

WILLOW DENE NEWS

FRIDAY 10TH JUNE 2016 - ISSUE NO: 92



Dear Parents and Carers

Welcome back to the final half term of the year. We hope you had a lovely half term. It has been great to have the children back in school and to see how excited they are about returning from the holiday.

We are starting with exciting news. You may remember that at the end of term we spent a day filming with Crick software to show some of the innovative ways that we are using Clicker 7 to support children's communication. Crick have now invited us to speak about some of the things that we are doing at Willow Dene at their annual conference.

We have also been asked to contribute to a book! Joanna Grace is a consultant working with children who have complex needs. She saw photographs on our Twitter feed (@willowdenesch) showing some of the ways we use resonance boards to support learning. She has asked us to write about this for her upcoming book about sensory approaches to learning.

At the end of last term we won a 'Tree Oscar' at The Tree Council's Trees and Learning Awards. We won our Oscar for our work with The Urban Orchard project establishing our school orchard. We were presented with a beautiful wooden bowl and a plaque which you will be able to see in the reception area soon.

We finished the term with an amazing opera experience which The English National Touring Opera and some children from Willow Dene performed together. Parents, children and staff were surprised and delighted by the achievements of all those involved. We look forward to working with the ETO again soon.

We have already started the term with visitors who are keen to look around and find out more about us. On Monday we had a visitor who works with children with special needs in Dubai, where the provision is very different. She wrote to us to thank us for the visit and is keen to visit again with colleagues to find out more.

On Monday a group of children from Willow Dene joined the Albany Taxi trip to Hastings. The children had an exciting time in the convoy of cabs which were festooned with balloons and had a police escort to the seaside. As always we were very proud of the behaviour and independence of our children in such a new and busy environment.

Our topic this half term is 'The Enchanted Forest' which has a drama and imaginative play focus. We are

beginning our topic with a visit from a storyteller. If you are visiting this week look out for our beautiful new displays in our central areas. In the corridor leading from reception to the halls you will also spot our new electronic display boards. These will showcase photographs of some of the amazing, challenging and exciting things we have done each term.

Look out for new parent and family events coming soon.

John Camp
Executive Headteacher
of the Compass Partnership

Carolyn Vagg &
Rachel Harrison
Co-Headteachers

Pupil Voice

Our trip to the seaside!

Some children enjoyed a trip to Hastings on Monday 6th June. The trip was organised by The Albany Taxi Charity. We met at Charlton early in the morning and were greeted with lots of London taxis decorated with ribbons and balloons. It was very exciting! We set off in a convoy with our horns sounding and people waving us on our way. We travelled to Bewl Water, where we stopped for a picnic lunch by the lake. We then went on to Hastings, where we were met by the Mayor. Onwards we went to the sea front, where we left our cabs and explored. Some of us went to the beach, others went to the aquarium and some of us went to the funfair! It was fantastic! We then went back to our cabs, to go to a disco, we had fish and chips and jelly! We were entertained with balloon making and party games. We danced the evening away until it was time to return to our cabs with a bursting goodie bag! Home we went, sleepy from the sea air and dancing.

The ghost train was fun, but I loved the aquarium! I wanted to touch the water.
Michael, Jackdaw Class

I loved the bumper cars! I got to drive; people thought I was a great driver!
Yusuf, Jackdaw Class

I had a delicious ice cream! The caterpillar rollercoaster was my favourite.
Liam, Sparrow

In other pupil voice news:

Keep up to date on our twitter feed - @Willowdenesch or via the school website!

CLASS FOCUS – Woodpecker Class

We're really enjoying our final term in Woodpecker class!

The first half of the Summer term was amazing. Our topic was 'Frame it' and we were looking at portraits by different artists. We were ripping, sticking and taking photos of one another to create some unique portraits as well as making collages from photos of other people at school. There is a 'Portraits' display up outside our classroom which we hope you will come to see!

On our community visits, we went shopping to buy ingredients for the biscuit and pizza faces we were making in cooking.

Our Play and Leisure sessions were great fun. We did some role play at being doctors and patients after reading our book about Doctor Molly's Medicine Case. You can see our photos on display in one of the corridors.

In our ICT lessons, we were learning about road safety. We practised using a pelican crossing on a program on the laptops and then we had a go at driving the remote control cars and jeeps up and down the corridor.

For our music lessons we go to James Wolfe School. We sing on microphones, play guitars, drums, keyboards and the piano as well as learning to share, take turns and work well together!

This half term our topic is the 'Enchanted Forest' and our class story, 'The Bear and the Piano' takes place in a forest. We'll be looking at familiar fairy stories that also take place in forests and woods.

On our class trip, we're planning to visit Groombridge Place and the Enchanted Forest there. It has giant tree swings and lots of other exciting things to discover. We may even try to recreate the tepees in our Design and Technology lessons.

We're going to be busy planting seeds in Science and wondering if we can grow our own forest!

Our art work will, of course, be based around trees. We hope to create some very big trees to help set the scene for our stories!

Only a few more weeks and we'll be enjoying our Summer holidays!



MOVE News

In Nightingale Class we had such a wonderful time exploring lots of different sensory materials that we didn't even realise we were working on our MOVE targets!

We are building strength in our necks by lifting our heads and keeping our heads up for longer periods of time.

We are reaching with our arms and grasping with our fingers.

Some of us are even leaning forward to reach for something.

Some of us are working at a table and lifting our heads to look up and catch what is falling.

Keep up the hard work Nightingale class!

