

WILLOW DENE NEWS

FRIDAY 4TH MARCH 2016 - ISSUE NO: 86



Dear Parents and Carers

We have had an exciting two weeks at Willow Dene. The school has been a hive of activity and there has been a buzz of excitement and sense of community everywhere.

Our central displays have all changed. Our three-dimensional 'living displays' in the corridors showcase our enrichment areas of the curriculum and range from art displays to technology. Our central wall displays focus on our recent 'Walk Through a Book' topic and are absolutely beautiful. They show how we used book as inspiration for our learning last half-term. Every class has contributed a piece of art on canvas to the giant display in reception. We are hoping to exhibit these and more at a community art exhibition later in the year. If you have not yet had a chance to look around the school to see our displays please do when you next visit. They are quite remarkable.

This week we are celebrating Book Week with a week of activities dedicated to making books and stories come alive. There is a strong link to our focus on creative arts in our book week activities. Children will get the chance to experience stories such as 'Under the Sea' and 'Room on the Broom' using an immersive theatre approach performed by our own teachers. We will also be working with Blink Theatre, Head2head Theatre and Moulded Theatre Companies who will each perform a story for our classes.

On Thursday we planted our school orchard. Everyone took part in this day and every class will have a tree that they will look after with the help of the orchard leaders. During Thursday children tried several different activities celebrating apples and orchards. There were a range of activities happening in the orchard including planting our trees. Other activities included apple bobbing, apple rounders and the apple launch. Lewis McNeill from the Urban Orchard Project joined us with his volunteers.

Last week we joined with two other Greenwich schools to attempt a Lands End to John O'Groats cycle ride for Sports Relief inspired by the amazing cycling we have seen children do in our school gym using the motor-medibikes. The hall was set up with three adult exercise bikes and three children's bikes and we had a target to reach of just over 300 miles during our day. We were able to track our progress on a map of Britain and are very proud to announce that in one day we cycled 461 miles. Not content with that, people have been cycling on the bike which is in the reception area and there are a few more miles to be added which will undoubtedly take us over the 500 mile mark. This takes us more than half way towards the final goal and well over our school goal! It was a lovely atmosphere in school on Wednesday, children were amazing and it was a remarkable effort from the whole school community. Thank you all and particular thanks to our MOVE and physio team who organised the day.

Last Wednesday was a busy day as we also welcomed Natalie Briggs who is a Trustee for SeeAbility who run our ophthalmology clinics. Natalie sent us a card following her

visit which says 'Just a note to thank you for taking time to meet me last week. It was wonderful to see the staff working in action with the SeeAbility optical programme. The atmosphere in the school is a real credit to you and all the team'. We are looking forward to the filming of SeeAbility's information film and the Swimming Association filming at Willow Dene later in the term.

This week we held the first School Journey information meetings of the year with lots of parents interested to see what we have planned for our residential stays this year. Please contact us if you would like to find out more.

Also look out for tickets for our 'Big Easter Raffle'. They will be available soon.

The consultation period for the proposal to convert The Compass Partnership of Schools to a Multi Academy Trust will finish soon. An open invitation will be available for any parents who would like to attend the governing body meeting where the final decision about how to proceed will be made. You will be very welcome. In the meantime should you have any questions please contact us in school. Kate Jarrett the Project Manager overseeing the consultation has lots of expert knowledge and is based here at Willow Dene and so is available to speak to you very easily.

John Camp
Executive Headteacher
of the Compass Partnership

Carolyn Vagg &
Rachel Harrison
Co-Headteachers

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Children break up for Easter on
Thursday 24th March at **1.30pm**
and
return to school on
Wednesday 13th April

**School will also be closed to pupils
on:-**

Thursday 5th May – Polling Station
Thursday 23rd June – Polling Station

CLASS FOCUS – Toucan Class

Toucan is a new provision for children aged two to three who have a range of complex needs. Our priority is to work with children and their families and to provide a safe, nurturing and stimulating place to play and learn.

In the past term we have particularly enjoyed learning several new songs all based around peep bo and hiding and finding games. Families have also learnt these songs so that they can be used at home.

The children have all made progress in the way they play and explore things like cornflour, dough and paint. We work at different levels to help develop physical skills e.g. over wedges, at the table, on the floor and also standing at the easel. At the moment all the children are working on their own canvas which will be displayed in the entrance to Toucan.

Please come and have a look when you are passing and call in to say hello to us.

The photos show children and families in Toucan and our brilliant little artists at work!



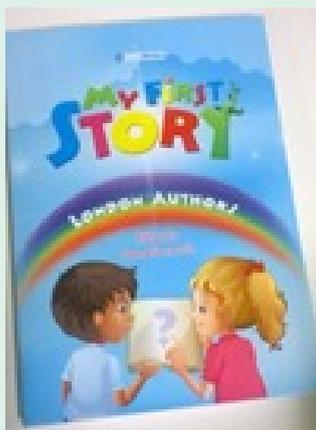
Pupil Voice

A published author!

Last year one of our pupils discovered a competition to get a story published in a book! Ayaan, who is now in Greenfinch, but at the time, was in Heron class, decided to enter!

Ayaan used a story board of pictures to assist him in writing his story. He dictated his story to an adult who transcribed Ayaan's words on to paper. Ayaan's story was based on a super space adventure. The characters were based on Ayaan's peers and adults in Heron class.

The story was submitted to Young Writers and was so fantastic that it was published! Ayaan is now a published author in the book 'My First Story By London Authors'!



This is a huge achievement and we are all incredibly proud of Ayaan's work. Keep your eyes peeled for more of this budding young authors work!

In other pupil voice news:

Pupils have had a fantastic time exploring a range of new experiences for Book Week. Check out our twitter feed for latest news and pictures!

Our twitter feed can be found @Willowdenesch or via the school website!

MOVE News

Children across the school have been working on their independent sitting . They are working hard on developing their trunk control and balance.

Some children are working on sitting on a bench independently. Others are working on sitting in their chairs without their chest straps on whilst using their arms to support their upper body.

Children are also using a Rachel harness attached to the hoist to sit on a conventional chair to help them sit supported at the table for some activities.

Well done to all the children who are working hard on their sitting motor milestone! Keep up the good work!

