



# WILLOW DENE SCHOOL

Friday 7<sup>th</sup> July 2023



## Head Teacher's Message

What a busy few weeks we have had as we approach the end of term. We are packing as much in as we can into the last few weeks and hope you will be able to join at least one of our end of term activities.

Firstly, we would like to say thank you for your patience and understanding during the NEU strikes this week. We are very much hoping this will be the last of the strike action, that teachers will get a fair pay deal, subsidised by the government and that there will be a return to normal. However, as you know, this is a very changeable situation and at the moment almost all teaching unions are out to ballot at the moment so that there is a plan if needed in the autumn term. Of course we will keep you up to date with developments as they happen.

Thank you to all of you who attended our Sports Day last week. It was an amazing day of events at both schools and we had a record breaking number of parents. It really was lovely to see you all.

We were very proud to hear that our very own John Camp, CEO of the Compass Partnership of Schools, to which we belong, has been awarded an OBE for his services to education. John is such an amazing advocate for Willow Dene and our community, so we were delighted with this news. Next year, John will also become President of the Association of School and College Leaders, which is a national organisation. It will mean that he will be able to raise the profile of special schools and the things that affect special

schools with a national audience. So, we were very proud to be chosen, alongside Alderwood school to be filmed for John's Presidency film on Monday this week. With the school looking beautiful, the film crew saw children, swimming, at Forest School, cycling and other areas. It was their first time in a special school and at the end of filming the film crew told us what a beautiful school we have and described their afternoon as 'a visual feast'!

This week we have our final two residential stays or 'school journeys' of the year. The Big Night Sleepovers at Oakmere Road include a night out for our Big Night Out group which this year is to The Selfie Factory at the O2. Our Big Night In group have plans closer to home with cooking an evening meal and film night on the agenda! We look forward to sharing photos on Twitter @willowdenesch.

We will finish next week with our Summer Fete on Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> July. With everything from stalls, to horse rides and a petting zoo, we are aiming to finish the year with a huge celebration. Bring your friends and family. We can't wait!

*Rachel*



## DORMOUSE CLASS



Dormouse have had a very exciting start to the term with a fantastic trip to the Ministry of Sound, along with their friends in Pool Frog class.

We had so much fun dancing, watching the lights and feeling the vibrations of the music in the incredible space, which we had all to ourselves!

In preparation for the adventure, we had put together our very own playlists for the MoS DJs to sample. It was so exciting to hear our chosen songs mixed together and played in a totally immersive space! We also had the amazing opportunity to play on the decks and practice our DJing skills. It was a day to remember!



## PARENTS EVENING

Next week we are looking forward to parents evening. This year we are trying a new format. As well as the multi-professional fair taking place in the large hall, every class group has chosen something fun to do as a social event together with their parents. We have produced a menu of what is on offer and there is everything from a drumming workshop to a garden party. We hope you will come and talk and have a lot of fun with us. It also means that is your child is changing class you will be able to meet the new teacher.

## GOVERNORS MEETING

Last week we also had our last Governor meeting of the year. In the morning we had a presentation from Mark Clayton which explained the impact of our Cost of Living Core Priority this year and also a presentation about our plans for sixth form. We will be sharing this presentation with our Year 11 parents on the 18<sup>th</sup> July. Look out for letters about this coming soon.

In the afternoon we looked at our new Core Priorities for 23/24. These seven areas are all things that we agree are priorities for Willow Dene for next year and they will form the basis of our school development plan. We look forward to sharing them with you in September.

## IMPORTANT DATES

**Playscheme Signup - 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> July 2023**

**Big Night Out & In – Complex Needs and ASD groups – Oakmere Road - 7<sup>th</sup> -8<sup>th</sup> July 2023**

**Year 6 Leavers Event - Swingate Lane - 11<sup>th</sup> July 2023**

**Parent's Evenings - 12<sup>th</sup> July 2023**

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

**Leavers Lunch – 14<sup>th</sup> July 2023**

**Summer Fete – 15<sup>th</sup> July 2023**

**6<sup>th</sup> Form Meeting with Parents - 18<sup>th</sup> July 2023**

**Last Day of Term – 21<sup>st</sup> July 2023**



## AllKidsCan Short Breaks Information Sessions

AllKidsCan are now able to offer Specialist Short Breaks during school holidays to children aged 5-10 years with ASD, learning difficulties and/or complex medical/health needs. They provide various types of on-site and off-site activities such as cooking, arts and crafts, sensory activities, multi-sport sessions, music and performing arts as well as trips out to places such as zoo/farm trips, bowling, trampoline parks, museums, parks and seaside trips (weather permitting!). They provide a one week summer club during the summer holidays (not available to children who already have a place on the Willow Dene Summer Play Scheme) and holiday clubs throughout all the other school holidays (with the exception of the Christmas break).

