



WILLOW DENE SCHOOL

Friday 7th October 2022

Head Teacher's Message

What a busy two weeks it has been since the last newsletter! We cannot believe how quickly this half term is going. We have of course, along with the autumn weather, seen an increase in winter colds. We were very pleased to welcome the Oxleas vaccination team into school to do the first round of nasal flu vaccines at Willow Dene and to see many children uptake. This is the first time Oxleas have used a fully electronic system for arranging these and so they are interested in any feedback you have about this.

Last week we welcomed the 'Cost of Living' team back to Willow Dene. In the autumn last year, they joined us to look closely at how Willow Dene supports families with costs related to school. They produced a full report which has given us some target areas to work on and which you will see in our Cost of Living Core Priority work for this year. They also found some strengths in what we do that they wanted to share with other schools, so visited Willow Dene for a morning of filming! They spoke to parents, staff and children to get their views. The finished film will be released soon and we will let you know how you can see it if you would like.

This week we were amongst the audience at Blackheath Halls, celebrating the achievements of three of our children who were awarded Jack Petchey Achievement Awards. Jack Petchey Achievement Awards are all about celebrating young people's achievements – however big or small. Each young achiever is awarded a medallion, certificate and invited to celebrate with their family on stage at the awards



event. Congratulations to Dhillon who won his award because of his positive attitude, Affan for his progress using eye-gaze technology and Izzy for her musical awareness. We are very proud!

This week we have celebrated our first Power Day of the year. There will be a Power Day every half term, each one focussing on a different subject area and immersing children in new subject related learning experiences. This supports our Careers strategy which starts with us finding out more about children's passions and interests so that we can build on these throughout the year. This Power Day was focused on 'Space' and the subjects Science and Maths. Children experienced exploring the galaxy through interactive magic carpets, building rockets and finding out how the moon gets its' craters. We have explored, experimented and observed. There are some amazing photos from the day @willowdenesch

Rachel





One of Our Favourite Times of Day

In Woodlark class, we share a messy story during our lunchtime session. Our current story is *The Great Pasta Escape* by Miranda Paul.

In the picture you can see Jesse and Eividas. Jesse loves to mix and explore with his hands on his tray and we know he is having fun because of his smiles and giggles.

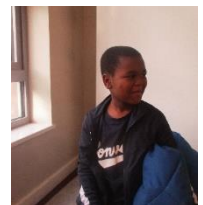
Eividas loves to have an adult close by reading to him. You can see by the way he is looking at Karen that he is enjoying his story.



WOODPECKER

In Woodpecker we are happy to be settling back into all our normal routines after a wonderful summer. When we come to school in the morning, we put our bags on our pegs and begin our selfcare routines.

We all have very different interests and so we choose different morning activities before attending to our workstations. Some of us like playing with cars, looking at books or drawing pictures. (Photo of the shapes in a line was taken by Adrian- who adores playing with shapes and taking photos of them!) Some of us like to head to the balcony for some physical activities like bouncing on the peanut, spinning on the spinner or playing catch. We enjoy starting our school day with positive interactions and fun!





We would like to say a huge thank you to Michael Sanford who ran the London Marathon last weekend to raise money for Friends of Willow Dene. Michael raised over £500 and we are very grateful to him and all the people who supported him.



As most of you will know, every October is Black History Month. Each year we join in Black History Month by celebrating some of the amazing Black figures throughout history and those who continue to make history. While we know it is important that there is representation throughout the entirety of our curriculum, all year round, we feel Black History Month is the perfect time to highlight, celebrate and reflect on this. The theme of Black History Month this year is Time for Change: Action not Words.

During the month of October our classes will celebrate Black History Month throughout the curriculum. Subject Leads have put together a bank of lesson ideas and resources for teachers to choose from. The folder includes poems, stories, recipes, dance lessons, PE lessons, art activities, experiments and much, much more. In our reception area, you will see a new display of high quality children's books which support this year's Black History Month theme.

We hope that children, families and visitors will take the time to stop and read a book. This week we have also adopted the Halo Code which is the UK's first Black Hair Code, ensuring that all Black members of the Willow Dene community have their identities fully recognised and celebrated.

Governors News

This week was also our first governors meeting of the term. At this meeting we said a sad farewell to Linda Perks who has been the Chair of Governors at Willow Dene for many years. Many of you will have met Linda at some point. She has seen all of our journey and been a huge part of our success. Although Linda is



retiring and moving to Yorkshire, she will still be part of Willow Dene's life as a Compass Partnership Trustee. Linda has taken with her a hamper of goodies made by our children and some of our honey as a huge thank you for everything.

