



# Scotch Orchard Primary

*Caring | Believing | Achieving*

# MERRY CHRISTMAS

## Autumn Newsletter 3

Thank you all for your support since we returned to school in September. It is difficult to believe that our first term of the new school year is about to draw to a close. Despite the obvious constraints and difficulties of current times, it has been lovely to see the fun and exciting learning experiences our children have been engaged in. In particular, our DT week last week was a real success—car designs, bread baking, smoothie making and Mars Rover designs, as well as our very own 'Great Italian Bake Off,' A challenging, stimulating and rewarding week for all. Take a look at our recent tweets for further information: @scotch\_orchard.

We have had a pleasing response to our recent 'Your View' questionnaire. A total of 49 responses have been submitted so far which reflects 24% of our children across the whole school. The results have been overwhelmingly positive; your children are very happy at school. Many of you kindly added your extra thoughts, comments and suggestions. These have proved extremely useful when reviewing our procedures and have fed directly into improving our routines. Please see Mrs Braybrooke's article below for further detailed information.

If you have not yet added your views, it isn't too late. Please click on the following link to respond:

<https://tinyurl.com/yymjcuju>, completing a new questionnaire for each of your children to reflect their personal views. The form will remain live until the end of term.

Please remember we are here for you. If you are worried about anything or are experiencing any difficulties and want to talk, just drop us an e-mail, send a message through ClassDojo or call the office number.

Take care, stay safe and a very 'Merry Christmas' to you all.

*Mrs Bishop*

Headteacher



### Diary Dates

#### INSET days (school closed to children):

Monday 4th January  
Friday 12th February  
Monday 16th March  
Friday 30th April  
Monday 5th July

#### **Wednesday 16th December:**

- School Christmas Lunches (orders via ParentPay) Christmas Jumper Day (jumpers over uniform)
- 1.30pm live streaming of the 'Virtual Staffordshire Schools Christmas concert'

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLZ0hmpiTR1XkttgJa-dJwB0m05hR9QFYT>

#### **Friday 18th December:** non uniform day.

N.B. children are dismissed earlier as follows:

11.50 pm - Nursery	12.00 pm - Year 1 and 2
12.10 pm - Reception	12.20 pm - Year 3 and Year 4
12.30 pm - Year 5 and Year 6	

**Tuesday 5th January 2021:** School re-opens to all children

**Friday 22nd January:** Year 5 & 6 Menstruation & Puberty Talks

### Term Dates

#### Autumn Term Dates 2020

Term ends early: Friday 18 December  
Holiday: Monday 21 December -  
Monday 4th January inclusive

#### Spring Term Dates 2021

Term starts: Tuesday 5 January  
Half term: Monday 15 February - Friday  
19 February  
Term ends: Thursday 1 April  
Holiday: Friday 2 April - Friday 16 April  
Easter Sunday: Sunday 4 April

#### Summer Term Dates 2021

Term starts: Monday 19 April  
May Day: Monday 3 May  
Half term: Monday 31 May - Friday 4  
June  
Term ends: Wednesday 21 July  
Holiday: Thursday 22 July - Tuesday 31  
August

### **Covid Reporting during the Holidays:**

During the Christmas holiday period we are still required to monitor positive cases in our school community. We will continue to assist supporting the identification and notification of close contacts as they will need to self-isolate. To report a positive case to school during this time, please use our new dedicated email address:

[covid19@scotchorchard.staffs.sch.uk](mailto:covid19@scotchorchard.staffs.sch.uk)

### **'Your View' the results of our questionnaire so far:**

We have received very positive comments regarding the way children have returned and settled into their new classes this term (please see table opposite for the results so far).

Positive comments received to date have related to:

- communication via Class Dojo,
- pastoral support you feel your children have received from their class teachers and school
- the excellent organisation of the school during the COVID pandemic.

Any concerns or suggestions raised have been explored further by Mrs Braybrooke in order that we could gain a full understanding of each issue. As a result, school procedures and practices have been reviewed and direct changes made:

**You said:** *We would like a more detailed plan in relation to a class bubble closure or any child who has to self-isolate.*

**We did:** Created and distributed a new clear and detailed 'Parent and Carer: Guide to School Isolation' outlining what you could expect from school should your child isolate or their bubble close.

**You said:** *We would like children to have more interactive sessions with their class teacher and classmates should their class bubble close.*

**We did:** Pledged that in the event of a class bubble closure, daily virtual meetings (via Zoom) would be organised between the teacher and their class. This has already been implemented, tried and tested when our Y5 class isolated earlier this term.

