



Orchard Primary & Pre-School



Quest
Learning
Trust

Part of Quest Learning Trust

3 September 2026

Dear Parents and Carers

Welcome back to a new school year!

We hope that you have all had a wonderful summer holiday and enjoyed spending quality time with family and friends. It has been fantastic to welcome the children back to school, and we are excited about the year ahead. We have lots of exciting learning opportunities, events and experiences planned, and we look forward to working in partnership with you to make this another successful year for all our children.

Attendance Matters

As always, **attendance is a key priority**. Every day in school counts, and regular attendance significantly impacts children's learning, wellbeing and progress.

We would like to remind you that if a child has **10 days off during the academic year**, their attendance will fall below **95%**. We greatly appreciate your support in ensuring that children attend school every day, arrive on time and are ready to learn. Together, we can ensure that every child makes the most of the opportunities available to them.

PE Arrangements

From this term, children should come to school wearing their PE kit on their PE days and go home in their kit:

What to wear - PE t-shirt, school sweatshirt, blue or black shorts or joggers and trainers.

- **Tuesday:** Year 2 and Year 3
- **Wednesday:** Year 4 and Year 6
- **Friday:** Year 1 and Year 5

Reception children should continue to bring their PE kit into school. We will support them in learning how to change independently as part of their development.

Reading and Homework

Reading continues to be a vital part of every child's learning journey.

- Children in **Reception, Year 1 and Year 2** will be trialling an **online reading record**, which we hope to have set up by next week.
- Children in **Years 3 to 6** will be bringing home a **reading diary** this week.

Homework information will be shared through reading diaries and via the school website. We appreciate your support in encouraging regular reading and helping children to complete homework tasks.

Exciting Playtime News - OPAL

We are delighted to announce that from next week we will be adopting an **OPAL (Outdoor Play and Learning)** approach to playtimes.

OPAL's programme enables schools to provide every child with rich opportunities to be creative, collaborative and active in their outdoor play. Children will be encouraged to explore, imagine, build, problem-solve and take managed risks in environments that are safe while still offering the challenge needed for their ongoing development.

To support this exciting initiative, please ensure your child brings:

- A pair of **wellington boots** to keep in school (these can be stored in their PE bag)
- A **waterproof coat**

We will be enjoying outdoor play and learning in all weather conditions, so these items are essential.

Open Day

Please keep an eye out for details of our **Open Day in October**. We would be delighted to welcome friends, family members and prospective parents who may be interested in visiting the school and seeing what makes Orchard such a special place to learn.

Autumn Term Trips

We already have lots of exciting educational visits and enrichment opportunities planned for the Autumn Term. Your child's class teacher will be sharing further information with you in the coming weeks.

SEND Support

We are pleased to welcome **Mrs White** back from maternity leave. Mrs White will be in school **Wednesday to Friday** each week.

If you have any concerns regarding your child, please do not hesitate to contact Mrs White or your child's class teacher through the school office. We aim to respond to all enquiries within **five working days**.

Academies Trust Update

We are also excited to share that Orchard is now part of a larger trust. Further information will follow in due course, but we would like to reassure parents that this change is intended to bring additional opportunities and support for the school and our children. We will keep you informed as more details become available.

School Uniform

The children have returned looking absolutely fantastic, and we would like to thank parents for their support with school uniform.

Our uniform policy is designed to be affordable and practical, while helping all children feel part of the Orchard team. It also helps to reduce financial and peer pressure by ensuring a consistent approach for everyone.

Please continue to support us by ensuring that children attend school dressed appropriately each day. Full details of our uniform expectations can be found here:

Orchard Primary & Pre-School - School Uniform

<https://www.orchardprimary.org.uk/page/?title=School+Uniform&pid=56>



Congratulations

Finally, we would like to welcome back Mrs Ladds and congratulate **Miss Godwin** and her partner, who were married during the summer holidays. As a result, Miss Godwin will now be known as **Mrs Kitchener**. We wish them every happiness for the future.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support. We are looking forward to a happy, successful and exciting year ahead and cannot wait to see all that the children achieve.

Kind regards

Sarah Bitcon

Head Teacher