Linda Perks

As of this week, our new Chair of Governors is Lynne Wainwright, who has been a governor for several years with specific responsibility for EYFS and Curriculum. Lynne knows Willow Dene well in her governing role and her role as Tutor for Kings College Nursing students who have placements at Willow Dene. We are very excited to be working with Lynne and she will making arrangements to meet as many of you as possible in the coming months.



Lynne Wainwright

IMPORTANT DATES

Last day of Term
Friday 21st October 2022

Half Term
Monday 24th October
To
Friday 28th October 2022

Return to School
Monday 31st October 2022

WHAT'S ON

The Bridge Active Play Sessions

Outdoor play, dancing and multi-sport activities for disabled children
All disabilities/abilities welcome

Where: The Bridge, East Greenwich Pleasaunce, Chevening Road, SE10 0LB
When: Saturdays 2.30 - 4.30 pm
Age: 0 - 8 years
Cost: £5 per family - card payments only



Use of a safe and accessible outdoor play area, plus organised multi-sport and dance activities on alternate weeks
Siblings, friends, parents and carers are all welcome to join in

Delivered in line with COVID-19 Guidelines

Register here to attend - <https://bit.ly/bridgeactiveplay>

Sign up and register once and turn up to the sessions you'd like to attend
✉ bridgesendplay@gmail.com



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FOR THE COMMUNITY
NOT FOR PROFIT



MumsAid Supporting Mums and their Families



MIGHTY ACORNS



Weekly group sessions, family support, counselling and advocacy for parents and carers of babies aged 0-2 with medical conditions or disabilities

Email send@mums-aid.org or call/text 07758763908 to self-refer or refer a family for support

ROYAL borough of GREENWICH



Come along on Saturday afternoons to The Bridge, a community centre in East Greenwich Pleasaunce SE10 0LB. Otherwise known as the Saturday club, a fellow Willow Dene mum with the support of Access Sport has established an extracurricular group supporting children with all disabilities and special educational needs since May 2021.

All children aged 0-8 are very welcome along with their siblings, wider family members and friends. It runs every Saturday in term time primarily as an activity club with multi-sports with themed dance activities alternating each week. These activities are set up to include and engage with a wide spectrum of needs and our main goal is to ensure that EVERYONE is made to feel welcome. There is an accessible changing area set up for older children with a private space inside.

Also running at The Bridge on Monday mornings is a newly formed group called 'Mighty Acorns'. Supported by Greenwich Council and MumsAid to support parents and their babies who have special needs disabilities.

'Mighty Acorns' welcome pre and post diagnosed children 0-2, their carers and siblings with the aim to support the whole family and allow them to meet others in a similar position. Here's a photo of some of the MumsAid Team, volunteers and staff from The Bridge at our recent launch party for Mighty Acorns which the Mayor and his wife attended.

Written by Rebecca Coulbey (Willow Dene Parent)





Friends of Willow Dene

Charity Number: 1139449

WILLOW DENE SCHOOL
HONEY
FOR SALE

FRESHLY HARVESTED
FROM OUR SCHOOL HIVES

£5
8oz Jar

£7
12oz Jar

CONTACT OUR BEEKEEPER, NOEL, TO ORDER:
nphillips@willowdene.compassps.uk
MAXIMUM 2 JARS PER PERSON
CASH ONLY

**WE
NEED
YOU!**

CAN YOU HELP FRIENDS OF WILLOW DENE?

We are looking for enthusiastic volunteers to join our dedicated team at Friends of Willow Dene. Our purpose is to raise money so that our children can have additional opportunities and resources.

You can give as much or as little time as you want.

We need help with:

- Fundraising ideas
- Sourcing prizes and donations
- Supporting at events
- Serving refreshments ...and much, much more!

Why not come along to our first meeting of the year or contact us to find out more?

Contact Katie Dooley on 0208 854 9841 or
kdooley@willowdene.compassps.uk

NEXT FOWD MEETING
Thursday

10TH
November
3- 4pm

Join us @ Swingate Ln
or Virtually



Friends of Willow Dene
Charity Number: 1139449

We had our first Friends of Willow Dene meeting of the academic year, last week. It was great to welcome some new volunteers to the group who brought lots of enthusiasm and some fantastic ideas for our fundraising efforts for the year ahead. We have an exciting year ahead of fundraising events, including an exciting Winter Wonderland event, a fitness and movement challenge, baking competition and much more!

If you would like to be part of Friends of Willow Dene you can join our next meeting on Thursday 10th November 2022, 3-4pm at Swingate Lane. Don't worry, we will remind you again closer to the time.