ORCHARD LEA JUNIOR SCHOOL

Parent Handbook- 2026 - 2027

Ofsted Good Provider

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Orchard Lea Junior School

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Orchard Lea Federation

Welcome Message

The Orchard Lea Federation comprises of an infant school and a junior school based on the same site. Both schools work closely together and some key staff work across both schools. This joint approach helps to ensure that our pupils have a cohesive and progressive primary experience.

We have lovely school grounds and enjoy making use of the space that we have to enhance our offer. For example, pupils enjoy using our daily mile track and scooting around our spacious playgrounds!

We have dedicated staff and a supportive Governing Body and together we work hard to deliver the best for all our pupils. We are committed to providing a safe, secure and stimulating learning environment where each one of our pupils can achieve their potential and flourish academically and socially. We have high expectations of all our pupils and endeavour to nurture their self-confidence and self-esteem so that they can develop to their full potential.

We hope you find this handbook useful but cannot capture everything in this document so do please see our website. Additionally, we are always happy for people to visit our lovely schools.

We look forward to meeting you.

‘New leadership has brought vision, high expectations and stability to this school. Pupils are now learning well. They are happy and enthusiastic, engaging in learning with vigour. Pupils are courteous, polite and show excellent manners. They behave well both in classrooms and at playtimes.” OFSTED in July 2024.

Who is Who?

Executive Headteacher- Mrs Ackerman
Mrs Ackerman works across both the infant and junior school and is responsible for the strategic direction of the Federation.

Junior - Head of School- Mrs Hawkins
Mrs Hawkins is responsible for the day to day running of the junior school.

Teaching and Learning Lead- Miss Wilson
Miss Wilson works across both the infant and junior and supports in ensuring the quality of teaching and learning is high as well as having responsibility for Pupil Premium across the federation.

Parent Support Advisor & ELSA- Mrs Ledgister (junior)
Mrs Ledgister works with parents to support them with any aspect of their life which might impact on pupils. Additionally, Mrs Ledgister meets with identified children to support them with their emotional needs and wellbeing.

SENCo- Mrs Cook
Mrs Cook works across the federation. She has responsibility for all children on the SEND registers and oversees that they are getting the support they require to enable them to be successful in their learning.

Office Staff
Ms Wells - Business Manager
Miss Wells - Admin Assistant

Our School

Contacting the School

Our friendly admin team will be happy to help with enquiries and messages as well as arranging appointments. The office is open Monday to Friday from 8.15am to 4.00pm and there is an answerphone for messages outside those times. You can also email the office on adminoffice@orchardlea-jun.hants.sch.uk.

Most of the information you need about the school is in this handbook but our website and Facebook page also gives a different insight into the school. Letters and weekly newsletters are emailed home to help you stay aware of key dates and information as well as being informed about recent learning and events that have taken place.

The School Day

8:40 - 8:50	Arrive at school for learning tasks
8:50 – 9.00	Registration
9:00 - 10:40	First Morning Session
10:40 - 10:55	Morning Break
10:55 - 12:00	Second Morning Session
12:00 - 13:00	Lunch
13:00 - 15:15	Afternoon Session

The classroom doors will be open from 8.40am until 08.50am. These doors are then closed and the children have to enter via the school office and will be marked as late. Children should not arrive at school before 08.40 as there is no one to supervise them.

School Meals

Hot meals cooked and prepared by Dolce School Catering and can be purchased by all children and are provided to those children that are entitled to free school meals. Meals cost £3.20 per day and must be pre-ordered using School Grid.

Instead of a hot school dinner, children can bring in a packed lunch. This should be healthy and contain no nuts.

Morning Snack

For mid-morning break, children can bring in their own fruit or raw vegetables to eat.

Afternoons

School finishes at 3.15pm. Children are accompanied by the class teacher and dismissed at the front playground. Children will only be able to leave with adults listed on the school collection list. Children in Year 5 and 6, whom have permission, may leave school unaccompanied in order to walk home independently.

We try to offer a range of after school clubs for children including; gymnastics, Dodgeball, Netball, drama, art, sewing, Lego and football. Most after school clubs finish at 4.15pm. For most clubs, children will be brought to the sails outside the hall for collection. Parents will be sent links each term to be able to sign-up to the clubs available.

Attendance and Absence

Punctuality and regular attendance are imperative in order for all children to achieve their full potential. Government expectations are that children's attendance is at least 95%. Attendance data is monitored by the Head of School and parents will be informed if attendance data goes below 90%. By law, applications for absence can only be granted in exceptional circumstances - a form is available on our website or at the office. Year 6 pupils should be in school in May for the SATs and in June for writing assessments. Please see our attendance policy on the school website for further details.

