

# WILLOW DENE NEWS



Willow Dene  
SCHOOL

FRIDAY 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2019

## Dear Parents and Carers

We have been a very busy school community during the last two weeks. We would like to thank each and every one of you who has supported our events this term. It is very much appreciated.

Our Cultural Awareness Week ended on Friday 8th November. Cultural awareness Week focussed on the Time, People, Place and Culture area of our curriculum. This area of our curriculum contains all the strands of History, Geography and RE as in the National Curriculum but taught in a way which is appropriate to our children. Cultural Awareness Week culminated in our Cultural Markets, which showcased all the work that children had been involved in during Cultural Awareness Week, including their focus countries. The markets looked amazing and we were very pleased to see so many of you visiting on Friday afternoon. We also asked children and staff to dress in outfits which reflected their culture and heritage and were pleased to see so many people doing just that. The Cultural Markets were so positively received that we decide to keep them in place until Parents Evening so that more families could enjoy the children's work.

It was lovely to see so many of you at Parents Evening. Both schools were very busy throughout the evening and it was great to have time to talk with you about your child's progress. It was also the perfect time for us to find out what you think about how we are doing and how we can improve. This year we distributed our annual parent questionnaire electronically and on paper so that you could choose the format you prefer. Over the next few weeks we will be collating your answers and comments and will publish these on the website along with an action plan based on your responses. Also, at parents evening we were able to get your opinion on the best way for us to pass on news and information. We were interested to see that many of you prefer email and will begin looking into this method of communication more in the coming weeks.

Alongside Parents Evening we also had our Information Fair, which saw representatives from many services join us to talk to you about what is available for you and your child. Short Breaks, Greenlight Project, SENDIASS, Welfare Rights Service, Anchor Charity and many more were available for the duration of the evening. The hall was extremely busy, and it was a great hub for everyone to meet and talk. It was particularly lovely to see so many parents from Oakmere Road make the journey between schools. We are already talking about locating Oakmere Road parents evening at Swingate lane next year to make it easier for you all to attend.

Last Tuesday evening was the long-awaited performance of Hamlet at The Albany Theatre in Deptford as part of The Shakespeare Schools Festival 2019. Our performance took place at the beginning of an evening of performances from other primary and secondary schools. The auditorium was packed – standing room only! There was huge support for Willow Dene and the performance was truly amazing. The children were such confident and talented actors and we were very proud.

Last Thursday we had Governors in school looking at all aspects of safeguarding including a focus on Online safety. They tried out some of the training that our staff do as a matter of course and was a good opportunity for them to find out more about safeguarding training in school as well as furthering their own understanding.

We have also enjoyed a visit to several classes from Louis, a miniature dachshund. Louis let us practice what it would be like to have a school dog. The responses from the children were very positive and will join all of the other information we are gathering to help make the final decision.

In the last newsletter we talked about the Challenge and Support review of the school from John Camp and Jo Atkins and what this looked like. This week we have received the final report and would like to share a quote from it with you which we really liked: **'A positive and welcoming atmosphere permeates the school with children and staff engaged collaboratively in learning – the school feels happy, content and energetic!'**

If you are visiting London in the next few months make sure you visit The Tate Gallery and search for Willow Dene's photograph amongst all the photographs making up McQueen's Year 3 project exhibition. If you need a clue about where to find us then look at our Twitter feed @willowdenesch

**Rachel Harrison**  
Head Teacher

## DATES TO REMEMBER

FOWD Christmas Fair	4 <sup>th</sup> December
KS3 & KS4 Christmas Fayre <i>At Oakmere Road</i>	6 <sup>th</sup> December
Polling Day Closure	12 <sup>th</sup> December
EYFS Christmas Sharing	13 <sup>th</sup> December
KS1 Celebration	16 <sup>th</sup> December
Christmas Lunch / Parties	17 <sup>th</sup> December

## BADGER CLASS

Badger class has had great start to the new term! We have had lots of fun engaging in independent cooking sessions, we were able to follow a recipe in order to make pop tarts. We tasted a variety of potential ingredients and then used our favourites in the recipe!

