



WILLOW DENE SCHOOL

Thursday 20th July 2023

Head Teacher's Message

Welcome to the very last newsletter of this school year, reaching you at the end of term! And what a year it has been.

So much has happened that it's hard to remember everything. We have had some amazing whole school high points, from our long-awaited Outstanding Ofsted judgement to becoming Little Wandle's first Champion School. We have also had some devastating low points, with the heart-breaking loss of Lily-Rose, Chloe and JJ, who we are still grieving for. We received the exciting confirmation that we are going to have a sixth form in September. We got involved by working with The National Maritime Museum to the Tate. We celebrated everything, from Eid and Christmas to our leavers. We held three fantastic community events and had a lot of fun. We found our way through extreme weather conditions and teacher strikes together. We re-started our school journeys with six fun filled residential visits to suit everyone's needs. We received hundreds of visitors and made a lot of new connections. We have walked every step of this year's journey alongside you and we could not be more grateful for your support. You are the most amazing school community to work with and we could not do it without you. So, a huge thank you from each and every one of us.

On Saturday morning, we were at Oakmere Road finishing off our final sleepovers, the Big Night In and the Big Night Out. The children were amazing, some of them never having spent the night away from home. Our Night Out enjoyed a rip-roaring time at The Selfie Factory at the O2 and then a meal out. Our Night In had a more sedate time with swimming and cooking in school. We have some brilliant photographs!

Last week we celebrated the Willow Dene journeys of all our Year 6 and Year 11 children with our Leaver's Celebrations. This year the theme was purple and green! Each of our leavers got to walk the purple carpet cheered on by their class friends and staff and most importantly, their families. We watched some very emotional photo tributes showing each child from their beginning at Willow Dene through to present day. Everyone had a presentation of a Yearbook with their own page, a photograph and some other goodies. They then had the opportunity for family photographs with our 2023

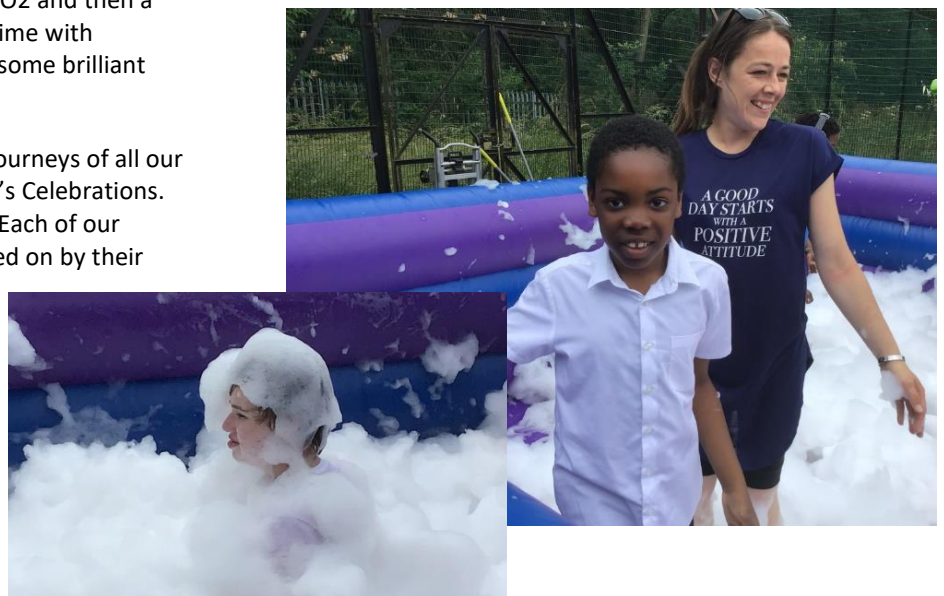
balloons. We are so proud of all our Year 6 and 11 children whether they have been with us for a long time or a short time.

On Wednesday after school we had our new format parents evening. Designed to get people talking, this term we did not set formal appointments but opted for a more relaxed event. Each class offered a different experience for our families; from drumming workshop to garden party. In addition, there were representatives from 24 organisations to talk to in our hall. It was lovely to see brothers and sisters joining us at this event. We finished by showing some photographs from all class groups across the year of just some of the experiences and encounters our children have had in 2023.

On Thursday after school, we also celebrated our Alumni Event. Our Year 11 leavers from previous years were invited back with their families to tell us what they have been up to and to catch up with old friends. It was lovely to see how they have grown and to find out what has been happening in their lives.

We are looking forward to a fun and enjoyable summer scheme during the first two weeks of holiday and will see some of you there. Keep an eye on Twitter @willowdeneschool to see what projects are underway during the holiday. Once again, a heartfelt thank you to all of you for your belief and support. We are lucky to have you. We wish you a fun and safe holiday. If you need us remember you can contact the emergency phone number if you need to speak to a school leader. We will see you in September, ready to go again!

Rachel



Broadstone Warren School

Journey

21st 22nd June 2023



After packing up the minibus we arrived at Broadstone Warren just after 12pm ready to have our lunch at the picnic tables. We then went for our first activity of the day which was crate stacking. After our

safety briefing and getting everyone who wanted to into their harnesses and helmets, we were ready to begin. Staff at Broadstone Warren demonstrated the activity first so we could all see what they needed to do and then there was no stopping the brave amongst us who thoroughly enjoyed the swing down from the crates and knocking them flying.



We all then went for a well-earned drink back at our lodge before heading out for a walk around the site, so we all had our bearings of where everything was. After our walk we then unpacked the

minibus and settled into our bedrooms. Once beds were made, there was fun to be had with pump action water rockets. There were a few soaked people by the end!



