



WILLOW DENE SCHOOL

Friday 23rd June 2023



Head Teacher's Message

Summer is well and truly here! In the last few weeks, we have been enjoying the sunshine and trying to stay cool when the temperatures have strayed too high. Even though this is the first newsletter of the summer term it seems like so much has happened already with a lot still to come, so this newsletter is a whistlestop tour of everything that has happened and is still to happen. Hopefully you will have also had a chance to watch this half term's parent briefing which will give you some more detail on the items in this newsletter.

Governors were in school last week for a monitoring morning, which was focused on our progress towards our communication Core Priority. Governors were able to hear about and see some of the new low tech approaches we have trialled this year to extend children's communication. Next week we will be having a full day of governors meeting, during which governors will see our new Core Priorities for 23/24 for the first time. Our Core Priorities are very important because they form the basis of our school development plan and outline our priorities for the year ahead. They will also hear more about our progress with our cost-of-living Core Priority and our plans for sixth form.

Our week ended last week, with our 'Little Night In'. Our two groups of children and adults had an amazing sleepover at

Swingate Lane.

Activities included swimming, dancing through the decades, a campfire and a movie night. The staff didn't sleep much but all the children were amazing. For some of them it was their first time away from their mums and dads and we are so very proud of them. This week our one night stay at Broadstone Warren is taking place and we look forward to hearing all about it. Still to come are the 'Big Night' events at Oakmere Road. Watch this space for further details.

This week we learned that there are likely to be more teacher strikes this term on July 5th and July 7th. This is because the government have not made a reasonable pay offer to teachers or agreed to fund any future pay rises, placing schools across the country in an increasingly difficult financial position. Next week we will be gathering information about the implications of the strike action for Willow Dene and we will confirm our plans by letter by the end of next week. As you know, the strike action has had a huge effect on our ability to operate and therefore we would recommend that you make provisional arrangements for your child for the strike days.

We are excited about sports day next week and hope to see lots of you there! Enjoy your weekend.

Rachel

IMPORTANT DATES

Sports and MOVE Day - 28th June 2023

Siblings Evening Event - 30th June 2023

Playscheme Signup - 4th, 5th and 10th July 2023

Leavers Lunch - 7th July 2023

Big Night Out – Complex Needs and ASD groups – Oakmere Road - 7th -8th July 2023

Year 6 Leavers Event - Swingate Lane - 11th July 2023

Parent's Evenings - 12th July 2023

Year 11 Leaver's/ Alumni Event at Oakmere Road – 13th July 2023

Summer Fete – 15th July 2023

6th Form Meeting with Parents - 18th July 2023

Last Day of Term – 21st July 2023



Pre-Loved Pop-Up

Last term saw the introduction of our pre-loved clothing items for children. We are passionate about reducing fabric waste and the impact on our environment so please support us.

Parents and staff have been really generous in donating children's pre-loved clothing items. We welcome children's clothing donation that are clean and ready to sell. All clothing items are available for a small donation to our FOWD charity. There will be a donation tin available at our pop-up events.

You can find our Pre-Loved Pop-Up clothing range at reception, Swingate Lane. We currently have this available on Tuesdays for Parent's Coffee Mornings and Wednesdays Parent Yoga group. We will also be 'popping up' at our forthcoming Parent's Evening on 12th July.

We looking forward to seeing you there!



We began this half term with a visiting group of school leaders from Nigeria who have been with us in school learning about what happens here for our children and what practise can be adapted for them to use when they return home. This is their last week, and we will be very sad to see them go. They really have been fully immersed in school life through that placement including meeting parents, staff, class placements much more. They wrote to us with the following comment, which we wanted to share with you:

'I wish to express my heartfelt gratitude to you for accepting me to have the opportunity to visit your school. My experience was awesome the staff were all wonderful and everyone was welcoming. I have had the privilege to have an open-door experience, gain a lot of knowledge practically and learn from individual staff who gave me deeper insights into the Willow Dene pathways to achieving your goals. These have enriched me in more ways than I could have imagined. Thank you for your time and support'.

Leaver's Celebrations

Teachers of children in Year 6 and Year 11 have been busy collecting photographs and writing testimonials for year books and end of year celebrations. Much to our excitement our Year 11s will not be going far this year, as they will be returning to sixth form as Year 12 in September. Planning for sixth form is going extremely well and in the coming weeks we will be sharing these with our staff and governors. We will be meeting the parents of current Year 11s to share our sixth form plans on the 18th of July.

