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Principal: Mr G Aldred
Executive Principal: Mr T Hague

Working Together to Support Your Child's Attendance, Preparedness, and Well-Being

Dear Families,

At Orchard Mead, our absolute priority is ensuring your child receives an excellent education in a safe, supportive, and structured environment. To protect lesson time and make sure our school resources are directed where they are needed most, we have recently spoken to all students about school readiness, communication rules, and how we manage minor illnesses and first aid during the school day.

We would greatly appreciate your support in reviewing these important guidelines at home so we can work together to keep our students healthy, focused, and fully prepared for their learning.

Attendance and Morning Illnesses: Balancing Health and Learning

Good school attendance is directly linked to your child's academic success and overall development. While we completely understand that children occasionally become genuinely too unwell to attend, we want to work together to minimize unnecessary absences caused by minor ailments that can be managed effectively.

If your child wakes up in the morning feeling slightly under the weather—such as with a mild headache, a slight scratchy throat, or feeling a bit tired—we ask that you encourage them to come to school. In most cases, students settle into their routine once the day begins. However, if they have a fever, a contagious stomach bug, or are genuinely unfit to learn, they should stay home to rest.

Please evaluate these symptoms carefully before they leave the house and provide any necessary medication. Where students attend school with ongoing illnesses or ailments, they can become frustrated with medical staff when they are unable to resolve their illness or symptoms. Please note that our school team are only able to provide immediate, temporary First Aid. As such, we do not hold medication on site to address or treat everyday bugs, colds, or the flu. Their priority remains to respond to sudden, unexpected accidents and emergencies that occur during the school day.

Communication and Mobile Phone Policy

We have noticed an increase in students bypassing staff completely by using their personal mobile phones to call or text home when they are feeling under the weather or anxious.

Please be reminded that students are strictly prohibited from using personal mobile phones to contact home during the school day. If a student uses their own phone to make contact, a sanction will be applied in line with the school's policy. If your child has a genuine medical emergency or feels suddenly, severely unwell, a member of staff will always handle the communication home through our official channels.

Personal Preparedness and Equipment

As is our approach, we encourage students to take personal responsibility for arriving at school fully prepared for all of their lessons. To minimise disruption to teaching and administration teams, please note the following:

- **No Calls Home for Equipment:** Student reception and admin staff will not make phone calls home for forgotten personal items such as PE kits, lanyards, or school dinner credit. An immediate solution will be offered on the day as we appreciate parents are unlikely to be able to bring these items to school.
- **Missing/forgotten lanyards:** If a student does not have their lanyard or has not topped up their lunch account, they will be provided with a basic sandwich and a drink.
- **Missing equipment:** During tutor time, form tutors will check with students that they have the necessary equipment for the day. Students will be provided with a pen in tutor time where necessary, and negative oath points will be issued for a lack of equipment.
- **Timetable Requirements:** Every student must have a copy of their timetable with them at all times. If they lose it, they must ask their form tutor during tutor time for a replacement. For a quick check during the day, a full whole-school timetable is prominently displayed on the wall opposite the language's toilets.
- **After-School Activities:** If your child wishes to stay for any after-school clubs or activities, they must obtain permission from you prior to the day of the activity. Students will not be permitted to call home on the day to arrange this.

Thank you for your continued partnership. By helping your child arrive prepared and encouraging them to stick to school communication channels, you help us protect their valuable learning time while keeping our resources focused on teaching and genuine emergencies.

Yours sincerely,
Mr G Aldred
Principal