Reporting an Absence

You should ring the school before 9.30am to explain that your child won't be in due to illness. Children should not be in school until 48 hours after the last episode of sickness and diarrhoea. Any absence not explained is regarded as unauthorised. If absence is persistent you may be asked to provide medical evidence or appointment details. Please try to make doctor and dentist appointments outside of school hours. You will need to provide evidence (e.g. appointment cards) for appointments in school time.

Arriving Late

After 8:50am a pupil will be marked as late and will need to enter via the school office as the classroom doors will be closed. If you are going to be later than 9.30am, you should ring the school to explain. If your child has a school meal, please ring the office to order. It really does help your child, and their class and teacher, to be in school on time as children are set morning tasks and heard read from 8:40am.

Collecting Late

If you're unavoidably late, your child will be taken inside the school building and will wait for you at the school office. You should ring the school to let them know you are on your way. It is not permitted for your child go home with somebody else (unless a prior arrangement has been made with the office) as this can cause confusion.

Collection by Another Adult

You should notify the office if someone other than those listed on the school collection form will be collecting your child. They will not be permitted to leave the school with anyone else until we have received permission from parents.

Parking and Gate Closure Times

For safety reasons pupils may not be dropped off or collected from the school site by car except by prior arrangement with the school. Disabled site parking permits can be applied for from the school office.

For the children's safety and security, the carpark gates are kept closed from 8:15am. The pedestrian gates on Red Barn Lane and Winnington Close are closed and locked between 9.30am and 2.50pm.

School Organisation

We are a junior school accepting children from the ages of 7-11 years, with a maximum class size of 32.

The children spend most of the time with their class teacher who becomes important and influential in their school lives. Children may be taught as a whole class, in smaller groups or individually, the method being chosen to suit the children and the subject being taught. The teachers within a year group plan the work together and may teach their specialist subject to all classes in that year.

Within classes, children are flexibly grouped on a daily basis according to the teacher's assessment of how secure the learning was in the previous lesson, in this way the work can be matched to their individual needs. Children may work in mixed ability groups for other areas of the curriculum.

Our School Environment

Our school is set in extensive grounds and forms an excellent environment in which children can learn and grow. We all share in keeping the school in good order so that it is a place of which we can all be proud and where we can all give our best. The children have access to a wooded area and play trail as well as the two playgrounds, one for the lower and one for the upper school.

We have a well-equipped ICT suite with 32 new laptops, which are used throughout the curriculum. In addition, each classroom is equipped with an interactive whiteboard and has access to Chromebooks and 32 new Ipads.

Our well-stocked library is located off the school hall and houses a modern and constantly updated supply of both fiction and non-fiction books. It is managed by the school's librarian with the book supply regularly enriched by the Hampshire School Library Service. Your child will receive a full induction to the library in the first few weeks of the term by our librarian, Mrs Osborne.

Other areas of the school include a well-equipped music room, a dedicated art and DT room, an ELSA room and a large hall used for P.E, school assemblies, performances and school lunches.

Home Learning

A strong home-school partnership is important if pupils are to make excellent progress at school. Home learning tasks can be accessed via Google Classroom and are designed to support the development of key skills or to reinforce work the children have covered in their lessons. The class teacher will discuss the task with the children but it is also recommended that parents discuss the task with their child. This is useful to ensure that they fully understand the instructions and gain the maximum benefit from the task. It is also important to encourage their children to take pride in the presentation of their work.

Our Home Learning programme is progressive in that more is expected from the children as they get older and this should help prepare them by Year 6 for secondary school. We recommend that all pupils should read for approximately 15 minutes four times a week and that they should read with an adult as frequently as possible, no matter what year group.

In addition to reading aloud, Year 3 and 4 are set either a spelling or multiplication related homework each week. Year 5 and 6 have weekly spellings they are expected to learn and an arithmetic activity as well as either an English or maths related activity they have to complete. Year 6 will have some SATs related revision set in the Spring term.

Pupils study a broad curriculum in line with the national curriculum…Pupils' work is of high quality. They take great pride in what they produce. In many subjects, pupils recall their knowledge accurately. Ofsted 2024

Parent Communications

We operate a texting and email service called 'Arbor' which will show as OrchardLeaJ. It has proved to be a successful and reliable communication with parents. You will receive login instructions by email. As such, we use this service to send the majority of school correspondence instead of sending paper copies home. Paper copies are available on request.

