



Orchard Manor School News

OMS Bulletin

School Updates and Communications

10 February 2023



"Teamwork is the ability to work together toward a common vision. The ability to direct individual accomplishments toward organizational objectives. It is the fuel that allows common people to attain uncommon results." – Andrew Carnegie - Scottish-American industrialist and philanthropist

Hello everyone!

Well, it's been quite a half term! I'd like to acknowledge the tremendous hard work from the fabulous team here at OMS and, at the same time, have an open and honest conversation with you all.

It is a difficult time for schools nationally at the moment. Educational establishments across the UK have struggled with higher levels of staff absence as a result of this prolonged cold and flu season and the ever changing varieties of Covid. This has been compounded by a national recruitment crisis in every sector. Our school is no different from the rest of the nation, and finding and attracting the right people to come and work in our team has been a real issue, and may continue to be for a while longer, especially as we also have some pupils who need a much higher level of support for their complex needs. However, I do want you to know that we are doing everything possible to support staff here in our team, and attract new people to join us.

Our existing team have worked tirelessly to fill gaps and ensure that the pupils are safe, well, and that they participate in a curriculum which is as normal as possible. We have also increased the number of skilled HLTAs who have been superb at picking up classes and covering whenever and wherever necessary, again avoiding the need for temporary teachers.

Furthermore, we have forged good relationships with local recruitment agencies and we have several "temp" staff booked for the longer term, so there is as much consistency as possible. We also include our agency colleagues in all our staff training to ensure that everyone is up to date with how we do things here. Some of our "temps" even go on to apply for permanent jobs in our school!

To tempt prospective employees, and alongside our recruitment advertising, we run social media campaigns on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram (please re-post and share like crazy if you see them!). We also have relaxed open sessions where potential employees can drop in and have a tour of the school to get a feel of what we offer here and we are also developing our training systems so they are even more comprehensive and focused.

We already know that Orchard Manor is a fabulous place for both students and employees, we just have to get the word out to the rest of the world who may be looking for an amazing position with fantastic people, wonderful students, great surroundings to work in, support and training, mental health and wellbeing care and of course the school holidays.

So, I hear you shout—How can we help? Its simple really!

- Please share! Share, share and share our adverts to raise our profile, and
 - Please be kind to us!
- Our team here is working its hardest for you and your children, every day, always.

Every one of us is extremely dedicated to our school improvement journey and to delivering the highest quality teaching for all our learners, and in this difficult time, I ask for your understanding and patience. Even with lower numbers of staff than we would like, we have still achieved amazing things: Participated in lots of sporting events and festivals, received praise from our school improvement partners for further developing our curriculum, begun training for 10 Tors and there are many more fabulous things to come next half term.



In the meantime, I wish you all a restful break and we look forward to seeing our students back at 09:10 am on Monday 20th February.

Best wishes **Nicola Jones, Headteacher**