



Orchard and Shepherdswell
Academy
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22 July 2021

End of Term Newsletter

Dear Parents and Carers,

What a year it has been for all of us - parents, carers, children, and staff alike! At the end of this very busy (and at times, disrupted) term, I wanted to write to you with an update of important information, but also to thank you for all your support this year. We were very disappointed to have to close two Year Group 'bubbles' in the last few weeks but were delighted that we have been able to welcome Year 6 back for their final few days at Orchard. Thank you to all parents who supported us when we had to ask you to collect your children at short notice.

End of Year Reports

You will have now received your child's end-of-year report. There is an online form to fill in if you would like to leave feedback to your child's teacher. Thank you for some of the lovely messages we have already had. Your kind words will undoubtedly mean the world to teachers, who have worked tremendously hard for the children this year under very challenging circumstances.

Staffing Update

Sadly, we say goodbye to three colleagues today. **Mr. Tony Nyman** started at Orchard in 2013. During that time, he was promoted to Estates Manager across the seven schools in the East Midlands Academy Trust. He worked tirelessly during the pandemic to ensure we had supplies of hand sanitiser, masks, lidded bins, and other PPE at a time where it was very hard to source any such things. Aside from this, he has done a fantastic job of maintaining health and safety standards on site at both Orchard and Shepherdswell. Those of you that have met him will know he is (and will always be) extremely passionate about both schools. We have only this week found out that Mr. Nyman sadly leaves us just before the new term in September. We will seek permission from his new employer for Mr. Nyman to attend a special assembly in September where we can give him the 'proper goodbye' he richly deserves.

Mr. Dan Williamson is one of our longest-serving teachers, having been here since 2016. He has made huge contributions to the school in that time, most recently as a Year Leader and our Science Lead. He is a big personality around school and has always been very popular with pupils and staff. Furthermore, he has always contributed to the extra-curricular activities at school, running clubs and supporting many residential trips. Mr. Williamson will be greatly missed, and we wish him all the very best for this new chapter in his career.

We also say a fond farewell to **Mrs. Michelle Carter**, who has been our Year 6 Lead and Elder class teacher this year. Mrs. Carter has been at Orchard since October 2019 and, as we all know, a lot has happened in her time with us! Mrs. Carter has made a very positive impact at Orchard and has always worked hard to give the pupils in her Year Group the best experiences and as many enrichment opportunities as possible. We are hugely grateful for this, and she will be missed by pupils and colleagues alike. We wish her all the best for her new role.

After a short spell with us, Teaching Assistant **Miss Miranda Hamish-Wilson** leaves us today. We wish her well and thank her for her efforts working with our children in Cedar.

We are delighted to welcome **Mrs. Sharon Osei-Tutu** as a new Year 5 teacher (Willow class) and **Miss Sophie Dimmock** as a Year 4 teacher (Beech).

We would like to congratulate **Miss Amy Wood** and **Miss Rachel Frank** (currently Teaching Assistants), who will each take on a new joint-role of Higher-Level Teaching Assistant from September.

Headteacher: **Mr C. Brown**. Assistant Headteachers: **Mr L. Bartishel** and **Mr J. Wilson**.
Springfield Boulevard, Springfield, Milton Keynes, MK6 3HW
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As a result of Miss Wood and Miss Frank changing their roles, we welcome **Miss Benedicte Larsen** in September as a new Teaching Assistant.

Times of the School Day

If your child was with us before the start of the Covid pandemic, you may remember that the timings of the school day were different to how they have been this academic year. As we hopefully begin to make steps toward 'normality' in September, we have been consulting with our local Infant Schools (Shepherdswell Academy and The Willows First School) to try to align our school start and finish times, enabling parents to get between two schools if required.

Orchard's start time will be 8:30am for all year groups from September, with the school gates opening at 8:25am. Breakfast Club will start at its usual time of 7:30am.

Orchard's finish time will be 3:05pm for all year groups from September, with the school gates opening at 3:00pm.

Please be reassured we are very understanding that parents who also have children at The Willows may arrive at school a little later than 3:05pm. Please do not worry if this is the case.

The designated entry and exit points and one-way systems that have been in place during the pandemic will no longer be in effect. Parents will be able to choose which gate they enter and leave school by. The wearing of face coverings on school site will no longer be a requirement, though we will still encourage you to wear one if you need to come into school.

Year 6 Leavers

We were delighted to able to host our Leavers' Celebration Assembly yesterday, to recognize the achievements and efforts of our Year 6 pupils over their time with us. For me personally, it was particularly poignant because (as I said to the children yesterday) many of the children started at Orchard at the same time as me, on Tuesday 5th September 2017. We have shared some wonderful memories in our four years together (some of which we talked about in the assembly) and they will all be greatly missed in September.



