

WILLOW DENE NEWS

FRIDAY 9TH OCTOBER 2015 - ISSUE NO: 79



Dear Parents and Carers

We have had a busy and exciting two weeks at Willow Dene which has included the re-launch of our school website with new features, photographs and information. If you have not already looked at the website we would be interested to hear your feedback. This was closely followed with a visit from a photographer yesterday who toured the school and spent the day taking photographs of everything happening including a special focus on Toucan and our Year 7 children. These will be used to update the screen in reception and our school brochures.

We have started our 2015-2016 Parent Training in earnest. We hosted 'Contact a Family' who ran two training days for 'Parents as Champions'. These days were very well attended so thank you to all of you who invested your time and knowledge. Next Thursday we will be running an 'E-safety' course. Details of our other up-coming parent learning opportunities can be found on our website.

During the last year we have been working with a company called 'Magic Breakfasts', who have enabled us to provide breakfast to some of our children who leave home very early or who prefer to eat later in the morning. They will be visiting school next Wednesday to see the project in action with a view to designating us as a centre of excellence in this area. Following this they will visit the Parent Speakeasy to talk to you.

Last week we were visited by Mandy Watson our Improvement Partner who visits us termly to look closely at our school and offer us advice and guidance. This term she spent the whole day at Willow Dene looking at everything from examples of progress and achievement to what was happening in classes around the school. Mandy's feedback was very positive and she wrote to us to thank us for the visit saying 'Thanks to all. I felt very privileged and everyone was really prepared. Well done'. There will be a full report from Mandy's visit available soon. We have also been visited twice by governors in the last two weeks. The first visit was to look closely at Willow Dene's E-safety and the second visit was to see Willow Dene's provision for two year olds and Year 7 children in action. Both visits were positive and reports will be available soon.

We will be holding our Autumn Parent's Evening on November 25th and letters will be coming home soon about this. We will also be holding an information fair on the same evening so there will be lots of useful contacts available to talk to you and answer any questions you may have.

News hot off the press... We wrote to Sports Relief last year to tell them that we wanted to do a 'London to Brighton' bike ride with our children using the Medimotion bikes in Willow Dene's Gym to raise money during the next Sports Relief. Sports Relief are so interested in our idea that they are going to use photographs of the children at Willow Dene in their National Schools Campaign which will be distributed to every school in the country. We are very excited to be representing such a worthy cause.

John Camp
Executive Headteacher
of the Compass Partnership

Carolyn Vagg &
Rachel Harrison
Co-Headteachers

Speech and Language Therapy

We would like to take this opportunity to welcome everyone back from what we hope was a positive summer break for all. We are enjoying spending time in classes this year; getting to know some new children and welcoming back some familiar faces. Over the summer, there have been some changes to our team. The Speech and Language Therapy team on site at Willow Dene are Lucy Clarke, Gemma Britten, Rea Bentley, Pauline Casanovas and Frances Johnstone.

Please contact our team if you would like to talk about your child, you can do so either by asking your child's class team to pass a message on through the home contact book or by calling us directly on (020 8316 8021).

OCTOBER HALF TERM

Children break up on

Friday 23rd October

and

return to school on

Monday 2nd November

CLASS FOCUS – Heron Class

Heron class have started the new academic year in style, jumping straight into our new topic, Explore It! We have experimented with lots of different materials, discovering what happens when ice melts and what happens when you blow things with different equipment, including a leaf blower and a hair dryer.

We have spent lots of time this term exploring a new learning environment, our Forest School, where we have collected conkers and pine cones, dug for treasure, and enjoyed ourselves on the mud slide.

In class, we have hunted for treasure while being careful not to wake up a sleeping crocodile, learnt about ourselves and our classmates by ripping and tearing photos to make collages in People, Place, Time and Culture, and we have made a whole collection of little clay people in Art, inspired by Anthony Gormley's "Field."

This year we have said goodbye to some old friends, Ayaan, Sofia and William, who have moved on to different classes. But we have also welcomed two new classmates, Abelart and Elisey. We are really happy to have them in Heron class and they have begun to form great friendships.

Pupil Voice

So what has made pupil voice news this week?

We have been spending time in Woodlark class, finding out all about Lyla!

"Hello!

I am a year 7 student in Woodlark class. I love being in the centre of all of the action. I have recently learned to use my hands purposefully to explore and feel things. I enjoy my morning stretches and love being with my friends, especially at snack time!"

In other pupil voice news:

The new Year 7 blog is now up and running! Check out the school website to read a welcome and catch up with student editor, Manny!

Swimming News

The children have been having fun exploring Space. We have visited the planets, swum around the world and taken a trip to the moon. They have been blasting off as rockets and practising their backstroke skills while looking out for the friendly aliens that have landed in our pool. Our key learning objectives are to achieve an effective leg kick in the supine position while maintaining a stream lined body position. We have seen lots of progress and real determination.

Well done everyone.

The Swim Team.

