



Newsletter

4th June 21

Dear Parents

We can't believe that we have finally reached June, following this very different year in school. We have had a great spell of weather and the children have all been enjoying learning outdoors.

Even though restrictions are easing, please continue to be mindful that Covid 19 is still in our community and we really want to keep our community and classes safe until the end of June.

Please continue to wear face masks at drop off and pick up times.

COVID REMINDERS Children should not attend school if:

- they appear unwell
- they, or a member of their household, displays any symptoms of COVID-19

Please contact the PHA for further advice.

<https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/covid-19-coronavirus/covid-19-information-public>

OUTDOOR CLASSROOM

We are delighted that our outdoor classroom has arrived. All classes have been able to enjoy using this for outdoor learning. This was funded through our Shared Education programme and will be an additional space to use and will be very useful when we have other schools visiting us in the future.



PLAY AREA

We would like to develop an outdoor adventure play area beside the nursery, for use by the whole school. We have had various quotes from companies but it looks like we will have to do a lot of fundraising to make this happen. We had a generous donation from a local company and that has started off our fund.

We plan to have a 'Summer Day' on **Wednesday 23rd June**. Pupils can come in summer clothing, shorts, t shirts, hats, sunglasses. We would ask that all pupils bring in a donation and this will go towards our play area fund.

FUNDRAISING

As you are aware we have not had an active PTA this year due to Covid-19, therefore we have been unable to continue to fundraise. Please continue to raise funds for us through easy fundraising.



Please consider raising funds for the school via the **PTA's Easy Fundraising online service**. Shopping doesn't cost you a penny more, but as you make purchases online items through Amazon, Ebay, M&S, Tesco, Argos, Boden and many more shops, you can make a **donation to the PTA**. All you have to do is register (it's good to select the "Donation Reminder" option) and start shopping. Please give it a go and encourage your friends and family to do so

too - it is free money to benefit the children of Orchard County Primary School and Nursery! Please register by clicking the link below: <https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/orchardcountyprimaryschoolpta/>

Once you have joined, the next time you shop online, start at [easyfundraising.org.uk](https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk) and log in. If you shop with your phone or tablet you can download the **easy fundraising app**.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR SPORTS



The pupils have really enjoyed the range of activities over the last number of weeks. Netball, pilates, fit club, cricket, rounders and running will continue for another few weeks. Please see the timetable.

I would like to thank all the staff and coaches for offering the children these opportunities.

Please send your child on these days in their PE kit, with navy tracksuit bottoms, school jumper or hoodie, trainers and a coat as we will be outside unless there is heavy rain.



Tuesday 8th June and our practice day will be Monday 7th June.

Please send pupils in their PE kits on both these days.

We understand that parents really enjoy coming to sports day but due to Covid 19 restrictions unfortunately this will **not be possible**. The governors and staff have to follow the guidance set by the Department of Education and the Education Authority and they are not permitting parents to come to school for events such as this. We therefore plan to run our sports day with only the staff and pupils and have a great fun day. We really appreciate that at least we have our pupils here this year to do this. We hope that all the pupils will be able to sit in their class bubbles (socially distanced) and watch the other classes. We hope to record activities and post these on Google Classroom or the school website to enable parents to see some of the events. I hope you understand that we want to try to keep all our classes safe until the end of June and we look forward to next year when hopefully parents will be able to join us again.

CYCLING PROFICIENCY

This will be completed next week hopefully. The P7s have been great and I hope they put into action all the knowledge they have gained through the scheme.

NURSERY and P1 ADMISSION

Nursery and P1 packs can be collected from the office window.

Nursery Induction Parents' Zoom Meeting- Thursday 10th June at 2pm

P1 Induction Parents' Zoom Meeting- Wednesday 9th June at 3pm

Links have been sent for these meetings by email. Please remember to click on the forms link to notify us of your intention to attend.

SUMMER UNIFORM- Term 3

Summer uniform for girls is the red and white gingham dress, white socks and black shoes. Boys and girls may wear a red polo shirt instead of the shirt and tie. This should be worn with their normal grey skirt, grey school shorts or trousers and black shoes.

PE uniform- red polo shirt, navy skort/shorts, navy tracksuit bottoms, trainers, school hoodie or jumper.

GREAT BIG PURPLE PICNIC

We had a fantastic day on Friday 14th May for our 'Great Big Purple Picnic Day'. The staff and pupils all really enjoyed having lunch outside. We had music and dancing and lots of smiles.

We raised £500 for Action Mental Health that they will put it to good use to raise awareness of positive mental health in NI. AMH have been in school leading P5/6 and P6/7 through two workshops to help promote good mental health. These workshops are always excellent and are really good in getting our pupils to think and talk about the importance of good mental health.