I would like to take this opportunity to thank all parents of our Year 6 pupils for all your support during your child's time with us. We have really appreciated your lovely kind words, cards and gifts over the past few days. Thank you to Mrs. Carson for the lovely cake we received yesterday (pictured). I have to say most of it was gone by the end of lunch time!

We hope your children have enjoyed their time with us, and that they enjoyed their Leavers' Disco yesterday. We were thrilled to be able to go ahead and put this on for them despite the pandemic, and hope they enjoyed dancing the evening away on the playground! They all got to take home a commemorative photo today – with this, a signed shirt and maybe even a hoodie, I hope they have plenty to remember us by and I hope their memories are fond ones.

We wish all our Year 6 children a fantastic summer and a brilliant start to secondary school in September. We'd love to see them and hear from them again – please do keep in touch. You will always be part of the Orchard family.

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SEND Department (Cedar and Sparrows) Consultation Feedback

A proposal was put forward to create an improved facility at Orchard Academy for SEN pupils and to merge the two departments at Orchard Academy and Shepherdswell Academy. It was proposed a new hub will deliver future provision for SEN pupils across the two schools.

The public consultation period ran for six weeks, ending on the 15th July. The consultation involved staff, parents/carers of current pupils and pupils who will be enrolled to start as of September 2021. The consultation reached out to the wider community including the staff at both schools, the local authority, and other local authorities with pupils that have EHCPs.

A number of responses were submitted with 75% of responders in favour to support this proposal. The local authority is in full support of the changes being proposed and are closely aligned with both schools through strategic development meetings.

We would like to confirm that following the consultation feedback a full business case has been put forward to Milton Keynes council to create this new SEN provision which will feature two SEN classrooms, an open-plan breakout space, a secure courtyard area with canopy, a soft play area and a sensory room. The project is set to be funded and delivered by Milton Keynes Council.

This is an exciting development for our two schools and this new provision will enhance the learning and support we can provide to our pupils with special educational needs and disabilities, enabling them to remain within and integrate with a mainstream education.

EMAT Celebration and Recognition Awards

This year's Celebration and Recognition Awards across the seven schools that make up the East Midlands Academy Trust acknowledge the efforts and contributions of our staff and pupils, seeking to shine a light on some unsung heroes. Nominations were open to staff and parents. Congratulations to all those nominated, and well done to our winners!

Award	Orchard Nominees	Winner
Inspirational Pupil	Vishaana S. (Year 3) George T-Z. (Year 4) Abeeha N. (Year 4)	George T-Z.
Home Learning Star of the Year	Nikodem S. (Year 6) Oscar G. (Year 3) Marcel W. (Year 3)	Marcel W.
Teacher of the Year	Miss P. Naseri Miss A. Kabir	Miss Naseri
Support Staff Member of the Year	Miss K. Ephgrave Miss A. Wood Mrs. C. Lowe	Miss K. Ephgrave
SEND Star of the Year	Mrs. S. Fairbrother Ayan P. (Year 5) Luke T. (Year 6)	Luke T.

You can watch the EMAT Celebration and Recognition Awards video by [clicking here](#).

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Term Dates 2021-22

Please see our term dates for the 2021-22 academic year below. These are also on our website.

PLEASE NOTE: Because we had to cancel our transition day for Year 3 pupils due to positive Covid cases at school, **WE WILL ONLY BE OPEN FOR YEAR 3 pupils Monday 6th September.**

The new Year 4, 5 and 6 pupils will start back at school on TUESDAY 7th SEPTEMBER.

Autumn Term 2021	Spring Term 2022	Summer Term 2022
<p>Monday 6th September* to Friday 17th December Half Term: 25th – 29th October</p> <hr/> <p>Staff Training Days (school closed to pupils): Thursday 2nd September, Friday 3rd September and Friday 19th November *School open to new Year 3 pupils only on Monday 6th September.</p>	<p>Wednesday 5th January to Friday 8th April Half term: 21st – 25th February</p> <hr/> <p>Staff Training Day (school closed to pupils): Tuesday 4th January</p>	<p>Tuesday 26th April to Friday 22nd July Half term: 30th May – 3rd June</p> <hr/> <p>Staff Training Days (school closed to pupils): Monday 25th April Bank Holiday: Monday 2nd May</p>

Thank you all again for your support this year. My very best wishes to you and your families for a lovely summer.

Yours sincerely,

Mr. C. Brown
Headteacher

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