Opportunities to share my child's learning

The staff and governors would like to encourage you all to attend the school at every opportunity possible, particularly when year groups share their learning at parent topic events. These sessions are very rewarding and the children really do enjoy themselves and this is even more enhanced if they know someone is coming to see them personally.

Parents are invited to attend our weekly Celebration Assemblies held on Friday mornings if their child is receiving a Learning Powers certificate. If you are unable to attend the assembly, it may be possible to hold back the certificate to another week, please contact the office to do this.

Parents' Evenings are held twice yearly in the autumn and spring terms. An end of year report is provided in July. Meetings with individual teachers or other staff can be arranged at other times as needed.

Houses

All children are divided into four houses, this happens in the infant school. These are red, blue, yellow and green in colour. At the junior school the children name these houses linked to special events or theme of their choice.
Siblings are placed in the same house team. By being in a house, the children work collaboratively to earn house points and team rewards as well as competing in sporting events. Each house is led by two Year 6 house captains which are voted in by the pupils.

Our School Learning Powers

We believe that in addition to the knowledge and skills the children are taught in lessons, there are key 'Learning Powers' which we wish to develop in all of our pupils in order for them to be the best learner and member of society they can be.

Our Learning Powers are:

Caring **Independent** **Reflective** **Collaborative** **Resilient**

One child in each class receives a certificate each week for displaying or developing one of these Learning Powers. Additionally, children receive house points to reward them for demonstrating these Learning Powers. The children are taught about them through assemblies and within lessons.

Rewards

We believe in the use of rewards to reinforce positive behaviour, good attitudes to learning and others, putting in effort and improving standards. These are recognised through verbal praise, stickers, house points and certificates. Classes can work towards earning reward time by collectively demonstrating or improving identified behaviours and attitudes.

Sanctions

If a child makes poor choices, there is a tiered system which outlines the response from the teacher.

Further information can be found in our behaviour policy on the school website.

"Pupils and staff understand and follow the new behaviour policy successfully.

Pupils love winning house points and nominating their friends for 'star of the week'.

They know the school's learning behaviours of being 'caring, resilient, collaborative, independent and reflective' well. They show them in much of what they do."

Ofsted 2024

School Uniform

We aim to foster a feeling of community, pride and high expectation in our school. Our uniform is as follows:

- Grey smart trousers, skirt or long tailored shorts
- White shirt or polo shirt
- Blue and white dresses
- Royal blue sweatshirt
- Completely black shoes with low heels

Open toe shoes are not permitted for safety reasons.

Your child may wear a watch to school, (no smart watches) which they are responsible for but other jewellery should not be worn. If your child has pierced ears one pair of plain studs may be worn. For reasons of health and safety, studs must be removed when your child is taking part in PE or games. If they cannot be removed, because of a recent piercing for example, they may be taped.

Extreme hairstyles are not permitted including shaved patterns, tramlines, and the dyeing of hair in bright colours. Nail varnish and make up are also not permitted.

PE Clothing

For PE children need a pair of black or navy blue shorts, a pair of plimsolls and a white T-shirt. For outdoor games in cold weather a black or navy blue tracksuit and trainers are required. A small simple bag is required with your child's name on to keep their kit in. For reasons of hygiene children must change for PE and games and we ask that P.E kits remain in school throughout the week.

Please label all clothes with your child's name to prevent items getting lost.

Lost Property

Lost property is stored in the classrooms. Staff will make every effort to reunite lost items with their owners but this is only possible when they are named. Unclaimed, unmarked items of lost property will be retained only for a short period before disposal.

Mobile Phones in School

Pupils are not allowed and do not need mobile phones in school. Should it be essential for your child to have a mobile phone for safety reasons when walking home alone, then the phone must be left at the school office and a parental permission form must be completed. The School cannot accept any liability for phones on the school site.

The Curriculum

The curriculum is the whole learning experience offered by the school. It is not only all the lessons and activities which are planned and organised while the children are at school, it is also the attitudes and values we promote.

We aim to develop children as motivated and enthusiastic life-long learners providing them with the knowledge and skills to help them learn. Our curriculum is designed so that it is well sequenced and progressive thus ensuring children feel challenged in their learning so that they know more and can do more as a result.

We believe strongly in developing the fundamental skill of reading as it is the key to the whole curriculum. For those children who join us having not yet secured this skill, the school follows Read, Write, Inc for phonic interventions. Teaching reading to all children is taught daily as well as the children being exposed to rich and varied texts in English lessons and dedicated story time at the end of every day.

