

WILLOW DENE NEWS



Willow Dene
SCHOOL

FRIDAY 8th March 2019

Dear Parents and Carers

Welcome back to the second part of spring term. We hope you all had a lovely half term and enjoyed the first spring sunshine of the year. There were lots of smiling faces coming back to school on Monday - it's amazing how the children seem to grow in the space of a week!

This contribution focuses on giving you some detailed feedback from our first Challenge Partners external review.

Just before the holiday we received the report from our 3-day Challenge Partners review which took place at the end of January. You will remember that this was a rigorous review of teaching and learning across the whole school. During the 3 days the reviewers observed in classes, met with leaders, carried out learning walks and scrutinised evidence. We are very pleased and proud to announce that the review team agreed an evaluation of 'outstanding' in all areas. These areas are; School Improvement Strategies, Outcomes for Pupils and Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment. This is summarised by the overall estimate of 'outstanding'.

Every school also gets some areas of development to work on which would further improve the school. At Willow Dene we will be working on a document which will help to summarise Willow Dene's journey since 2010. There has been a lot of change in all areas during this time period and framing it in a way that others can understand the development of Willow Dene will be a key task for us. We will also be writing some documentation to help people external to the school understand our school-based systems and how they link together. You will know that we are already making links with people and organisations outside of the school so that we can engage in dialogue and discussion with wider audiences and we will be encouraging all staff to do this.

We are very proud of our children and families, staff, school and community and are delighted that the review team were so positive about what they saw. However, it is important for us to remember that Challenge Partners review is not equivalent to an Ofsted inspection and that the estimates do not equate to Ofsted judgements. We continue to expect an Ofsted inspection at any time, given that our last inspection took place some time ago.

You can read the full Challenge Partners report on our website at <http://bit.ly/ReportWD> but here are a few extracts from the report itself:

The school runs very smoothly, and the routines established through shared protocols and practices give every opportunity for learning to be maximised.

There is very positive team working to support engagement of all pupils in differentiated ways. Pupils across the school are highly engaged in learning.

Challenge and pupil choice are built into lessons and personalised as appropriate.

Behaviour for learning is excellent. Staff manage learning behaviour when appropriate. Strategies for self-regulation and choice are built in and pupils encouraged to recognise this in themselves.

Leaders have secured increasingly excellent outcomes for all profiles of learners with no groups of pupils making less progress and, therefore, achieving less than others. The school has successfully closed any gaps that may have existed during a period of both rapid and sustained improvement. Current pupils of all learning profiles across the school are making excellent progress with no gaps between significant groups in the school.

In other news we have started the new half term full of energy and looking forward to our topic 'Mix It Up'. There is potential for a lot of mess! Your child's class topic descriptor will tell you how your child will be accessing the topic and what they will be learning about in each subject. Our displays are changing to reflect the huge breadth of Literacy and Maths work across the school; please have a look next time you are visiting. We are currently immersed in the literary world with Book Week. A wide range of reading and storytelling opportunities were planned for everyone, to know more and to view what we have been doing follow us on Twitter [@WillowDeneSch](https://twitter.com/WillowDeneSch)

Outside at the front of Swingate Lane we are preparing for our moving kinetic sculpture to be installed near the main gates. This will give anyone approaching the school some beautiful art to look at and will engage the children waiting to enter or leave on school transport. If you have visited school, we hope you like our comfy new reception furniture. You may have noticed that the fish tank is empty. This is because it developed a leak during the holiday and flooded reception and the gym below. We will have to dispose of a lot of equipment and carpets during the coming weeks but most importantly the fish are safe! We will be working with our suppliers to get a new tank in place and at the same time will be planning the fish tank for Oakmere Road, which school council have requested be filled with fish and coral!

Please respond to Greenwich's Home School Travel Assistance Consultation which is taking place now. The proposed changes may affect the way your child gets to school, and it is important that you are fully informed and have your say. You can read the consultation documents on our website and you can email SEND.Travelassistance@royalgreenwich.gov.uk with questions or feedback. The consultation closes on 14th March.

Rachel Harrison
Head Teacher

PUFFIN CLASS

We've been so lucky to have had such glorious weather this week that in Puffin class we decided to take our learning outside. We explored using our senses and particularly enjoyed playing in the sand and making music with all kinds of instruments. Everybody enjoyed listening to our tunes as they passed by. We also learnt about taking turns and even helped to push our friends when they travelled in the big car.



TOUCAN NEWS

We have been delighted to welcome more new families to Toucan in the past few weeks. They have spent lots of time with us in Toucan as their children settle and gain confidence. We have a little group of children who are interested in building and so we have been looking for construction toys which they can use with more independence. We have 2 new sets of magnetic building toys which the children are really enjoying and learning so much from. They are having a positive impact on learning in lots of areas including fine motor skills, cause and effect, creativity, independence and playing alongside their friends.



TWEET OF THE WEEK

Every week in Foundation Stage we hold a Sharing Time Assembly and welcome parents and carers to attend! Not only do we celebrate successes, share good news and celebrate, occasionally you even get to splat a teacher! Come and join the fun every Friday at 10am in Foundation Stage!

To share more of what is going on at Willow Dene 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.



SPARROW CLASS

Sparrow class enjoyed exploring the topic 'Tech City' last term by creating some fantastic digital art inspired by the artists David Hockney. We also enjoyed exploring technology in our everyday lives by using electric gadgets to support our food technology sessions such as making microwavable cupcakes and smoothies. We have also enjoyed reading stories inspired by technology such as 'The Iron Man' by Ted Hughes and the interactive story 'The Dragon Machine' by Helen Ward. We have been working on answering comprehension questions using topic boards to support us. This half term we are looking forward to the topic 'Mix it up' by learning more about the colour wheel and how primary colours create secondary colours, reading the stories 'All the colours I see' and exploring feelings and our emotions through drama and PSHE sessions.