Look at the invitation coming soon. Our leavers celebrations invitations should be coming to you this week. At Oakmere Road these will be on the afternoon of 13th July, followed by our alumni event, which will give all our previous Oakmere Road Leavers to come back and visit and to celebrate their successes. At Swingate Lane our leavers celebrations will be on 11th July. For Year 6 leavers who are going to Charlton Park Academy next year, we have already started our transition visits so the children can meet the staff they will be with next year and get used to the new environment.



Last week a group of children and adults had a lot of fun during the annual Albany taxi trip to Hastings.

Including food, dancing, the seaside and of course door to door transport, this event is fully funded by the Albany charity. There are very few events which are tailor made with our children in mind and we very much appreciated all the little touches which made it such an amazing day.

There are photographs on Twitter @willowdenesch



1:07 · 17 Jun 23 · 1,548 Views

1 Retweet 1 Quote 30 Likes



Twitter

If you are not following us on Twitter then you can sign up as a follower @willowdenesch or alternatively see our Twitter thread on our website.

← Tweet



Fantastic start to our Broadstone Warren School Journey. Crate stacking, nature walk, followed by a campfire with marshmallows!



22:20 · 21 Jun 23 · 238 Views

← Tweet



One proud Premises Officer with our new electric premises vehicle. We'll be making less of a negative environmental impact from here! We are committed to a #SustainableFuture



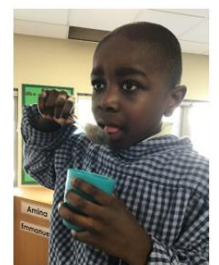
19:54 · 08 Jun 23 · 630 Views

21 Likes

Kestrel Class

We are having a very busy and exciting half term in Kestrel class with lots of fun learning and activities happening. We have been working hard on our self-care skills. We have been learning how to comb our hair, brush our teeth, wash our faces, wash our hands and clean our nails. As a class we are becoming more independent in our care routines and really enjoy being able to do these by ourselves!

In DT we have been exploring different types of healthy food we can have for breakfast, lunch and dinner. Recently we made smoothies by choosing fruits we enjoy and mashing them up before blending them to drink. We tried lots of new fruits such as raspberries, strawberries and blueberries and enjoyed trying our creations!



Dormouse Class

Dormouse Class have had a wonderful time at forest school this term. We have been exploring living things and habitats. The children loved searching for bugs, then making a bug hotel for them to stay in.

The children explored the materials well to select what they wanted to make their hotel out of. Most recently we have been planting seeds. All the children have loved getting their hands dirty exploring the soil, seeds, water and pots involved. We are looking forward to seeing, and maybe tasting, the results!



Friends of Willow Dene

Thank you so much to all of you who have supported Arky's Grandad who is raising money for FoWD through completing some challenging bike rides. If you haven't sponsored already but would like to please go to his Just Giving page:

[Crowdfunding to Willowdene School Greenwich. An Outstanding Centre for children with Special Educational Needs. on JustGiving](#)

We will be holding a samosa sale for staff to raise money for FoWD next week which we are all very excited about. A big thank you to the team who have been organising this.

WHAT'S ON



SEND Swimming Lessons

INCLUSIVE SWIMMING
LESSONS FOR ALL WHO
WISH TO LEARN

Specialist Facilities

Our SEND Swimming lessons take place at Marlborough School, Sidcup. Specifically designed for SEND swimming the pool is fully accessible for all users, the water is a warm hydrotherapy pool and the use of sensory lights and music is available.

Expert Tuition

Our team are experienced, patient and understand that every client's needs are individual. We have our own SEND badge award scheme and every swimmer will be inspired and encouraged to reach their full potential and enjoy their time in the pool.

Booking Information

Private tuition and group classes take place on a Monday and Wednesday evening and a Saturday morning. To book the limited spaces we have available please email info@zambeziportsschool.co.uk and a member of our team will contact you to give you all of the information and assist you with your booking.



CONTACT US

info@zambeziportsschool.co.uk
www.zambeziportsschool.co.uk

ZAMBEZI
SPORTS SCHOOL

SIBLING *night*

SWIMMING OR FITNESS FOLLOWED BY MOVIE NIGHT AND PIZZA!

FRIDAY 30TH JUNE 2023

5-8PM
WILLOW DENE, SWINGATE LANE
FOR SIBLINGS AGED 12-16

TO BOOK YOUR PLACE, EMAIL YOUR NAME, AGE, CHOICE OF
ACTIVITY AND CONTACT NUMBER TO JO:
JSIMSON@WILLOWDENE.COMPASSPS.UK