



WILLOW DENE SCHOOL

Friday 2nd December 2022

Head Teacher's Message

It has been an extremely busy two weeks since the last newsletter. Many of you have stopped to ask whether there has been any news from Ofsted. We are still waiting for the report to be published and are hoping that this will be before Christmas. As soon as there is any news we will let you know.

This newsletter is coming to you straight after our Winter Wonderland event. This is the first time we have tried having a festive celebration like this in the evening rather than the daytime. We wanted to make sure as many people as possible could come and also to include siblings who would be in school if we were to hold the event during the school day. As well as all of the stalls, refreshments and photo opportunities, we were able to exhibit both Willow Dene Star Baker entries and the entries to the Sibling Project competition. There will be more news about all of this later in the newsletter, but we would like to say a huge thank you for coming and for supporting the school. It was an amazing night, so well attended, and after such a busy term it was a really lovely opportunity to catch up and have fun together.

On Wednesday we had our annual Challenge and Support meeting which is an opportunity for external validation of our practise. John Camp our CEO and Jo Atkins our Improvement Partner attended school to hear about a variety of new initiatives and developments that are underway at Willow Dene. These included how we are approaching training for staff, how we are using technology to support communication across the school, sixth form expansion and plans for supporting more widely across Compass. Because of the focus on Ofsted, we have not shared these plans more widely until now so we were very excited to see what Jo and John thought.

There will be a report published and we will share this with you when it comes.

Thank you to everybody who attended parents evening last week, it really was lovely to see you all. the outcomes from the parent survey will be published on our website soon. Our next newsletter will be at the end of term. we hope in the meantime that you enjoy all of our seasonal activities along with us!

Rachel





Transport

If your child is travelling to school by bus, you live in the Royal Borough of Greenwich and are moving within the borough, please make sure you reapply for transport as the process can take a minimum of 28 days.

Borough of Bexley children who are moving within the Bexley Borough, you will need to contact SEN on 020 3045 4431.

If you are moving out of the Borough please contact the school office, so we can talk you through the process. Thank you.

New address

Could you please make sure that once you have moved that you inform the office of your new address and telephone number, so we can update our systems.



The My Child at School (MCAS) is a website where you can pay for school dinners, school trips, school clubs and buy school uniform. You can also check attendance, other information and send a message to the school office if your child is absent. If you haven't signed up for or used your child's MCAS account, please contact the school office for an invitation code.

Festive Season

The festive season is well and truly upon us as you may have noticed by the arrival of our very tall tree in reception! This year we are inviting children to find the hiding elves and to enjoy the lights on their way into and out of school. We hope you are enjoying this display! It always amazes us that the children treat it with such care and it continues to look wonderful till the end of term. Over the next two weeks, our other festive events will be underway. You should have already or will soon receive your flyer advertising our Christmas performances and we hope you will be able to join us at those. Planning for parties and dinner and visits from Santa are also underway.



Second Hand Uniform



You may have seen our flyer from our Cost Of the School Day Committee asking for donations of pre loved clothes so that we can open our own preloved

shop.

We need donations of school uniform, warm and festive clothing that doesn't fit anymore which can then be made available to other parents in school. We hope your donations what happened the families and help save the planet at the same time.



This has been a busy week in school for other reasons too! Last week we were visited for an assessment day by Little Wandle who are our phonics scheme providers. They have now visited the school several

times to look at provision for reading across all needs groups.

After their visit they sent us a letter to say that we have been chosen to be a Little Wandle Champion School. This means a school where a good practise in reading can support other schools to improve and develop. There are very few of these in the country and we will be the first special school. Watch out for more news about this coming soon.

End of Term Arrangements

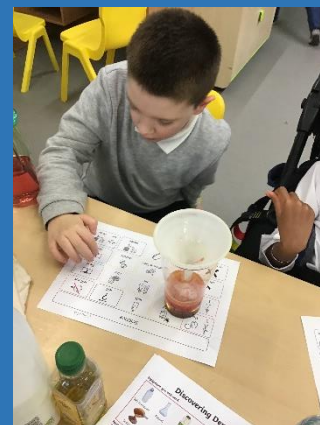
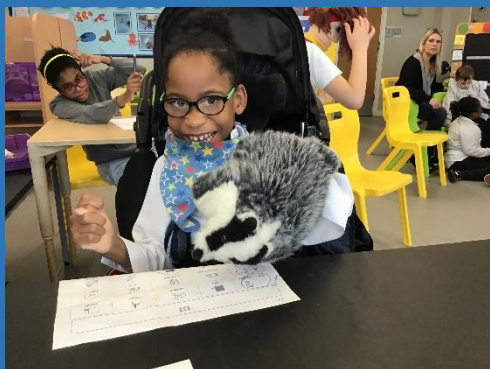
School finishes at 1:30pm on Friday 16th December 2022. Children return to school on Thursday 5th January 2023.

Sparrow Class



In Sparrow class for our DT lesson, we have been looking at puppets. We have been exploring how to use them and have designed our own. We are going to use our designs to make our own and make a puppet show.

In Science we have been looking at mass and density. We made our own density towers, using different foods and then we dropped objects in to see if they would float or sink e.g. rice and pennies.



IMPORTANT DATES

Christmas Performances

(Times to be confirmed)

12th December 2022

Goldcrest/Redwing/Bunting/Kestrel
Jackdaw/Staring/Chaffinch/Brambling
Pheasant/Partridge/Osprey

13th December 2022

Greenfinch/Heron/Sparrow/Nightingale
Merlin/Woodlark/Skylark/Robin/Woodpecker/Magpie
Falcon/Wren

15th December 2022

Swan/Lapwing/Puffin/Kingfisher

16th December 2022

Badger/Dormouse/Hedgehog/Otter/Squirrel/Pool Frog

Christmas Dinner/Parties - 14th December 2022

Christmas Jumper Day 14th December 2022

Governors

Also, this week was our autumn 2 governors meeting, the first with our new Chair Lynne Wainwright. We discussed our pupil premium plan, safeguarding for governors, Ofsted and how we are using data reporting to look more closely at attendance behaviour and safeguarding.

