



19th December 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we come to the end of this term, I wanted to take a moment to reflect on what has been a positive and encouraging start to the year at The Orchard School, and to thank you for your continued trust and support.

Across the past two terms, there have been many moments to celebrate. Our pupils have worked hard to settle into routines, build relationships and take pride in their learning and their environment. We are seeing growing confidence across the school, with pupils increasingly able to talk about being *ready, respectful and safe*, and to recognise these qualities in themselves and others. This shared language is helping to bring consistency and reassurance for our young people, and it is making a real difference.

There have been some notable highlights. Year 3 have made impressive strides, showing increasing engagement and confidence, while Year 6 have navigated a particularly challenging term with resilience and support. Across the school, pupils have responded positively to the calm, predictable environments being created in classrooms and shared spaces. The move towards a more primary-style model in Key Stage 3 has also been encouraging, and pupil feedback tells us that many feel more settled and supported as a result.

We have also really valued the opportunities to welcome families into school. The primary gathering and the secondary craft afternoon were lovely examples of how strong partnerships between home and school can support pupils' confidence and sense of belonging. Your presence and encouragement matter greatly to our children, and we are keen to build on this further in the coming terms.

Behind the scenes, there has been a great deal of work to strengthen our therapeutic approach, with Therapeutic Thinking continuing to shape how we understand behaviour and support pupils. We have also begun to enhance our staffing and systems to ensure that this work is embedded consistently across the school.

None of this is possible without the dedication of our staff team, who continue to show care, patience and commitment to every child, every day. I am proud of the way they support our pupils and work closely with families to help each child feel safe, valued and understood.

As we approach the festive break, I hope it offers you time to rest, reconnect and enjoy being together. We look forward to welcoming everyone back in the new term, ready to build on the progress made so far.

On behalf of everyone at The Orchard School, I would like to wish you and your family a peaceful and happy festive break, and a very warm New Year.

Warm wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alistair". The script is cursive and fluid, with the first letter 'A' being particularly prominent.

Alistair Hammond
Headteacher