



ORCHARD COUNTY PRIMARY SCHOOL
To Treasure Our Past and Invest in Our Future

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Dear Parents

At Orchard County we greatly appreciate your help and support with homework activities and the staff are always willing to assist parents with any queries regarding homework. In school the staff have a full class of pupils to support and due to budget cuts, it is not possible to have full time classroom assistants to offer 1:1 support, unless a pupil has a statement for educational needs. Therefore, we really appreciate and see the benefits of parents working with their children on a 1:1 basis regularly at home. Please read the 'miss-school, miss-out' section on the NI Direct website (see over page).

Following our 'Support for Parents' survey, I wish to inform you of the training and support we can offer for parents this school year.

At our parent information afternoon in September, each teacher spoke to parents about the year ahead. Some explained processes such as subtraction by decomposition, Accelerated Reader and Mathletics. Hopefully these meetings were useful for those who attended.

Accelerated Reader

Accelerated Reader is a scheme to encourage reading for pleasure. Pupils read a book, take an online quiz and the pupil and teacher receives immediate feedback. P5-P7 pupils are taking part in the Accelerated Reader programme and we are really seeing progress being made by those pupils who are reading regularly and reaching their targets. Keep encouraging your child to read regularly at home and discuss their books; this will assist them with their quizzes and comprehension skills. If you have any queries, please speak to Mrs Neill, Literacy co-ordinator.

Mathletics

Mathletics is an invaluable online and offline resource to reinforce maths concepts introduced in school. It helps children consolidate their understanding at home and lets parents see the topics being covered in class. All pupils were given the opportunity to get involved in the Mathletics programme. This has encouraged excellent home/school links with pupils being able to complete tasks at home on topics they have been studying in class. Again we really see the benefits of this with many pupils and the competitive nature has brought real excitement for Numeracy in the classroom. Please encourage your child to complete the activities set by their teacher each week. If you have any queries regarding Mathletics, please speak to Mrs Allen, Numeracy co-ordinator.

Nursery to P2 Ready to Learn Programme

The Ready to learn Programme is a parent workshop designed to support parents in maximising their child's potential for learning in school. The workshop will explore;

- Staying alert in school including adequate sleep, attention and screen time.
- Speech, language and communication
- Nutrition
- Motor skills and sensory awareness
- Behaviour
- Resilience and self-esteem.

We recognise that each child should feel valued and be given the opportunity to reach their full potential through a positive home/school partnership. We are delighted to invite parents/carers of children aged from Nursery-Primary 2 to this beneficial training led by RISE NI.

This two-hour training programme will take place in school on **Tuesday, 26th November 2.30-4.30pm**. Please indicate whether you would like to attend the training and complete the reply slip below, returning to school as soon as possible. If you require any further information regarding this, please contact Mrs Davidson, SENCO.

RISE will also be supporting P1/2 (Mrs D/Mrs McC) with an additional PE programme focusing on following instructions through movement. This 4 week programme will run on 14th, 21st, 28th Nov and 5th December.

Literacy/Phonics

A few parents asked for some support with phonics. We intend to offer some phonics training for parents in Term 2.

Attendance

Good attendance at school is not just beneficial, it's **essential**. Going to school regularly helps to develop friendships, social skills, life skills and improves learning opportunities. The Education Welfare Service have access to all attendance information for all pupils. If your child is missing school or is continually late, without good reason, the EWS have the authority to find out why. If your child is at school for **90%** of the year then they have missed **19 days** (almost four whole weeks of school).

To avoid disruption to your child's education, you should arrange (as far as possible) appointments and outings after school hours or during holidays. Taking holidays during term time are recorded as unauthorised absence. Please continue to encourage good attendance and punctuality, it really does make a difference.

Below are some useful websites for parents with top tips for parents on positive parenting, dealing with bullying, safety, friendship skills, managing behaviour, mental health, improving self-esteem, attendance, building resilience, promoting independence and managing emotions. Please check these out:

- www.nidirect.gov.uk/miss-school-miss-out
- www.parenting.ni.org/resources/top-tips/

If you have any further questions, please contact school as we want each child at Orchard County to achieve their **full potential** and this can be achieved through a great partnership with parents and staff.

Yours faithfully

Mrs J McMillan

Principal

Ready to Learn Programme

Name of child _____

Class _____

I/We wish to attend training on Tuesday 26th November

I/We do not wish to attend training

Name/s of parent/parents attending _____

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