

WILLOW DENE NEWS

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Dear Parents and Carers

Welcome back to the summer term. We have been busy over the holiday making changes to the school which will enhance the learning environment for our children. At the top of the stairs near Brambling class there is now a beautiful stained glass window made by Joanna Reay. In the corridor near the big hall you will notice some lettering which will give you a clue about the art which is going to be displayed there. Our gym is now clearly labelled with signage. We are very excited about the display screen that will be located in the corridor near the small hall as this will be our first attempt at electronic displays.

Some of our classes have been experimenting with an iPad app called 'Aurasma'. This allows photographs of children to be linked to video clips. Holding the iPad over your chosen photograph triggers a chosen piece of video to be played. This app has lots of potential for us to make our learning environment more interactive. Woodlark class have made a display about how they use switches using 'Aurasma'. Each child has their own photograph on the display of them using a switch to do something they enjoy. These photographs link to a piece of video of the child. Feel free to pop in and try it out. We have arranged training for staff in how to use 'Aurasma' this half term and so expect to see more accessible displays around school soon.

We are also very excited about our first venture into aquarium keeping. We have noticed how engaging, calming and visually attractive many of our children find aquariums, so we have made the decision to buy our own to use as a specialist learning environment and context for teaching. Our aquarium is going to hold marine fish. The aquarium will be installed this weekend near our main reception area and classes will be choosing which fish they would like to put into it.

We are very excited that Willow Dene School, Oakmere Road building is nearly complete and will open to our secondary aged children in September 2016. This week the whole school met together so that everyone is up to date on our progress. We are scheduled to take possession of the building on May 5th and at present we are busy ordering furniture and resources. We will be meeting with our year 7 & 8 parents after half term to give them lots of information and will be organising tours of the new school shortly afterwards. We will also be working closely with the staff at Charlton Park Academy to organise transitions for the children who will be joining them in September.

We have been busy supporting other settings by offering training in a range of areas. Other schools and therapists were able to attend our INSET sessions this week. We delivered training in safe moving and handling for Clyde Nursery and also a workshop about good practice using sensory rooms and sensory equipment. In the next few weeks we will be spending a day in Pontefract delivering training about 'Learning Journeys' our school assessment system.

We will be starting to film our Willow Dene documentary next week and are also looking forward to meeting with Jordan at Crick Software with a view to filming some of the innovative ways we are finding to use 'Clicker 7'

Remember to keep a check on Twitter @willowdenesch and our website www.willowdene.greenwich.sch.uk for the most up to date news and photographs.

John Camp
Executive Headteacher
of the Compass Partnership

Carolyn Vagg &
Rachel Harrison
Co-Headteachers

Music Therapy Service News



Firstly, at the start of the summer term 2016, we are delighted to welcome Ergina Sampathianaki to our expanding band of music therapists at Willow Dene school. Ergina has worked for many years in the Oxleas music therapy department as well as for a music therapy charity, working with children and young people of all ages. She is very happy to be able to finally join our ranks!

Secondly, Richard, Ergina and Nicky have just returned from the British Music Therapy conference in Glasgow, where we all presented work from Willow Dene and beyond. Richard even won a prize for his poster presentation about Transition work.

CLASS FOCUS – Kingfisher Class

This term we have our own dark area so lots of our stories, games and activities are taking place in this environment. This has helped us to focus and track in different directions. We have a bubble tube for tracking up and down, a light umbrella for looking up and lots of light toys that spin and flash on and off.



We enjoyed a night time story with ultraviolet pillows, white, furry teddies, a sparkly dream catcher and very loud snoring.

Now that it is nearly summer we have an insect story with fluorescent creepy crawlies, wriggly worms, butterflies that open and shut and bees that fly in all directions. We are looking forward to getting out into our real garden to explore our herbs and plant our vegetables.

Here we are using the magic carpet – looking, tracking, touching and making things happen



The Alert Programme

Goldcrest class have made excellent progress since starting the Alert Programme. The children have learnt the engine words **Too High/Just Right/Too Low**, through fun, practical and visual activities and they are able to identify and label the engine levels independently using familiar pictures i.e. cars, balloons, Disney characters and animals etc. Children are also starting to develop awareness of their own feelings and how this can affect and change their engine level, with support from adults, children are beginning to recognise the type of sensory input that is needed to help regulate their engine level. Here are just some of the visual resources that we have been using, Well done to all the children in Goldcrest class.