English is both a subject in its own right and a vital means of communication throughout the curriculum. Children are taught to develop not only their reading but also their writing, spelling, handwriting and speaking and listening skills.

In Mathematics, children will learn to understand the language and concepts needed for everyday life. To do this they must develop a secure understanding of the number system, mental maths skills such as multiplication facts and the written methods for addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. Our children then apply mathematical ideas to practical problem solving and investigative work. To support children in developing a secure understanding, we use concrete and pictorial representations of mathematics before using abstract methods.

Science gives children the opportunity to examine, in a systematic way, the physical and natural world around them. Children will be asked to predict, test, record and conclude according to their ability. Our extensive grounds are extremely useful in carrying out practical scientific activities.

Music is encouraged throughout the school through listening, singing and playing instruments. In Year 4 and 5, all pupils receive music instrument lessons delivered by Hampshire Music Service. Every term, the children are taught how to play a new instrument by a specialist teacher. This is funded by the school. Additional paid instrument lessons are available for a range of instruments.

Physical Education

All children are required to participate in Physical Education. All children have two PE lessons per week, often one outdoor PE lesson and one indoor PE lesson. In Year 5, children take part in swimming lessons, which is a National Curriculum requirement. The school also engages with the schools in the local community so that our children are offered a wide variety of opportunities to participate in competitions. These are often held at our local secondary school but on occasion they are further afield. On these occasions we may require parent support in getting the children to the venues.

Religious Education

Religious Education is taught in line with guidelines laid down by Hampshire Education Authority and we follow the Living Difference IV syllabus. We have daily collective worship, which takes place as a whole school, class or year group. Parents have the right to withdraw their children from collective worship or RE lessons by putting their request in writing to the school and meeting with a school leader to discuss the request.

Personal Social Health Education (PSHE)

PSHE is taught as specific lessons and discreetly as part of the wider curriculum. Relationship and Sex Education is taught to our older pupils at an age appropriate level. Hygiene and puberty is covered in Year 5 and human reproduction in Year 6. Parents have the right to withdraw children from elements of Sex Education, although we would ask you to discuss this with the school before making any decision. Parents are offered the opportunity to view materials for these topics prior to the children's lessons. Our policy is available on the school the website.

Educational Trips

We provide the children with opportunities to experience visitors such as theatre groups, and to go on a number of educational visits. These are a really important part of the children's curriculum as the trips help the children to engage with the learning in a more practical way. There are at least two trips per year, designed to extend children's learning. Parents are usually needed to come too – your child's teacher may send a letter home prior to a trip asking for volunteers. A request for a voluntary contribution to cover such visits may be necessary and is payable on Scopay.

Year 4 Residential

Towards the end of Year 4, children are offered the chance to visit Stubbington Study Centre and sleepover for two nights. This is a great way to build pupil confidence and independence in readiness for upper school and to build their confidence before travelling further afield for the year 6 residential. During their stay, the children take part in beach studies, team building activities and get the opportunity to visit the hide to see badgers and foxes at night. We ran this residential for the first time in 2025 and it was a great success.

Year 6 Residential

During the Autumn term, children in Year 6 are offered the opportunity of participating in an activity week at a PGL centre, when they not only experience time away from home, but also set themselves a number of physical challenges. Activities may include climbing, archery, abseiling, fencing, quad-biking and orienteering, to name but a few. As well as these physical activities, children are also engaged in team building activities. A high percentage of pupils participate and it becomes one of their most lasting memories of their time in the school.

Year 2-3 Transition

Most pupils who join the school in Year Three, transition from Orchard Lea Infant school. Transition activities for the children start in the Summer term. Initially, Year 2 pupils visit Year 3 regularly to begin to familiarise themselves with the junior site and routines. There are additional planned activities including art activities and tours as well as transition morning where the children spend the whole morning with their new class and teacher in their new classroom. Some children benefit from additional extra transition which we plan for on an individual basis.

Pupil Voice

In order to give children at Orchard Lea Junior a 'voice' in how the school can be run and improved, we have a variety of councils pupils can be a part of. We have a School Council which consists of a representative from each class. They meet regularly with the members of staff who chair it and discuss issues raised by the children in their class. This is a useful forum to involve children in collective decision making and they take their roles very seriously. We also have Eco-Reps- who work to help the school be more environmentally friendly, Ecadets- who help spread e-safety messages, Play Leaders, who run games at lunchtime and pupil librarians who help to run and maintain the library.

