

# WILLOW DENE NEWS

FRIDAY 15TH JANUARY 2016 - ISSUE NO: 83



## Dear Parents and Carers

We would like to start the first newsletter of 2016 by saying 'Happy New Year and a very warm welcome back to school'. We are looking forward to another exciting year ahead with new challenges and achievements for both the school and the children.

We had a very busy end to the year. Thank you to all of you who supported our concerts, sing-along and visits parties. There was a great community feel in the last week because of your support. Sadly, at the end of term we said 'Goodbye' to Dave Allen, our Premises Manager, who has retired after 14 years of working at Willow Dene. Every class contributed to his leaving book which was presented to him before the sing-along on the last day of term. This week we have been interviewing for our new Premises Manager. Candidates spent time in classrooms with children and staff as part of the interview process and we are looking forward to introducing you to the successful applicant very soon.

We are delighted to welcome several new families to the school. We hope you and your children will be very happy at Willow Dene. We are fuller than we have ever been and have already got visits booked from parents who have heard about the school and are keen to see it for themselves.

Those of you who were at the sing-along on the last day of term had the opportunity to hear Brenda Clarke, our School Nurse sing to the school. We are very proud to announce that Brenda was part of the Lewisham and Greenwich NHS choir who reached the coveted 2015 Christmas Number 1 spot with the charity song 'A Bridge Over you', outselling Justin Bieber by 31,000 copies!

Last week we were visited by a group of Educational Psychologists from Greenwich who heard about Willow Dene from our allocated Educational Psychologist and wanted to find out more. They toured the school with Claire Bayfield who was also able to tell them more about how we work with CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services) in our school based clinic to support children who are experiencing high anxiety or a crisis period.

As part of our ongoing relationship with The National Autistic Society following our positive ASD Accreditation report last year we hosted a visit from NAS representatives on Thursday. They were able to do learning walks in classes and observe practice and talk to staff. We are looking forward to hearing what they think about their visit.

Out topic this half term is 'A walk through a Book' and we have selected a range of excellent books that classes will choose from and we are excited to see how each class approaches the books they have selected. If you are curious about our book list try some of these suggestions:



We will be using the books we have read as inspiration for our corridor displays in February.

Our parent training for this year is well underway. Our ASD awareness training began on Monday and City Lit re-joined us this week for part two of their highly successful parent course. This time they will be designing a recipe book around some of the amazing food that was cooked last term! We can't wait to see what they produce.

Have a lovely weekend

John Camp  
Executive Headteacher  
of the Compass Partnership

Carolyn Vagg &  
Rachel Harrison  
Co-Headteachers

## Governor News

Happy New Year!

At the end of last term we had our full governors meeting and one of the decisions we made was who does what. We can't all monitor everything, so some governors have specific responsibilities. This academic year, they are:

Chair of Governors - Anne-Marie Organ  
Vice-Chair - David Mbatha  
Safeguarding - Kafayat Eletu  
Health & Safety - Linda Perks  
SEND - Natalie Turpin  
Looked After Children - Anne-Marie Organ  
Expansion (Toucan & Secondary) - Michele Foster  
MOVE & Sensory Processing - Natalie Turpin

You can find out more by looking at the governors section of the website.

## CLASS FOCUS – Nightingale Class

This term we have been exploring colours and emotions in art by reading “The Colour Monster”. We are investigating what emotions feel like, look like and sound like. We are discovering that colours like yellow and jolly music are associated with happiness and that blue, with a slow song can feel like sadness. We are looking forward to finding out about other colours, sounds and emotions as we make our way through the book, before storing them in a bottle as a reminder of how they make us feel.



## MOVE News

Last term MOVE ran a motivational group on a Wednesday afternoon; this was to encourage children to work on their limbs. The session started with a firm massage to make children aware of their limbs and to warm up their muscles. We then encouraged the children to find and explore their own feet and legs. We then introduced sensory materials such as shaving foam and crazy soap to facilitate this. The staff worked with children during the session to encourage and support each child to sit as independently as possible and work on their core balance skills.



Lisa Parascandolo MOVE Co-ordinator

## AFTER SCHOOL FAMILY SWIM

We have some places available on Mondays for our after school family swim sessions. If you are interested please contact Jude McPartlan.