on the upper site, some pupils from year 8 will be spending some time in school as part of our ongoing phased increase. On the lower site, we have extended our provision to some pupils across all year groups, gradually building up to inviting the vast majority of pupils in for two days of each of the final two weeks. The majority of pupils who have been offered some time in school have loved being back and enjoyed spending time with peers and staff again.

### **Important School Day Timings**

Please be reminded that Monday (29<sup>th</sup> June) is a training day. The school will be closed to all pupils for the day to allow for important staff training.

On Tuesday, the start of the day will be 9:10am. The school day would usually start at 10:40am following a long weekend or holiday, however, to minimise further disruption, we will return on Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> June at 9:10am to allow pupils more time in school and to support parents who are working.

The last day of the summer term is Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> July 2020 but the last day of in school education will be Friday 17<sup>th</sup> July 2020 as the last two days are being used to support our year 11 and Post-16 leavers and our new pupils transitioning into the school in September. Remote learning for pupils will be provided on the Monday 20<sup>th</sup> and Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> June for all other pupils. On Friday 17<sup>th</sup> July, the school day will finish at 3:00pm.

## **Ofsted**

We really value your feedback and have been delighted by so many supportive messages from parents, pupils and staff. I am grateful to have such a supportive whole school community. I am particularly thankful of all of the supportive messages that we have received from parents. We really value your feedback and assure you that together we will make Orchard Manor School an even greater school than it already is as we continue to work towards all areas which have been identified as needing improvement.

As promised, below are some FAQs which you will hopefully find helpful.

### *What does academisation mean?*

Academisation is a method of working collaboratively with other schools. Becoming an academy is the government's preferred school development plan as it brings benefits such as sharing good practice and economies of scale. If Orchard Manor School was to become an academy, the school would move from being a maintained school by the local authority to an academy trust where leadership and control moves to the CEO and Board of Trustees of that trust. An academy receives funding directly from the government and has more flexibility around how to spend funding.

### *What is the school and local authorities view on academisation?*

The local authority recognises that Orchard Manor School is a key and unique school and recognises all of the hard work that has already taken place. Some academies thrive due to the support that is around them so neither the school or local authority are against academisation. However, the local authority and school feel that the Orchard Manor School has the support in place to make the required improvements without the need for academisation. As such, we will be seeking a re-inspection at the earliest opportunity.

### *What are the timescales for a decision to be made on academisation?*

Due to Covid-19, timescales are not normal at the moment. Conversations about academisation start once the report is published. We will keep you informed with any updates and information that we receive.

### *If the school academises, will there still be a residential provision?*

There is no intention to change the school's designation or provision. The LA are committed to maintaining OMS as a residential school. If the school academises, we will be matched with an academy sponsor who will be able to support us as a residential special school. However, future decisions will move to the control of the CEO and Board of Trustees if the school academises.

### *Is progress already being made despite Covid-19?*

Since the inspection, staff have been working extremely hard to make progress in the areas identified. For example, the registration process has been reviewed and improvements have been made, and our curriculum is continuing to be embedded. Although Covid-19 has changed the way we are working, progress is still being made in all areas. Since the Ofsted inspection, we have had two local authority audits of our safeguarding process, both reporting positively. We have continued to work closely on a regular basis with the local authority and other SENTient schools to ensure we are doing everything we can to make required improvements.

If you have any further questions, please email Abigail Norris [anorris@orchardmanor.devon.sch.uk](mailto:anorris@orchardmanor.devon.sch.uk)

## **Keeping Children Safe Online**

The government have updated advice and guidance to help parents and carers to keep children safe online during Covid-19 to include new information on apps to help children stay safe online.

The BBC have a website and app called [Own It](#). The website has a lot of content for children to help them navigate their online lives, and the free smartphone app comes with a special keyboard which can intervene with help and support in the moments that children need it the most. It can be downloaded for free in the Google Play Store and Apple App Store.

[SafeToNet](#) is an app for parents to help them safeguard their children from online risks like cyberbullying and sexting, whilst respecting their child's rights to privacy. The SafeToNet Foundation is providing UK families with free access to 1 million licences during coronavirus.

Further advice and guidance on keeping children safe online can be found [here](#).

Once again, thank you for all your support. Working together, we will be able to move forward from this Ofsted report to further improve the education and care we provide for pupils.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Rose', written in a cursive style.

Mark Rose  
Executive Principal