

Orchard's C of E Academy

Weekly Parent Bulletin

19th December 2018

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Our Christian Value for this Half Term is **Understanding**

Dates for the Diary

7th January Children back to school
9th January New Homework Policy Meeting for Parents
10th January Music Workshop
17th January SEND Coffee Morning
25th January Spelling Bee – Round 1
14th February Spelling Bee – Round 2
15th February Last school day before Half Term
25th February Children back to school
3rd and 4th April Parent Consultation Evenings
5th April Last day of Spring Term

Christmas Events

Many thanks to all of you who have been able to attend our Christmas events over the past couple of weeks – I think you'll all agree that the children have worked very hard and done you all proud.

A special mention must go to Reception for their wonderful Nativity Play. The children did so well to remember all the songs and lines – and a big thanks to you at home for helping with the costumes.

These things don't work so well by accident of course, and we all need to say a big, "Well done!" to Miss Harrison and the Reception team for putting the play together over many weeks.

New Homework Policy Meeting

We will be introducing a new Homework Policy after Christmas. If you would like to hear more about it, there will be a meeting for parents at 8:30am in the CDT Room on Wednesday 9th January. The new Policy will be on the website for all to see shortly after this meeting, and the children will be bringing home their new homework grids during the first week of the new term.

Staffing Changes

Those directly affected will already know, but there will be some changes to the teachers in some of the classes in the New Year. The classes and teachers for the first half of term will be as follows:

- Nursery – Mrs Goodes
- Apple – Mrs Stratton
- Cherry – Miss Harrison
- Walnut – Mrs Wojcik and Miss Surtees
- Willow – Mrs Garwell
- Beech – Mrs Ketley and Mrs Westgate
- Hazel – Miss Johnson
- Maple – Miss Smith
- Hawthorn – Miss Carter
- Laburnum – Mrs Herman
- Holly – Mrs Wells
- Rowan – Miss Burrows
- Cedar – Mrs Lester and Mr Hicks
- Chestnut – Mr Redmile
- Elm – Mrs Ackah
- Oak – Mr Davis and Mrs Carter

Mrs Jacobs and (another) Miss Johnson will also be joining the team in January, and will have class responsibility from February Half Term – more on this to come.

Sadly, we will be saying goodbye to Miss Newell, who has been working in Walnut Class this term, and Mr Martin, who has supported art in the school for many years. We wish them luck in their future endeavours.

Winter Reading Challenge

Did your children enjoy taking part in the Summer Reading Challenge 'Mischief Makers'? Then you will be pleased to know that The Reading Agency is running a Winter Mini Challenge, to encourage children to snuggle down with a book and keep reading through the cold winter holidays.

Based on the book 'There's a yeti in the playground' by Blue Peter Award winners Pamela Butchart and Thomas Flintham, The Winter Mini Challenge starts on Saturday 1st December and finishes on Friday 11th January.

The challenge will be run online through the Winter Mini Challenge website, although website name is confusingly called Summer Reading Challenge! <https://summerreadingchallenge.org.uk/>

Children simply read three books of their choice, add them to their WMC website profile and leave a short book review. They will unlock rewards, including a virtual badge and a certificate to print off and keep. The website will also have a whole host of fun activities, quizzes and reading recommendations, plus an exciting new competition.

Stars of the Week

Well done to all the children for their hard work this week. The following children were particularly celebrated for their effort, behaviour and achievement in class.

Early Years – Jessica in Apple; Emma in Cherry.

Key Stage 1 – Daniela in Willow; Kamile in Walnut; Adamas in Beech; Emilis in Hazel; Gabriela in Maple.

Key Stage 2 – Darija in Hawthorn; Kamile in Laburnum; Xyjahn in Holly; Manuelis in Rowan; Jemma in Cedar; Armante in Chestnut; Bradley in Elm; Kody in Oak.

Attendance

Attendance across the school since Friday 7th December was as follows. We understand that children are occasionally ill and sometimes it is inappropriate for them to be in school, but we are working towards the Government target of 96% attendance over the course of the year.

Whole School – 94.2%

Early Years – 91.5% in Apple; 93% in Cherry.

Key Stage 1 – 93.1% in Willow; 92.1% in Walnut; 93% in Beech; 94.9% in Hazel; 94.9% in Maple.

Key Stage 2 – 94.8% in Hawthorn; 94.8% in Laburnum; 94% in Holly; 93.9% in Rowan; 97.3% in Cedar; 95.3% in Chestnut; 93.3% in Elm; 93.9% in Oak.

Congratulations to Cedar class for having the best attendance in the school during this time.

The Attendance Cup for the Half Term, which was presented in assembly by Mrs Hasler, our Chair of Governors, went to Laburnum Class – well done to them!

And Finally...

Mrs Claxton would like to take this opportunity to thank parents for their warm welcome to herself and Mr Steeden this term and for all your feedback both good and bad! It has been a very busy term with a clear whole school focus on recruiting teachers and improving the quality of teaching and learning. We have a number of new staff starting in the New Year who between them bring a rich mixture of youth and experience, but enthusiasm to make a positive difference to your children's education is the value that unites them all. I would also like to pay tribute to the existing staff at Orchards who were tremendous in their efforts to help us both 'hit the ground running'.

Merry Christmas to you all – have a happy and relaxing break!

Thank you for all the support you provide for the children and our academy!

