

Willow Dene News

Friday 6th March 2020



Dear Parents and Carers,

We hope you all had a lovely half term. It seems quite remarkable that we are in the second half of the academic year already. The world around us has seemed a little unsettled in the past weeks due to the extreme weather conditions and the advent of Coronavirus in the UK. You will all have received the Compass wide information letter for parents which gives current information for Coronavirus. The health advice is changing daily and we are in constant liaison with the Health Protection Agency to make sure we are abreast of any changes. As you know, the health and well-being of our children is always our priority and many of the recommended measures to limit the spread of Coronavirus are already in place at Willow Dene. We will continue to follow the latest guidance and keep you informed of any further advice for schools that applies to us.

In school, it is a much more positive picture. It is always lovely to see smiling children arrive back in school after the holidays. This week was our annual book week. The whole school was immersed in literature, stories and books. Our theme for Book Week 2020 was 'One World, Many Cultures'. There were a rich variety of experiences for all children, including 'The Magic Paintbrush' a traditional Chinese Tale in the sensory room, a drama workshop with the book 'The Last Stop on Market Street' and a multi-cultural soundscape story with the Music Therapy team about immigration across the sea to name just a few.

As part of book week and to celebrate World Book Day on 5th March we invited children and adults to dress up in book inspired costumes and we held our first ever book swap. Our book swap encouraged our whole school community to recycle books by donating their pre-loved books to our book swap point in main reception. Throughout the day people could come and browse the books and take any that they were interested in. This was a great success and a way to share loved stories and find new favourites.

Next week we are joining schools across the country to celebrate Sports Relief on 13th March. We will be raising money to support life-changing projects in the UK and around the

world by 'getting our kit on and getting involved'. On Friday 13th March, we hope that as many children and adults will be wearing something sporty to school as possible and paying £1 to Sport Relief. We look forward to telling you how much money we have raised.

You will remember that just before half term we had our MOVE Accreditation visit to assess how we meet the MOVE Centre of Excellence Standards. During the day visit, all aspects of our MOVE practice were looked at closely and we are very happy to report that we continue to hold the MOVE Quality Mark and are a MOVE Centre of Excellence in the category of Outstanding. Charlotte Peck, our assessor said 'I was really impressed with the evidence I saw and MOVE in action in the classes I visited'. We are looking forward to sharing the final report when it arrives.

We are now looking ahead to warmer weather. Our local governing body have approved all of our plans for school journeys and overnight stays 2020 for children in key stages 2, 3 and 4 so look out for these dates coming soon. Our annual Spring Fling is on 27th March 6-8pm with proceeds going to Friends of Willow Dene. Information about ticket sales will be coming soon!

Rachel Harrison
Executive Head Teacher of
Willow Dene School

DATES TO REMEMBER

Sports Relief

Friday 13th March 2020

Dental Screening

Monday 16th - Monday 23rd March 2020

SIMS Pay Support Session

Friday 20th March 2020

School Photos

Friday 15th May 2020

Lapwing Class



'Shape' has been a focus in Lapwing class recently with circles, rectangles, squares and triangles featuring in our daily song session. We have been practising our cause and effect skills on the plasma screen, learning to isolate our fingers to drag our own choice of shape across the screen to make pictures and printing them off for our class display.

Valentine's day celebrations provided us with an opportunity to look at heart shapes. In our Attention Autism sessions, children squirted paint into foam and mixed it to make patterns, heart shapes were laid on top of the foam which created a great textured effect on the card. Taking turns to walk along shaped stepping stones, throwing shaped beanbags into containers, collecting shapes from the water tray and pushing shapes into play dough supported our developing physical skills and encouraged spontaneous naming of shapes and choice making.



Hedgehog Class

Hedgehog class have been enjoying our story and poetry lessons where we have been reading the book 'The Littlest Dreamer – A Bedtime Adventure' by Suzanna Smith!

We loved to act out and role play different characters within the story, by dressing up as knights, pirates, animals, deep sea divers and racing car drivers. We love to snuggle up and explore the journey into dreamland.