This session really developed our cooking skills as it required us to use a range of techniques such as measuring, pouring and stirring to create the perfect pop tart! We really enjoyed sharing these as a class and were able to use our topic boards to comment on which pop tarts were our favourites!



## PHYSIOTHERAPY NEWS

Can't believe the first half term went so quickly and we are already looking towards Christmas! The Physiotherapy team have had a busy start to the school year as we have been completing all the checks of our students equipments after the school holiday. The long Summer break means that our students have often grown and changed by the time they come back to school, so we make sure every year we take the time to fully re-assess all of the physio equipment that they use during the school day. If you have any equipment at home that you feel has also become too small please let us know and we can arrange a home visit with either our team, or Occupational therapy.

Whilst thinking about how we have been spending our time at school we would also like to take the opportunity to let you know it has been more difficult than usual for us to see our students as much as we would like to. This has been due to a long term vacancy that we have been holding in the team. We have ran several unsuccessful recruitment campaigns and this has left the team with a big gap to fill for a significant period of time. With less hours in the team we have clearly not been able to be as responsive as we would like and we have had to prioritise seeing students that have urgent and complex issues. We are closely supported by our school team who have been expertly helping us to monitor and manage the physical needs of our students as part of their fully inclusive school day. We would be very grateful if parents at home could also help us to continue to work through this difficult time by helping us to identify any needs that arise for their children. If there is anything you are concerned about for your child's physical health & development, at home or at school, please let us know by writing a message in the home/school communication book; leaving a message with your child's teacher; calling the therapy office on 02083168021 or emailing me directly [Claire.higgins1@nhs.net](mailto:Claire.higgins1@nhs.net)

Many thanks for your on-going support and we wish all of our students and their families an early Merry Christmas for the coming festive season. If you have any questions about any of the information in today's newsletter, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

## TWEET OF THE WEEK

Our most liked tweet from last week! Our teachers carefully combine learning and fun and even demonstrate tremendous balance skills. What a great way to support Children in Need in our EYFS Sharing Time Assembly!

**Willow Dene School @WillowD...** · 15 Nov

Lots of fun painting Pudsey in our #ChildrenInNeed2019 themed #EYFSSharingassembly today! Look at the balance skills on our teachers and children! All parents and carers welcome every Friday at 10am!



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 Twitter, simply go to [www.twitter.co.uk](http://www.twitter.co.uk), click 'Sign Up' and follow the prompts on screen.

## REDWING CLASS

Redwing class are enjoying our topic this term 'Let's travel our world'. In science we are exploring different animal habitats through an attention autism style story and sensory trays. So far we have learnt about animals that live in the desert, rainforest and ocean. During multicultural week we also explored Kenya and enjoyed our animal safari. In art we have been creating some beautiful compositions linked to the different habitats that we are learning about and you can see our weekly art on display in the classroom. In P.E. we have been creating some animal dance moves and linking them together to create our own simple choreography.



## COMPASS NEWS - Alderwood School Focus

Autumn term for Alderwood has certainly been busy but we have lots to celebrate as a school! We hosted our Reading Open Morning this week; welcoming lots of curious parents into the school to be part of the reading experience the pupils get here daily. It was a wonderful turnout and great to see so many adults getting involved with the learning that happens here.

Recently, Oak class debated on some pressing matters for UK Parliament day. The main school hall became the House of Commons, with Mrs Aldridge bringing 'order' to the event as our very own Speaker of the House!!

The 'Take One Painting' focus on The Fighting Temeraire by Turner has been a huge success! The learning in the books and now in our environment on displays is wonderful to see. The outcomes truly are of the highest quality and we are very proud of learners here achieving what they have. Next time you visit be sure to take a look!



## Compass Events - open to all of our schools

School/Trust event	Date & Time	Event
Willow Dene	Every Wednesday 10.30 - 11.30 AM	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 10 - 10.30 AM	EYFS Sharing Time: A chance to celebrate all the achievements in EYFS with family and friends
Horn Park	28th November	Christmas Fayre
Deansfield	5th December	Christmas Fayre
Alderwood	6th December 3 - 5:30 PM	Christmas Fayre
Wingfield	11th December	Christmas Fayre