



FRIDAY 28<sup>th</sup> June 2019

## Dear Parents and Carers

We have not let the unseasonable wet weather get in our way! The rain stayed away for our Sports Day and children loved all the activities on offer. The snow cannons were very popular as were the races and the sensory circuit. It was lovely that so many parents and families came to support us. Thank you to everyone. Sports Day was the last event during our Healthy Living Week. All week children were involved in activities to support healthy living. These included a sharing breakfast and a mass exercise group out in the playground. Some of these activities were very popular and after trying them out, we will be repeating them more often. During Healthy Living week a group of children from Willow Dene also joined the Compass Sports Day, and you can read more about this later in the newsletter.

Willow Dene's first ever trip outside the UK took place with a small group of our oldest children who travelled to Disneyland Paris for a three-night stay. They acted as our pioneers, exploring new frontiers and bringing back lots of information about whether the trip was something we might like to repeat next year. It was also an opportunity for them to practice the French they have been learning at Oakmere Road! The trip was a resounding success and we are pleased to announce that we will not only repeat this trip in 2020 but we will also scale it up to include more children. Closer to home, Willow Dene's 'Little School Night In' at Swingate Lane was also a lot of fun. There was a night-time swim, line dancing and a campfire before we all bedded down in the hall and watched a film on the big screen.

We are very proud of our two children who were nominated for 'Do the Right Thing Awards' for outstanding citizenship. Ayaan from Sparrow Class and Ahmed from Heron class received their awards in the categories of Personal Achievement to Learning and Resilience to Barriers. They received their awards at a reception at the Town Hall presented by The Mayor of Greenwich with very proud families and teachers cheering them on.

Since the last newsletter we have had a Willow Dene admissions panel and now know that 22 new children and families will join us in September in classes across the school. These children will replace our leavers and so both schools will begin the academic year full to capacity. In the next few weeks we will be meeting all of our new starters in 'stay and play' sessions, home visits and at their current schools. It is a busy, exciting time of year for us but also a sad time of year as we prepare to say 'Goodbye' to children who we will miss greatly as they move on to new things. We are always very proud of the children who leave us and have a lot of very fond memories. Our transition visits to Charlton Park Academy have now started and will continue through the term so we have a really good chance to handover detailed information to the new school.

This summer we will also be saying 'Goodbye' to some familiar staff faces. Grace Barker and Mary Hill will sadly be leaving us for new adventures. We can't thank them enough for the contribution they have made to Willow Dene Oakmere Road and we are very sorry to see them go. We would like to wish them luck in whatever they do in the future. Jude McPartlan will be retiring from her role as Deputy Head and from Willow Dene despite our best efforts to persuade her to stay! There will be a coffee morning near the end of term where Jude and parents can get together for a farewell event.

Keep a lookout on Twitter for exciting things coming next and remember our Family Achievement evening on July 8<sup>th</sup> which will give us all an opportunity to review the year, catch up with friends and meet new faces!

**Rachel Harrison**  
Head Teacher

## TWEET OF THE WEEK

Willow Dene School @WillowDeneSch · Jun 17

Some more photos of our sports day. The snow cannons were a great success! Everyone loved dancing in the 'snow'!



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We had great fun at our recent sports day and were glad to see so many parents and friends there to support us. Thankfully we avoided the rainy weather but enjoyed the 'snow'! 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](http://www.twitter.co.uk), click 'Sign Up' and follow the prompts on screen.

## IMPORTANT DATES

This year's Leavers Presentation will be held on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> July from 10 am onwards.

## PUPIL VOICE NEWS

We have two representatives from Willow Dene on the Compass School Council and we have been working on a special project called '11 Before 11'. The children from School Council discussed and voted on ideas of things they thought all children should experience before they turn 11 at an amazing venue! We were lucky to meet at the Education Centre at Westminster Abbey to learn about the history of Westminster Abbey, talk about British Values and have our School Council discussions. Some of the ideas included:

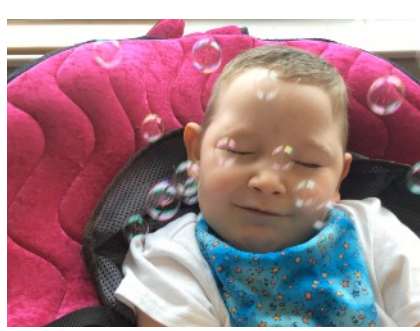
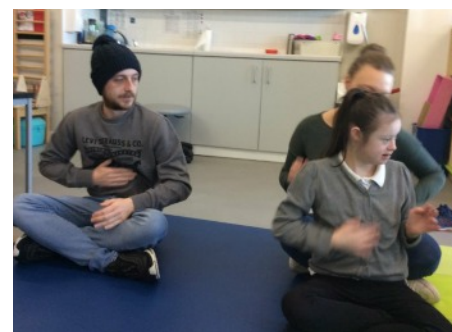
- Residential/ overnight stay
- Take part in a sporting competition
- Learn a language
- Watch/ take part in a live performance of the arts (music/theatre/dance)
- Visit a place of historical significance in Greenwich
- Learn to play an instrument
- Plant a seed
- Give back to the community
- Access different forms of technology
- Learn first aid/ life-saving skills
- Learn to cook a healthy meal

As a School we will be looking at ways to support these ideas and provide opportunities for all our children to access these experiences. We are also looking at developing this project further to include our secondary provision. School Council members at Oakmere are currently looking at developing '16 Before 16' and we cannot wait to hear what interesting and innovative ideas they come up with!



## SKYLARK CLASS

Skylark Class have really embraced our Healthy Body Healthy Mind topic this term. We have had lots of fun in Play and Leisure, exploring ways to be physically active. We have been developing our relaxation through yoga, sensory massage, music and through role play learning about emotions, looking after our health and caring for others! Last term we even had some parents trying out our class yoga sessions!



## LAPWING CLASS

'Growing' has been the topic in Lapwing class over the last few weeks with the children engaging in fun activities centred around two focus stories, 'Jasper's beanstalk' and 'The very hungry caterpillar'. We have been practising our placing and posting skills by feeding our very own caterpillar his favourite fruit of oranges, apples, plums, strawberries and pears. The caterpillar certainly grew very big after all that food! At the group table we worked on our physical skills by cutting the fruit and placing it on skewers, in preparation for a healthy snack. We developed our mark making skills using sponges to print in paint to create big and small caterpillars. We filled containers with peat and added beans so that we could grow beanstalks, just like Jasper, watering them every day and observing their growth. We were also very interested in the snails that were featured in the sensory story and some of us were happy for them to crawl on our hands.



## COMPASS NEWS

The Compass Council met last week, at the University of Greenwich, to further explore their idea of the '11 before 11': the eleven experiences that they believe that all children attending a Compass School should have before they leave at 11 years. Children from our Willow Dene secondary school have added a further five experiences to become the '16 before 16'. The ideas include a career opportunity and being involved in a school decision. The children talked about the experiences they had had so far, such as taking part in the Compass Sports Day, residential trips, growing turnips, and seeing Matilda at the theatre. They also discussed how to ensure children in our schools actually have these experiences and suggested that they were integrated into the curriculum. One great suggestion was that they could learn about ratios whilst cooking! We are looking forward to seeing how the Council develops next year.



### Compass Events - open to all of our schools

School/Trust event	Date & Time	Event
Willow Dene	Every Wednesday 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 10.15	EYFS Sharing Time: A chance to celebrate all the achievements in EYFS with family and friends
Horn Park	29 <sup>th</sup> June	Summer Fayre
Wingfield	4 <sup>th</sup> July	Supporting Children with EAL (Parent Workshop)