AllKidsCan came to the Willow Dene coffee morning on Tuesday 20th June, and also held a tour of the spaces of their base at Shooters Hill College on Monday 26th June. At the tour we met Chris Eather, Director and Jessica Hobday, Inclusion Assistant Manager (see photo). During the tour we got to see the facilities used during the provision, and asked lots of questions. We were able to see the sensory room, theatre/cinema room, independent living space, outdoor spaces, and a new child-friendly space that will be opening in September. All spaces have level access and there's a changing places toilet and mobile hoist. The tour concluded with a video of parent's sound bites who already use the service and accompanying pictures of the children enjoying the activities, who gave us a greater understanding of what they like about the provision and why AllKidsCan are a valued and trusted resource for them.

To find out more about AllKidsCan you can:

- read this leaflet <https://online.fliphtml5.com/srsti/sckr/>
- contact them by email or phone e: [shortbreaks@allkidscan.co.uk](mailto:shortbreaks@allkidscan.co.uk) t: 020 8836 8906



## Woodlark City Garden

Next week is the grand opening of our City Garden. We have been working hard with the support of family and friends of Woodlark to bring to life our garden.

The inspiration for this garden came from JJ one of our Woodlark students. Our garden will be dedicated in memory of Katie Allix, Primrose and JJ who will always be remembered.





## SPORTS DAY

Last week we celebrated our annual Sports/MOVE day, inviting our families and friends to join us for a morning or afternoon of fun and games.

For our sensory learners with complex needs we had a sensory trail with activities based on sight, touch, smell, and parachute games.

For our active learners there were some races, dressing up, bean bag toss and hook a duck.

All children had the opportunity to go in the foam party and experience the foam falling down from the sky. The children had lots of fun and really enjoyed themselves with all the different activities.

We would like to send our thanks to Xentric Events for supplying the foam parties and Cherie Bennet from Morrisons at Thamesmead for our helium balloons. A special thanks to all the hard work from our specialist teams in helping to set up and welcome guests for the day.

We had a record breaking number of parents so thank you for your support. We look forward to seeing you again next year!





Dear Parent / Guardian,

**RE: Chartwells Free School Meals + Food Allergies**

With the introduction of universal infant free school meals for all primary school pupils in London we understand the importance of ensuring that every pupil can enjoy a healthy and safe school lunch regardless of their dietary requirements.

Chartwells take food allergies and intolerances seriously and have a robust medical diet policy in place to ensure the safety of all food allergic children.

If your child requires a medical diet menu please complete our medical diet request form and return to us with supporting medical evidence no later than **21st July**. This will ensure that your child has a medical diet menu in place for them when they return in September. Please contact your school reception to request a medical diet form.

Chartwells can successfully cater for a range of food allergies and intolerances via a number of different menus,

**1- Allergy Aware Menu**

- a. Suitable for children with allergies to any of the top 14 common allergens.

**2- Bespoke Medical Diet Menu**

- a. Individual menu tailored for children with complex or bespoke food allergies outside of the 14 common allergens.

**3- Nutrient Counts**

- a. Provided to children and parents who require the nutrient content of recipes in order to manage medical conditions (e.g., Diabetes, cystic fibrosis etc)

If you wish for your child to receive a Chartwells medical diet menu, please send completed forms to [chartwells.medicaldiets@compass-group.co.uk](mailto:chartwells.medicaldiets@compass-group.co.uk)

For any questions, please contact us or visit the Chartwells website.

Kind Regards,

Chartwells Medical Diets Team

Email: [Chartwells.medicaldiets@compass-group.co.uk](mailto:Chartwells.medicaldiets@compass-group.co.uk)

Website: [www.chartwells.co.uk](http://www.chartwells.co.uk)

# FREE SCHOOL MEALS FOR ALL CHILDREN

## FROM SEPTEMBER



Dear Parent/Guardian,

**From the new Autumn term, commencing September 2023, all children in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 living in Greater London will be offered Free School Meals.**



In response to the rising cost of living, the Mayor of London has made a commitment that every primary school child is entitled to a Free School Meal. This important step extends the existing Free School Meal provision – currently available to children in reception, and years 1 and 2 – to all primary school children in Greater London.

Chartwells Schools – as your catering partner – design nutritious seasonal menus, lovingly created by our team of talented chefs and dedicated nutritionists, who make sure the menus are packed with all the ingredients children need to grow strong and healthy.

Every day there is a choice of two hot main courses, jacket potatoes, pasta or a packed lunch. The meals are nutritionally balanced and feature familiar favourites as well as exciting new flavours, to encourage children to try something different.





# WHAT'S ON



## VIRTUAL MUSIC EVENT

Friday 7th July 2023

LOG ON AT 7PM

ALL COMPASS SCHOOLS REPRESENTED

The link to this event will be sent to you on Friday 7th July 2023 and will be open until Monday 10th July 2023.

WE HOPE YOU ENJOY THE PERFORMANCES!



## FamilyFirst

Helping millions of families stay bored-free this summer

It's 100% FREE for all parents- Enjoy!

[CLICK HERE](#)

- Free Family Days Out ✓
- Family Travel ✓
- The Great Outdoors ✓
- What's On This Summer ✓
- Parenting Hacks ✓
- Children's Fashion ✓
- Healthy Recipes ✓
- Toys & Games ✓
- Children's Sport ✓



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