



Dear Parents and Carers

We can't believe that it is almost December and we are beginning to plan festive events. We are very excited about our Winter Party on December 4th. This has been planned following the success of our Summer Celebration. We are looking forward to many of you attending with your families alongside our staff and their families. It will be a good opportunity to talk, have fun and celebrate together. Look out for details in your child's home school book.

This week has been a busy week for the swimming pool. On Wednesday we welcomed five swimming teachers from the Royal Borough of Greenwich who looked around the whole school and spent time with our Swimming Team. On Thursday we hosted a governors monitoring morning at the pool because governors asked specifically to see how the school spent last year's Sports Premium Funding. This money was spent on resourcing the swimming pool with teaching resources and a range of swimming aids. The governors were able to watch a swimming session and speak to the Swimming Team about how they teach swimming and their rationale for this. We will be able to share their report soon. Look out for our amazing underwater photographs in the corridor outside the pool.

On Wednesday November 25th we welcomed Muriel our Special School Dental Nurse to The Speakeasy to talk to parents about some of the difficulties they have with their child's dental care at home. This follows the whole school focus on tooth-brushing last term. There was lots of interesting discussion and Muriel is planning a regular dental clinic at Willow Dene.

Wednesday was also Parents Evening and it was a pleasure to welcome so many of you to school to talk about the progress your child is making. The Information Fayre in the hall was very well attended and we hope it was useful for you to talk to the range of professionals who were there. There was a lovely positive feel around the school. The photographs on the screen in reception were updated with some of our new professional photographs and both parents and staff were transfixed by them! Thank you to everyone who has completed our parent questionnaire. We very much value your honesty, opinions and suggestions and as usual will collate your answers and publish the result on the school website.

On November 16th we visited Springwater School in Harrogate. They are an outstanding special school working with children aged 3-19 and they asked us to work with them so that they could use our assessment system, Learning Journeys, in their school. They were really interested to find out more about Willow Dene and we are looking forward to working with them in the future.

On November 18th a large group of Willow Dene staff and Parents had an evening out at The Albany Theatre in Deptford where we proudly watched Sparrow and Kestrel classes perform 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' as part of the

Shakespeare Schools Festival. The SSF are the largest youth drama festival in the UK and the world offering students from all backgrounds the opportunity to perform Shakespeare on their local professional stage. Visit their website at www.ssf.uk.com to find out more. The Willow Dene performance got a standing ovation and we cannot describe how amazing the children were and how impressive their performance was. We will be framing some of the professional photographs from the night so look out for them appearing in the corridors soon. Thank you to all who attended and supported the evening.

On November 13th the school was taken over by superheroes as we supported Children In Need (@BBCCIN) by dressing up in superhero costumes and holding a cake sale. Good fun was had by all and we loved seeing groups of children wearing the same outfits playing together and children recognising what other children were wearing. Some of the staff were spectacular in their choice of costume! You can see photographs on Twitter. We raised £406.67 for Children In Need. Thank you so much for your generosity.

John Camp
Executive Headteacher
of the Compass Partnership

Carolyn Vagg &
Rachel Harrison
Co-Headteachers

IMPORTANT REMINDER

We recently sent a letter home to you regarding changes to mobile phone use at Willow Dene. Please note the following:-

- All visitors must keep their mobile phone (or other device such as a tablet/iPad) out of sight for the whole time they are on the Willow Dene site in all areas which are accessible to children
- If you are going to the Foundation Stage, the requirements are even more thorough and you will be asked to use a phone locker to store your phone until you leave the site. These lockers are either in Reception or in the FS office and you will be provided with a key
- Visitors who go straight to the Toucan classroom will have to put their phones in a locker



CLASS FOCUS – Skylark Class

We are excited by our topic for this term 'Around the World!' We have had great fun sharing stories, exploring places and things from around the world. We are using our airport role play area to travel to different destinations including Africa and the Arctic.

In technology we are exploring textiles including weaving and mud cloths from Africa, sari prints from India, silks and paper craft from China & tartan from Scotland.

We are exploring festivals and traditions from around the world. We had lots of fun taking selfies to see what makes us different and the same.



We enjoyed dressing up as Super Heroes to support Children in Need



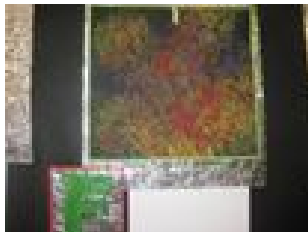
Folk Tale from India - The Tiger Child



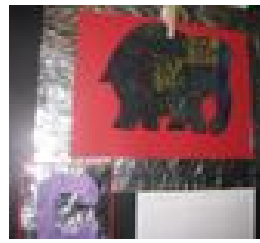
Selfie pictures and exploring our faces



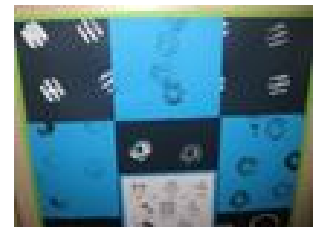
Exploring fruit from Handa's Surprise



Fireworks



Printing



Woven mudcloth prints

Pupil voice

Sparrow class and Kestrel class performed at The Albany Theatre in Deptford last week. They did a performance of 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' as part of the Shakespeare School Festival. The evening was a real success! We caught up with Karim, who narrated the performance



"Hello! I am Karim. I was the narrator for our show. I had a very important job to do, I had to tell the story whilst my friends performed. We had to do lots of practises and I worked hard on my reading. We spent a very long day at the theatre doing rehearsals. In the evening it was show time! I had to do it just one last time. We were all very excited to go onto the stage and show everyone all of our hard work. There were lots of people in the audience. Everyone said I was fantastic and we all made everyone really proud.

In other pupil voice news:

Check out our Year 7 blog, which is now filling up with new posts. For more regular updates, don't forget to check out the twitter feed!



MOVE has been very exciting so far this term. We have created two different MOVE groups, led by Dinah Stone, as well as her work supporting new teachers in their classes with incorporating MOVE in to daily routines and activities. Dinah has been working with two groups of children: one group have been working hard practicing their sitting skills, working on head control and lots of ways to improve balance. The second group has been working on their feet and legs, lots of massage and sensory input, working towards their walking skills. More information on these groups as they develop.



Dinah has also been working closely with the swim team to incorporate MOVE targets during swimming sessions. Colleen, Rose and John (swim team) are doing a fantastic job using inventive ways to get our children on the MOVE in the pool.