



PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Autumn Term 2025

Year 8

Dear students and families,



At Orchard Park High School, in addition to a broad academic and character curriculum, every one of our students has the opportunity to experience a wealth of personal development activities. This newsletter contains useful information about the provision for your child this term. We will send this to all families at the beginning of each term.

Head of Year 8, Ms C Ruby

Please contact: cruby@orchardparkhigh.net

Working together to guarantee the best chance of success for every child

At Orchard Park High School we know that good attendance at school is crucial for our students, not only academically but also socially and emotionally.

We want all of our learners to be successful and we know that good habits at the start of the academic year can make a huge difference to our learners' motivation, success and enjoyment of school. Missing school can result in a child falling behind, making it harder to catch up on lessons and participate fully in school activities. We want our students to love school and we know the more they are here, the happier and more successful they will be.

As parents, your role in your child's success is critical and so we thank you in advance for your

support. We know that working in partnership gives us a better chance of guaranteeing every child at Orchard Park the best chance of success.

Here's how you can help:

1. Create a routine
2. Plan ahead
3. Communicate early
4. Stay informed

By working together, we can help all our students build habits that will lead to lifelong success. Thank you for your commitment to your child's education and well-being.

Ms K Brown, Assistant Headteacher for Personal Development

Character passports

We have recently launched our Character Passports at Orchard Park, where students are given eight challenges per term to complete, all relating to our core values.

We want to ensure our students are achieving their best and ensuring they are prepared for

the world outside of school. House awards, as well as greater awards at the end of term and at the end of the academic year, will be given to students who can complete all the tasks.

Click [here](#) to see the autumn term challenges on our website.

House information



ATTENBOROUGH

MS KING



HAWKING

MS VEALL



PARKS

MS PAIN



RASHFORD

MR EVANS



YOUSAFZAI

MR VASEY

Fun Friday takes place every Friday lunchtime. Join in and collect lots of House points.

Key dates

Year 8 parents' evening

19th March 2026

**Assemblies for Year 8
– every Tuesday**

Autumn term

Core messages: bring your best self and reap the rewards

Key characteristics: ambitious, optimistic, respectful, perseverance, dedicated, self-disciplined, motivated, enthused, diligent.

23rd September

Year group: Character passports Excellence

30th September

House assembly: Introduction to houses and aims for the year. Collaboration

7th October

Year group: Black History Month
British values: mutual respect and tolerance of others. Integrity

14th October

Year group: Excellence – what have we achieved? Half term awards

11th November

Anti-bullying week: Integrity

18th November

House assembly: The importance of fundraising and chosen charity. Collaboration

4th November

How can we be our best selves? Drive

2nd December

Launch of Christmas donation competition – thinking of others in our community. Collaboration

9th December

Human Rights Day: "Nurturing a culture of social justice and human rights." Integrity

16th December

Year group: Excellence – what have we achieved? Half term awards



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Year 8 PSHE schedule for the autumn term

Big ideas	Topic	Atoms
Autumn 1 Health and wellbeing	Drugs and alcohol and manipulative relationships Alcohol and drug misuse, and pressures relating to drug use. PoS refs: H23, H24, H25, H26, H27, H29, H31, H5, R42, R44	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Medicinal and recreational drugs 2. Over-consumption of energy drinks 3. The relationship between habit and dependence 4. Safe use of over the counter and prescription medications 5. Assessing the risks of alcohol, tobacco, nicotine and e-cigarettes 6. Managing influences in relation to substance use 7. Recognising and promoting positive social norms and attitudes
Autumn 2 Living in the wider world	Emotional wellbeing Mental health and emotional wellbeing, including body image and coping strategies. PoS refs: H3, H4, H6, H7, H8, H9, H10, H11, H12, L24	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Attitudes towards mental health 2. Challenging myths and stigma 3. Daily wellbeing 4. Managing emotions 5. Developing digital resilience 6. Unhealthy coping strategies (e.g. self-harm and eating disorders) 7. Healthy coping strategies

If you would like to discuss the subject matter or wish to withdraw your child from any of the PSHE lessons listed above, please contact Head of Year 8, Ms Ruby, at cruby@orchardparkhigh.net

Character Clubs for the autumn term

YEAR 7-10	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Lunchtime (12.45-1.15pm)	Debate Club (Wk A) – Year 7/8/9 S9 KAF Concert practice – Year 7/8/9 Music Room SST Library – Year 7/8/9/10 Poetry Club – Year 7/8/9/10 E5 LVE	Eco Club – Year 7/8/9 L1 EFE Equality Club – Year 7/8/9/10 H1 MEV Library – Year 7/8/9/10 Working Lunch – Year 10 IT2 SAL	Sparx Club – Year 7/8/9/10 IT2 Library – Year 7/8/9/10 Working Lunch – Year 10 IT2 SAL Spanish Film (WkB) – Year 7/8/9 L3 TGO	STEM Club – Year 7/8/9 S7 DEB & SAL Library – Year 7/8/9/10	Maths Club – Year 7/8/9 M3 JBU/NDE Library – Year 7/8/9/10 Salsa Dancing (Wk B) – Year 7/8/9 PAS HSM
After school Available for Years 7-10 (3.00-4.00pm)	Football – Year 7 PE Block SWE Netball – Year 7/8/9/10 PE block LHA & KBR Art Club (Wk B) – Year 7/8/9 AR2 APA Homework Club – Year 7/8/9/10 Library	Girls Football – Year 7/8/9/10 PE Block LGO Coding Club (Wk A) – Year 7/8/9 IT4 FKI Homework Club – Year 7/8/9/10 Library	Dance Company – Year 7/8/9/10 (Invite only) Plant Club (WkB) – Year 7/8/9 H2 NMO Duke of Edinburgh Volunteering (Wk B) – Year 9 only IT1 HBA Homework Club – Year 7/8/9/10 Library	Dodgeball – Year 7/8/9 PE Block LHA Band practice – Year 8/9/10/11 Music SST Boys Football – Year 8/9 PE Block SWE Homework Club – Year 7/8/9/10 Library	Homework Club – Year 7/8/9/10 Library

Our full list of Character clubs is also available on our website here: <https://www.orchardparkhigh.co.uk/extra-curricular-activities>

You can find out more about personal development at Orchard Park High School on our website [here](#). There is also a wealth of information about student support under [Information, Safeguarding](#).