PAST PUPILS

Sabrina Greenaway

As a school community we were saddened to hear of the passing of one of our past pupils, Sabrina Greenaway. Sabrina was an excellent pupil and a great ambassador for Orchard County PS. As we are collecting in our P7 school trophies, we see Sabrina's name on quite a few in 2011/12. We knew Sabrina would excel and she proved us right, going onto achieve 10A*s at GCSE, 4A*s at A level and then transferred to study at Queens University. We have such lovely memories of Sabrina, her smile, her impeccable manners and her helpfulness. From the whole school community, we pass on our sympathies to John, Jean and Jonathan Greenaway.



Darren Robinson

Darren Robinson, one of our past pupils and brother of our current pupil, Ray, has signed a three-year deal for Derby County in England. Darren's talent was spotted very early on at Orchard County, he always had great skill and passion for the game. He was a valued member of our football team and was very dedicated to the sport. I taught Darren in P7 and I still remember telling him when he was leaving, that I hoped he would remember me when he was a rich and famous footballer. It looks like he is certainly on his way!

The Orchard County community wish Darren well as he sets off later this month on his new adventure. We are all very proud of Darren and we expect to continue to hear great things about him.

Winning one of the many primary school football cups



Darren with his very proud mum and dad



P7 NOTIFICATION OF POST PRIMARY SCHOOL- Saturday 12th June

The Education Authority has shared the concerns of many parents and school leaders in both the primary and post-primary sectors with regard to the timetabled notification of outcome date of 19 June 2021. I am pleased to advise you that the new online system has enabled faster processing of applications by schools and has made it possible to bring forward the parental notification of outcome of applications to **Saturday, 12th June 2021**.

Parents who had applied online will be able to login to the EA Post-Primary Application from **9am on Saturday, 12th June 2021** to receive the outcome of their child's application. Please note that parents cannot indicate acceptance or refusal of a place offered via the online portal. If any post-primary schools require confirmation, they will contact you directly with instructions on how they should respond.

REPORTS

School reports will be issued to all parents, week beginning Monday 21st June.

HOLIDAY

Primary School ends for P7 on Friday 25th June

School ends for P1-6 in Monday 28th June at 12 noon

P7 FINAL ASSEMBLY -Tuesday 22nd June 11am

This is a very special occasion for P7 pupils and their parents. I really understand how P7 parents would like to be part of this very special end to their child's primary school career. The governors and staff would love to be able to have parents in for this event but we must follow the Department of Education and the Education Authority's guidance. Therefore, we can't bring parents onsite for final assembly but we would like you to join us via Zoom for our final assembly. I hope our technology holds out! I will send you the Zoom link and details in a separate letter next week. We are delighted that this year we will have the most important people, our P7 pupils, face to face in school for their final assembly. The P7 class last year did not get this opportunity as our final assembly was virtual.

We plan to have a **FUN DAY** on **Friday 25th June for P7**. This will be a non-uniform day for P7 only, with lots of special activities. This will be their last day at primary school, so we want to make it special. They have chosen their favourite meal and the kitchen staff will cook this for them. They will not be required to attend on Monday 28th June. A letter will be sent out next week with more details.

THANK YOU

Thank you to the Willis and McConnell family who have donated cups to be presented to our P7s this year. We really appreciate your thoughtfulness and generosity.

MESSAGE FOR P7

P7, this will be your last OCPS newsletter. I want to say a very special thanks to you all for the enthusiasm and fun you have brought to Orchard County PS. You are a very special group of pupils, so thoughtful, accommodating, talented and a great group of friends. It has been a difficult year for you all but you have kept smiling and have still achieved great things. I want to also thank your parents for their support to Orchard County PS over the past 7/8 years.

The governors and staff wish you all every success and happiness as you move to your new schools. I hope I will be writing about your successes, in the years ahead, on our school newsletter.

Remember our school motto 'Treasure your past and invest in your future'. You can treasure the time you spent at Orchard County PS but now is your chance to invest in your future, as you begin another chapter, at a new school.

CONGRATULATIONS

It is with mixed emotions that I have to inform you that Miss Barnes will be leaving Orchard County at the end of June. She has been successful in obtaining a full time post in Magherafelt Primary School. She has been an excellent teacher in P6/7 and P4/5 and a great team member of the Orchard County staff. I know the pupils and staff will really miss her but we knew we couldn't keep her, when she was offered a full time post. We are delighted for her and will send her off with our best wishes and know that her new class and school will be very lucky to have her.

Her replacement for her 2-day post in P6/7 at Orchard County will be confirmed before the start of next year.

Mrs Neill will be due to return from maternity leave in January 2022. We are delighted that Miss Bothwell will continue to cover her absence in P4/5 until Christmas 2021.

Thank you for your continued support.

J McMillan

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