



The Orchard School

Weekly Bulletin

Week commencing: Monday 22nd January 2024

Dates for your diary

Monday 22 nd January	Parent/carer coffee morning
Friday 2 nd February	Training Day – school closed to pupils
Monday 12 th – Friday 16 th February	Half Term
Tuesday 5 th March	Parent/carer Support Group – Makaton Workshop
Friday 8 th March	Mothering Sunday Activity Morning

Update from Liz

I hope you have had a good week and are keeping warm during this cold snap!

Safeguarding in school is a priority and to support this we are having a timer fitted to the main school gate so we can monitor who is coming on site during the school day. This means that from 9:15 every morning the school gate will be closed and you will need to press the buzzer next to the pedestrian gate to enter the site (you will no longer be able to drive up to the gate for it to open automatically). This will be the case until 2:30 in the afternoon; at this time the gate will revert to opening automatically to support the smooth flow of vehicles at the end of the school day. The gate will still open automatically when you drive up to it to leave the site. This adaptation will make the site more secure during the school day.

Training Day



A reminder that we have a training day on Friday 2nd February where the school will be closed to all pupils.

Coffee Morning

On Monday, Sandwell Family Hub are coming into school from 9:30am to meet with parents and carers to discuss the help and support they can offer families across Sandwell. This will also be supported by our pastoral team. We invite all parents and carers to join us for a cuppa and chat and take the opportunity to find out about the support you can access.



Home Communication Books

As we are all aware it is essential for children to have access to the resources they require to communicate wherever they are. As part of this, upon the request of parents/carers, school are able to make a copy of the communication books the pupils use in school for them to use at home.

As in all areas, budgets are tight, and we need to prioritise spending on the teaching and learning in the classroom. Due to this we are no longer able to provide the laminating pouches for home communication books. The school is able to print and collate the communication book but if you require the book to be laminated, we will need to ask parents/carers to provide the laminating pouches. The class staff will be able to let you know how many pouches are required. Once the pouches have been provided the class team are willing to laminate the book for you. If you need further information on communication books please speak to your child's class team.

Mild Illness and School Attendance

As we welcome children back for a new school year, we have been asked by the Department for Education (DfE) to provide you with a clinical and public health perspective on mild illnesses and school attendance. The DfE are aware that the COVID-19 pandemic may have caused some parents to feel less confident with assessing whether their child is well enough to be in school so they have laid out some information which they hope will be helpful.



There is wide agreement among health professionals and educational professionals that school attendance is vital to the life chances of children and young people. Being in school improves health, wellbeing and socialisation throughout the life course. The greatest benefits come from children and young people attending school regularly.

It is usually appropriate for parents and carers to send their children to school with mild respiratory illnesses. This would include general cold symptoms: a minor cough, runny nose or sore throat. However, children should not be sent to school if they have a temperature of 38°C or above. Additional information can be found in the NHS 'Is my child too ill for school?'

Please follow the link; Is my child too ill for school? - NHS (www.nhs.uk)

Measles

You will have heard in the news there has been an increase in cases of Measles across the Black Country.

Parents and carers are being reminded to get their children vaccinated against measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR).

Measles is a highly infectious disease which can lead to serious complications if it is not treated. In the most severe cases it can develop into more threatening conditions such as severe lung infections, especially in those with a weakened immune system. Symptoms include:

- A high fever
- Rash
- Cough
- Runny nose
- Watery eyes

All children are invited for their first MMR vaccine on the NHS when they reach the age of one. The second dose is given when they reach three years and four months of age. Having two doses of the vaccine provides the best protection against MMR.

Parents who are unsure if their child is up to date with all their routine vaccinations should check their child's Red Book (personal child health record), the NHS App, or contact their GP practice.

Adults and older children can also be vaccinated at any age if they have not been fully vaccinated before and are being encouraged to come forward if they haven't had two doses.

[For more information on the MMR vaccine, visit the NHS website](#)

[Think measles video](#)

There is now a [pupil wellbeing](#) section on the school website where you will find information about breathing difficulties and measles.