If you have not yet submitted your views it is not too late. Please follow this link and complete a new response for each of your children:

<https://tinyurl.com/yymjcuju>

Question	Agree' or 'strongly agree'
My child was happy to return to school in September.	92%
My child has already made positive transition to school.	100%
My child is currently happy in school.	98%
My child understands the new COVID-19 restrictions in school	81%
Despite current COVID restrictions, I feel I am able to communicate effectively with my child's class teacher	94%

### **Christmas Cards and Gifts**

It has long been customary for our school community to exchange cards and gifts at Christmas time. This year's risks relating to COVID-19 make these routines unsafe so we are therefore politely asking that no cards or gifts be brought into school this term.

Instead, perhaps you would like to join Scotch Orchard staff in supporting their chosen charity this Christmas, by making a donation in lieu of the usual cards or gifts. Staff are keen to support the tremendous work of The Lichfield Foodbank who help local people who are experiencing crisis. This makes a difference within Lichfield and our local community. Further details about how to donate can be accessed here:

<https://lichfield.foodbank.org.uk/give-help/>

**Please note:** Scotch Orchard PTA have already purchased a small gift for each child in school which will be distributed during the last week of term. Please rest assured, the gifts are currently living in quarantine within the school building in order to rid them of any traces of the Covid virus!

### **PTA and Book Drive: Update**

Our Key Stage 2 Book Drive has been a phenomenal success and we have now received over 125 books from our Scotch Orchard community. Local businesses, Zest Education, Aspire People and Hair by Mel, have also kindly donated books.

The Year 4 librarians have been kept very busy and it has been fantastic to see our children already enjoying the new titles and recommending them to their friends.

In addition, we are thrilled to announce that the PTA will be providing £3,000 of funding to purchase a brand new book scheme to enrich and enhance the Early Years and KS1 libraries. Every child in Scotch Orchard will now be able to benefit from these new, diverse and exciting books from a wide range of modern and classic authors.

Once again, we would like to thank everyone for giving the gift of reading.

## Staff Focus: Miss Sturch

I have been working at Scotch Orchard since September 2015 and I currently teach the Year 6 class. I am passionate about teaching and providing the best possible education for our pupils at Scotch Orchard.

Last academic year, I joined the Leadership Team and I lead the teaching of Maths across school. I support and develop our teaching staff to ensure we are delivering a Maths curriculum that teaches the right knowledge in the right order. Using our cognitive science principles about 'how children learn', children are explicitly taught key mathematical concepts and then, when embedded, they transfer their knowledge to reasoning and problem solving. My introduction of a daily Maths fluency session in addition to our Maths lesson is allowing the children to practise the key skills that underpin the curriculum on a daily basis. Research tells us that this constant exposure and repetition of knowledge is proven to aid children's mastery of Maths.



*'Much of teaching is about helping students master new knowledge and skills and then helping students not to forget what they have learned.'*

Pachler et al., 2007

Being a part of the ATLP has created opportunities to share my expertise across the other schools in our partnership. I mentor the Associate Teachers that are training in school as well as deliver training sessions about Teaching Maths to the ATLP School-centred Initial Teacher Training (SCITT) cohort. Supporting this new generation of teachers is something that is incredibly important to me, as I believe they deserve the best possible start to their career in order to aid teacher retention.

I have also had the privilege to work with other professionals across the ATLP to design a specialist curriculum for both Science and Design & Technology for our Trust. This continued collaboration enhances the learning we offer our children, ensuring that Scotch Orchard children receive the very best.

### School Lunch Order System

Thank you all for using the new ParentPay system for ordering your child's lunches. This system will continue after Christmas, as it has proven to be a real success. Following parent feedback, we are pleased to announce the following amendments:

- An introduction of 'side dish' choices – this means that you will be able to select accompaniments to the meal e.g 'with' or 'without' vegetables (or beans).
- The addition of a 'special dietary menu' option – if your child has specific dietary needs you will already have liaised with catering staff to develop a bespoke menu. This menu will be available for you to select at the point of ordering by choosing the 'special dietary menu' option. Unfortunately, ParentPay limitations mean that only one menu can be live at any one time but please be assured, kitchen staff will consult your child's bespoke menu when preparing their food.

Date week beginning	Menu choice
04.01.21	Week 2
11.01.21	Week 3
18.01.21	Week 1
25.01.21	Continues with Week 2

Our 3-week rotation of menus continues into the new year with the same menu choices as outlined below. In addition to these, a jacket potato with cheese, beans or both is always available to order.

Look out for the 'special dietary' option if your child has a specific dietary need.