Twitter Spotlight



Twitter spotlight 28.02.2020

SIMS

SIMS Pay

Just a reminder that payments for School Dinners, School Uniform, Swim Shorts, School Trips and School Journeys should be made using your SIMS Pay account.

If you haven't already set up an account, please call the school office alternatively pop along to our next SIMS Pay support session taking place on **Friday 20th March** in the Courtyard at Swingate Lane.

Thank you for your support, the Admin team

At Willow Dene we ensure our children have access to educational trips and experiences to develop their interests and experience cultural opportunities within the wider community. Several of our classes have been able to enjoy a wonderful immersive visit to the Southbank recently for a multi-sensory journey through Vincent Van Gogh's art and life.

To hear about all the exciting trips, visits and opportunities we are planning and to stay up to date with what is happening as it happens, with useful information and links, follow us on twitter @willowdenesch To join, simply go to www.twitter.co.uk, click 'Sign Up' and follow the prompts on screen.

Compass News: Alderwood School Focus



At Alderwood we have been using our local offer to enhance the learning experience our pupils receive here through various trips such as year 2 visiting the **National Maritime Museum** in Greenwich. This brought to life the pupils' learning as they have been looking at the great explorer 'Scott of the Antarctica' within their History unit of learning.

Our Compass Council representatives went off to the Woolwich town hall to meet the **Mayor of Greenwich** and his wife. They shared the Compass schools' vision for '11 before 11' and got to ask the both the Mayor and Mayoress some questions about their important roles.



Year 3 had a very exciting trip to the **King Tut exhibition** at the Saatchi Gallery. This was truly a once in a lifetime trip as this will be the last world tour these artefacts will do. It was spectacular and the pupils had an amazing time!



This Sunday is the **Big Half Marathon** and we have 20 parent/staff runners taking part to raise some money for the school! If you could spare any money at all to go towards

sponsoring our dedicated runners in raising funds for the school, it would be greatly appreciated. Please click the link here or go on our website for more details. Any donation, big or small, is welcomed as it will all go towards benefitting the pupils' learning experience here at Alderwood. Thank you

Pupil Voice

Our ACE group have been meeting each month to discuss different topics presented to them by the Local Authority, in order to make positive and meaningful changes within Greenwich which directly impact children and families with SEND.

Some of the items they have recently been discussing include:

- Accessing activities in the community and what they would need to support this.
- Accessing work experience and volunteering; what they would be interested in and what support they would need.
- Exploring who/what keeps them safe and who/what keeps them healthy

Look out for updates on our school website and twitter to see more of what our ACE group get up to!

Both Swingate and Oakmere sites have been busy with student elections for new Reps for the Compass School Council. We had some fabulous election campaign videos and statements detailing why our nominated students should be elected to represent their peers. Full campaign pledge transcripts are on display on our Pupil Voice display at Swingate Lane.

Our recent Compass School Council meeting was held at the Council Chambers at the London Borough of Greenwich and we were able to engage in a Q&A session with the Mayor and Mayoress. Look out on the website for a full report from our student reps who attended. It was a fantastic opportunity to see democracy in action and sit in the seats where big decisions are made by our local councillors and MPs. We also continued to work and discuss the Compass School Council projects '11 before 11' and '16 before 16'.

Don't forget to follow our twitter account for photographs and up to date news! Twitter - @willowdenesch

Compass Events – open to all our schools

School/Trust event	Date & Time	Event
Willow Dene	Every Tuesday at 10:30 – 11:30	Speakeasy: Coffee morning with the chance to chat to other parents and listen to key speakers on a range of topics.
Willow Dene	Every Friday At 10:00 – 10:30	EYFS Sharing Time: A chance to celebrate all the achievements in EYS with family and friends.
Deansfield	24 th March 6-7pm	Parent workshop: Children's wellbeing and mental health
Deansfield	1 st April 6-7pm	Parent workshop: How children learn and how the curriculum supports them
Wingfield	2 nd April	Parent & Carer workshop: Anti-bullying
Wingfield	7 th May	Parent & Carer workshop: Timetables and Early Maths