Special Educational Needs

All children learn at different rates and it is our job to provide the right work and support for every child whether they are having difficulties keeping up or racing ahead. Programmes of work are organised for children with special needs and their learning is supported by the SEN co-ordinator and Learning Support staff. We also make use of help and advice from the Educational Psychology Service and the SEN Advisory Support Service. We will consult with you at an early stage if your child is identified as having special needs. A full Special Educational Needs Policy is available upon request at the school office.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) benefit from well-considered adaptations to achieve as well as their classmates. Ofsted 2024

Helping at School

The school welcomes the support of parents, and indeed, other relatives or friends. There are many ways that you can help out in school. Here are some of the main ones, but there are many more:

- the school PTA
- in the library
- hearing children read
- helping children with their spelling
- painting lessons
- sewing
- cooking
- going on school trips
- gardening

If you can assist with any of these, or have a skill that you feel may be of benefit to the school, please contact the office. We are really keen to involve the community with the school which really benefits the children.

Care and Safety

This school is committed to safeguarding children and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. We will ensure that all our recruitment and selection practices reflect this commitment. All successful candidates will be subject to Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) along with other relevant employment checks

Medication

We need to know how to reach you or a person named by you who will care for your child in an emergency. Please complete a contact form and keep us notified of any changes to work or mobile phone numbers.

If your child is under the care of the family doctor and taking medicine he or she is sometimes better off at home. Prescribed medicines will only be administered by the school office if the dosage exceeds three times per day. You will need to complete a form at the office and we will then try to ensure that the medicine is administered as directed.

We request that children who use inhalers have one in school which will be kept in the classroom.

In the event of a minor accident, we will give the necessary first aid. We will inform you if your child has had a bump to the head and if we feel medical or other attention is required.

No Smoking Policy

We aim to provide a smoke-free environment for all those who work and access the school site, therefore smoking is not permitted anywhere on the school site. This includes e-cigarettes.

Before and after school Childcare

The school work closely with TJS who provides early morning and after school clubs. Below are their contact details.

> TJs Club operate in a room at this school. Contact Tryphaena or Jo on 07495 699484 , by email contactus@tjsclub.co.uk or www.TJsclub.co.uk

Pupil Voice

We asked the pupils: What do you like about Orchard Lea Juniors?

"Everyone treats each other nicely." Year 6 pupil

"The lessons are challenging but the more you do it, the easier it gets. Also, teachers help everyone with their learning." Year 6 pupil

"At playtime we get to play lots of different games and sports with our friends." Year 3 pupil

"Celebration assembly is my favourite because we get to appreciate everything we have achieved this week." Year 4 pupil

"Teachers support you with your emotions." Year 6 pupil

"The residential was fun because you got to challenge yourself and try something new." Year 6 pupil

"I have fun in art lessons where we learn about famous artists and try to copy their style." Year 4 pupil

"There are lots of special jobs for children to do like House Captains, School Councillors and E-Cadets." Year 5 pupil

Governors

The role of the governors is to work with the Leadership team, staff and local authority to secure the best possible education for all our children. The Federation Governing Body comprises of a dedicated team of parents, local authority, community and staff members from both the infant and the junior school. It is a strong, committed and active group, whose members bring a wide range of expertise and experience to complement that of the Senior Leadership Teams. There is an excellent relationship between governors, staff and pupils, and many governors attend school regularly to assist with activities and support projects. A full governors' meeting is held twice each term.

PTA

We have a federation PTA- Orchard Lea and Friends- which meets regularly with school staff to plan fundraising events to enrich our pupils school experiences. They have funded things like author visits, a school panto and first aid lessons. Should you wish to get involved, please let the school know and we will pass on your details.

Complaints Procedure

If you have a complaint please let us know at once. In the first instance, you should first arrange to see your child's teacher. If this does not resolve the problem, contact the school office to book an appointment to see a senior leader. Most problems are usually solved in this way.

From time to time, parents, and others connected with the school, will become aware of matters that cause them concern. To encourage resolution of such situations the governing body has adopted a 'General Complaints Procedure'. Full details of the procedure are available in the policies section of the school website.

Accessibility Plan

The school has wheelchair access to the front entrance, school hall and most teaching areas. There is also a unisex toilet for the disabled with a changing area. If required, the school can use the LEA services to convert all written information into alternative formats. Each year governors review the Accessibility Plan and also the website.

Cycling

Cycle training is provided for Year 6 children by qualified staff. There may be a small charge for this training. As part of our School Travel Plan the children may cycle to school providing they meet the following rules:

- A cycle helmet is worn whilst cycling.
- Bicycles are made secure using the cycle rack provided in the front playground behind the fence.
- There is no cycling on the school site except for cycle training.