We hope you will find these changes useful. We welcome any feedback which may improve our school lunches.

Week	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Week 1	Cheese and Tomato Pizza or Burrito	Chicken Burger and Wedges or Baked Macaroni	Roast Chicken with Potatoes & Vegetables or Sweet Potato & Chickpea Roast	Pasta Bolognese or Hotdog with Potato Wedges	Golden Fish Fingers and chips or Quorn Nuggets and Chips
Week 2	Cheese and Tomato Pizza or Sausage, Mash and Gravy	Chicken Tikka Masala with Rice or Baked Macaroni	Roast Turkey with Potatoes & Vegetables or Pastry Slice with Potatoes & Gravy	Lasagne or Chilli Macaroni	Southern Fried Chicken Tasters and Chips or Soft Taco and Chips
Week 3	Cheese and Tomato Pizza or Chinese Veggie Noodles	Sausage, Mash and Gravy or Quorn Bolognese	Roast Turkey with Potatoes & Vegetables or Country Vegetable Pie	Pasta Bolognese or Mild Chickpea Curry with Rice	Golden Fish Fingers and Chips or Beany Burger

## Spotlight on Year 1 and Year 2

When the Scotch Orchard child finishes their time in Early Years, their journey continues as they enter Key Stage 1. Here they build on their Early Years' foundation. Learning and teaching is designed to continue fostering their independence and curiosity. We observe our children as their confidence grows across the curriculum. The children are provided with opportunities to try new things in a safe and supportive environment, with lots of positive feedback for their successes, as well as support and encouragement for any challenges they experience along the way.

Key Stage 1 have had many successes this term. Children have settled very quickly, adapting to new routines in their new classes and establishing positive and productive relationships with staff. In addition, we have all been working together to promote one of our school values – *caring*. Celebrating 'acts of kindness' has been an integral theme throughout the term. Our children are encouraged to build friendships, think of others and use good manners throughout the school day. Year 2 have also been recognising their peers' good deeds and have been promoting these by awarding a "caught you being kind!" voucher which is on display in the classroom.

We are passionate about ensuring all children become enthusiastic life-long readers; we can see our children thoroughly enjoying their Reading and Phonics lessons, as well as their 'reading for pleasure'. We recognise that our children are at a pivotal point in their reading journey; working on decoding, fluency and comprehension. Our early readers are beginning to gain control of their reading process themselves.

Our daily phonics sessions follow the Department of Education approved document 'Letters and Sounds.' We use a variety of strategies to enthuse and engage the children, including the use of whiteboards, magnetic letters, speaking and listening, songs, rhymes and practical activities. In Year 1, children start to explore vowel digraphs and trigraphs. They begin to understand that letters can make different sounds in different words and that one sound might be represented by different letters. Children in Year 2 build on this knowledge, as well as learning spelling rules. Both classes are certainly developing a love of reading, which is clear to see! Our daily reading lessons focus on a text a week with planned activities which develop vocabulary, prediction, inference, retrieval, sequencing and clarifying skills. All books are carefully chosen - fiction, non-fiction, poetry, multi-cultural stories and other texts - to support themes in our foundation subjects in order to make purposeful links across the curriculum.

We would like to thank you for your continued support, reading at home with your child and donating books to school. We can't wait to read all the books from our 100 Books to Read in Key Stage 1 list!

*Mrs Tomlinson and Miss Ingle*

## How physically active are you and your children?

The benefits of physical activity for young people are widely recognised and, during the COVID-19 pandemic, moving more and sitting less has become very important to help families maintain their physical and mental health. Any form of physical activity boosts self-esteem, helps relieve stress and anxiety and creates healthier, happier children.

At Scotch Orchard, we understand the importance of our children being physically active and of living a healthy lifestyle. Since returning to school life in September, staff throughout the school have been promoting this through PE lessons, Forest School activities, Joe Wicks challenges, Yoga sessions and Commando Joe challenges; all designed to help keep our children active and healthy.

If you find your child or your family isolating, keeping fit and active can be a real challenge.

Here are a few websites you could turn to for ideas and inspiration:

Change 4 Life: <https://www.nhs.uk/change4life/activities>

Jump Start Jonny: <https://www.jumpstartjonny.co.uk/home>

Cosmic Yoga for Kids: <https://www.youtube.com/user/CosmicKidsYoga>

Future Playmakers (PE with Mr Dineen): <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCX9oqHIPKuzjBUBzVsKEb3Q>

Youth Sports Trust: <https://www.youthsporttrust.org/primary-pe-activities>