

## Orchard School Bristol

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**Headteacher:** Mrs Julia Hinchliffe **MA (Hons), MA, NPQH**

5 January 2021

Dear parents and carers

### Lockdown Update

The news yesterday evening confirmed that we are returning to lockdown for Term 3. Children will be at home studying, unless they are the child of a critical worker or a vulnerable child. By reducing the number of children and adults in school together, we all hope the spread of the COVID pandemic will be controlled and this will reduce the pressure on the NHS until a vaccine can be fully rolled out. I understand that as parents/carers you may be very concerned with this news, but I want to reassure you of the Remote Learning that is in place to support the education of your children this term.

### What does Remote Learning look like?

Each weekday morning at 8.40am your child needs to log onto their laptop to see their tutor and get a registration mark. The tutor reminds students of their daily timetable and lets them know which lessons are 'live' (ie taught online by the teacher at that time) and which are recorded and can be accessed at any point through the day. Your child works through these lessons, either into their school exercise books or online, and is expected to be studying for at least 4 hours per day. Teachers monitor all children's engagement in lessons across the week, so we can see who is doing well and who needs more support. House Points (1s) are available for students with excellent engagement.

You can read more about Remote Learning expectations on our website and get a YouTube video to help with Microsoft Teams by clicking on this link: [Remote Learning from Orchard School](#)

### Borrow a laptop for free

All children at Orchard School can borrow a laptop so they can take part in Remote Learning fully.

We have invested over £90,000 in laptops over the last couple of years, to support our students with IT skills for the future and being able to access the highest quality learning in school and at home.

We are not sending out paper copies in envelopes anymore, as we need to ensure all students have access to the same high-quality learning.



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If you need help connecting to wireless or mobile broadband, we may be able to support with this too. Please note a smartphone is not enough. Each child will need a laptop. If your child does not have access to their own laptop, please contact your Pastoral Manager (email details below). If you have more than one child learning at home, we also recommend each child uses earphones to help them study without being disturbed.

I am really proud of our staff who have rapidly developed their expertise in Microsoft Teams and are delivering excellent lessons online. Teachers ensure that instructions are clear, with some narrated elements, and many are keen to deliver 'live' to keep students motivated and on track.

### **Missing Out**

It is very important that your child does not miss out on their education during this lockdown. If you are struggling to get your child engaged in learning, or they are in a routine where they're not getting up on time or are not in a good place mentally to study, please contact your Pastoral Manager. We will try our best to help. More and more of our children have learned how to work well at home online, and we are very pleased with the excellent engagement in learning. This means that more than ever any children who stop engaging, or who don't complete their work, will be falling behind their peers and will struggle to catch up. Please encourage your child to get into a new routine now. If you need any help, please contact your Pastoral Manager.

### **Pastoral Manager emails:**

Year 7            [nantigha@orchard.tila.school](mailto:nantigha@orchard.tila.school)  
Year 8            [dpiper@orchard.tila.school](mailto:dpiper@orchard.tila.school)  
Year 9            [ebhakerd@orchard.tila.school](mailto:ebhakerd@orchard.tila.school)  
Year 10          [tpointing@orchard.tila.school](mailto:tpointing@orchard.tila.school)  
Head of Year 11 [mgrafton@orchard.tila.school](mailto:mgrafton@orchard.tila.school)

### **Critical Keyworker and Vulnerable Children**

We will be sending out a booking form each week for you to book in your child to be in school to access their learning. Please note this is only for children who come under the definition of critical workers and vulnerable children

### **Covid Testing**

For children of Critical Keyworkers and Vulnerable children in school, we aim to start the testing of this from next week, so it is essential please that you complete the [Online CONSENT Form](#) in the next couple of days.

We are extending the deadline on the consent form and encourage all parents to sign their children up for testing (please read the [Privacy Notice](#)), so your child will have access to testing at the earliest opportunity.

We are postponing our plans for mass testing until just before children come back into school for Term 4, so will be back in touch with you to arrange for your child to come in for their two tests towards the end of term 3/ start of term 4.

### **Free School Meals**

We are arranging for parents in receipt of Free School Meals to collect their food hamper for the next few days. Please don't waste your food hamper – if your child receives a Free School Meal, you are entitled to this hamper. Our admin team will be in touch with you to let you know the dates/times you can collect your hamper. We are aiming to move to the voucher system as soon as possible.

If you think your child may now be eligible for free school meals, please complete the form here: [Apply for Free School Meals](#).

We know lockdown is a difficult time for many families. Please remember that you are part of our Orchard School family, and we are here to help you. Just email [info@orchard.tila.school](mailto:info@orchard.tila.school) or call us on 0117 377 2000 and we will do our best to support you.

Yours sincerely



Julia Hinchliffe, Headteacher