We hope many of you will have had a chance to meet Lynne at the winter Wonderland and you will see a greeting from her in this newsletter. At this meeting we said goodbye to Keith Simson who has been a Willow Dene governor for the last four years. Many of you will know Keith from his kind and generous contributions of time to school projects. We very much hope that Keith will keep his connections with what we do and be involved in some of our ongoing support to families



Willow Dene Star Baker is Crowned!

A huge thanks to all of our super talented bakers who entered our festive bake-off competition. The entries were beautiful, and you could see how much work had gone into baking and decorating such beautiful cakes and bakes. The competition table looked amazing!

Santa and his helper were on hand to judge the competition, making their decision based on taste and looks. They had a very tricky job on their hands, but they were both in agreement that all bakes were delicious!

Our winner for this year's competition were JJ, Zaki and Carlie, who created a phenomenal chocolate cake based on The Grinch. They took home a prize of a £50 voucher, a Star Baker Apron and Star Baker Wooden Spoon!



THE SIBLING PROJECT

Thank you so much to everyone who contributes to our Sibling Project. We hope for those of you who entered it gave your children the opportunity to get creative with their siblings. The submissions were absolutely amazing! They made the most beautiful exhibition at our Winter Wonderland event and hundreds of people took time to stop to look at, read and view every piece.

Our Chair of Governors, Lynne, had the very difficult job of choosing a winner, which was a near impossible task! After much deliberation, Lynne chose Arky from Merlin class, and his sister Anna as the winners of the £150 Amazon voucher. A huge congratulations to everyone who entered. All children and their siblings will receive a certificate before the end of term.





THE LOCAL OFFER
in Royal Greenwich

ROYAL borough of
GREENWICH



Royal Greenwich SEND Local Offer Newsletter

Issue 9

December 2022

Christmas Special Edition

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**Merry
Christmas**



For parents and young people

To visit the Local offer
website [click here](#) or scan
the QR code

ROYAL borough of
GREENWICH



[Click here or scan the QR
code to visit the website](#)

Greenwich Together for Winter

Local community groups, businesses, the NHS and the council are working together to provide support for people who might be struggling over the festive period (and beyond).

The Greenwich Together for Winter campaign gathers information about all the support and help that's available for residents over wintertime in one place, making it easier to find and access.

Christmas gift ideas for children with SEND



[Click here or scan the QR
code to see the list](#)

Looking for some inspiration?

Take a look at some gift ideas
that have been a hit from parents
across Greenwich.



Queen's House Ice Rink



[Click here or scan the QR
code to find out more](#)

Suitable for anyone who needs a
calmer, more relaxed environ-
ment to get the most out of their
visit



Greenwich Theatre presents

Our relaxed performance will be on Thursday 5th
January 2023.

[Click here or scan the QR
code to book your tickets](#)



Do The Right Thing awards 2022

The RBG ACE participation group produced a 'Hello' video which was used at the Safeguarding Children with SEND conference in 2022. The ACE group as a whole were short listed for a 'Do The Right Thing Award' and ultimately won the 'Services To The Community' award. Winners received medals and a certificate....

ACE members agreed some of the 'stars' of the video deserved to attend the award ceremony on behalf of ACE.

[Click here to visit the ACE Local Offer page](#)

Do The Right Thing award winners 2022

[Click here or scan the QR code to watch the video](#)



Greenwich Museums - Disability History Month

From craft activities to workshops, find out how Royal Museums Greenwich is celebrating the lives of D/deaf and disabled histories and communities.

Location: National Maritime Museum

Date and Times: 18 November – 18 December

[Click here or scan the QR code to find out more](#)



Christmas tips for autistic people and their families



Christmas can be an exciting and fun time. But new activity can be overwhelming for some of us, particularly when we're also dealing with the impact of coronavirus. We might have to adapt some of our usual plans but that shouldn't stand in the way of an autism-friendly Christmas.



With your help, we've compiled a list of tips for the festive period. With good planning and clear communication, we hope these will help you have an enjoyable Christmas.

[Click here or scan the QR code to find out more](#)

Take care of yourself this Christmas



What is your HeadScape? Headscape has been developed by Oxleas NHS Foundation Trust for young people who live in Greenwich.

Take the quiz, find out what's going on in your head and what might help sort it out.



[Click here or scan the QR code to find out more](#)

Holiday Food and Fun Winter 2022



[Click here or scan the QR code to search the directory](#)

If your child attends a special school in the borough and/or has a package of care from social services, they can access the specialist SEND provision and programmes.

Clubs will run between 19 December and 30 December.



Christmas message from the GPCPF



With Christmas approaching soon, the festivity will blossom... On behalf of the Greenwich Parent Carer Participation forum, we would like to extend our support during this Christmas season. With the impact of covid, alongside the current financial difficulties some may face, it is even more important for us as a community to come together and support one another.

Merry Christmas

[Click here or scan the QR code to visit the website](#)



Please do take this Christmas break to refresh and relax. Although it can get hectic with having the children back at home for their half term break! It's even more important to look after our own mental health. If at any time you are wanting a bit of fresh air, take a look at the ['rolling news' on the Local Offer](#) as there are some FREE activities to do in Greenwich over the festive season

We hope you all have an enjoyable Christmas and New year. Once again, we are all here to support you.