Crate stack – we donned harnesses and helmets to ascend an ever-higher and ever-wobblier tower of crates before the whole lot inevitably came crashing down or were pushed over!

Pump water rocket – plastic bottles were filled with water via a pump which would then release it into the air.

Our last activity of the day was the campfire which was enjoyed by all. We learnt some new campfire songs from the staff at Broadstone and were helped to cook some yummy marshmallows on the fire.

Somewhere in the midst of that we fitted in an all-important dinner to keep our energy levels high, then finished off a busy day with a relaxing play outside the lodge or time in bedrooms relaxing.

We were all up early the next day ready for a fun packed morning. First thing on the timetable was low ropes which everyone participated well with, exploring rope swings and rope bridges making sure we didn't fall off - easier said than done!



Low Rope Course– wearing our helmets children climbed and swung on different low rope activities.

Before we knew it, it was then

time for our go karting session which was a hit with everyone. Adults and children enjoyed pedalling around the track and trying to navigate the turns. Next stop, Brands Hatch!

Before we knew it the morning was over and that was it for another year, except for a quick lunch and piling back into the minibus to head back to school, eager to see our families.

As always, after the incredible amount of planning and work that goes into a successful school journey, the trip itself left us humbled and grateful that we work with such an amazing and great bunch of children and such fantastic, kind staff. Without the unwavering support and hard work of staff who volunteer for school journey, it simply would not be possible, so a huge thank you to each and every one of them, as well as the extensive support team back at school who help in ways big and small to ensure everything goes smoothly. And lastly, a special mention, to all of you parents, who trust us with your wonderful and precious children. Your faith in us has allowed your child to benefit from an incredible experience, supported by people who know them well and care about them deeply.

The photos and videos speak for themselves and give a real sense of the excitement, achievement and fun!

Claire and Emma

IMPORTANT DATES

Inset days

Monday 4th September 2023

Tuesday 5th September 2023

Wednesday 6th September 2023

Pupils return

Thursday 7th September 2023

EXCEPT

**Starling, Badger, Otter, Squirrel pupils
who return Friday 8th September 2023 (due to
extra staff training day)**

**Meadow and Moorland who return
15th September 2023**

EARLY CAREER TEACHER WELCOME EVENT

Monday 10th July 2023
10:00 - 15:30
WILLOW DENE SCHOOL



ECT and Schools Direct

At Willow Dene we love to have the opportunity to share our school, our provision and our fantastic children with the wider education community. We are proud of what we do and enjoy the opportunity to speak to others about it. Over the summer term we have welcomed many Early Career Teachers (ECTs) and Schools Direct student teachers to learn more about what we do.

In June, we welcomed a group of Schools Direct teachers to Willow Dene. These students are studying for their PGCE qualification, whilst working within schools across Greenwich. Many of our fantastic teachers at Willow Dene took this route into teaching. The students joined us for a workshop which focused on understanding more about our setting, our children's varied needs, their barriers to learning and we work hard to overcome them. They also learned many of the strategies that we use to engage our children in learning and how they can adapt these for their mainstream classroom. The students also had a tour and an opportunity to hear from one of our teachers who took the Schools Direct route and is now finishing her first year of teaching.

We have also welcomed Early Career Teachers from throughout Thames South over the term. They have had the opportunity to have a tour of the school and observe in a classroom for the morning, followed by an opportunity to reflect and ask questions with a leader.

Most recently, we welcomed Early Career Teachers from across our Trust, including those from Essex at Compass East. This was for our annual ECT Welcome Event. These teachers have just finished their initial teacher training and will be starting in one of the Compass schools in September. This was a full day of workshops, tours, class placements and opportunities for reflection. Willow Dene is chosen to host this event as a way of inspiring new teachers, ensuring they start their careers feeling empowered to take forward our ethos and embody our message of 'Seeing Possibilities, Realising Dreams' for their children that they go on to teach in their schools.

Lastly, we hosted the annual ECT Celebration Evening for the ECTs from across the trust who have now finished their two years of induction into teaching. We held the event in our sensory garden. ECTs enjoyed the opportunity to reflect on their career so far with leaders from across the trust and consider advice for those new teachers starting with us in September.

We are incredibly proud of our initial teacher training offer at Willow Dene, and relish in opportunities to share the amazing work we do much more widely, in hope that it inspires future teachers. We are very pleased to be welcoming two new ECTs to Willow Dene in September and to support another member of staff through their Schools Direct Programme. Good Luck to them all, they are choosing an extremely rewarding career.

"It really was such an amazing and inspiring visit and I will definitely be coming again soon." **New ECT, Wingfield**

Message from our Chair of Governors

Here we are at the end of another school year at Willow Dene and what a busy year it has been!

As you all know back in November OFSTED graded the school as outstanding- something which is richly deserved. As Chair of Governors, I have the pleasure of coming into school, seeing some of the amazing work that goes on both in the classrooms directly with the children and behind the scenes work that is necessary to keep school running. I know I speak for all of the governors when I say how proud we are of the school and all the children and the staff who go above and beyond to ensure all children get what they need. Feedback from several sources including OFSTED has identified how well staff know the children and how hard they work and how effective the leadership team, led so brilliantly by Rachel is. Importantly relationships between school and parents/ carers are also really good - thank you for supporting the school as you do.

In September the school will be taking another step forward as the new 6th form opens meaning more opportunities for the young people at Willow Dene.

As we move into a well-deserved summer break, I hope that you will all have a great time.

Best wishes

Lynne



SPECIAL SCHOOL NURSING NEWSLETTER

Our Special School
Nursing Team continue

to work across the Greenwich and Bexley Special Schools. The current Team comprises of Nurses, Nursery Nurses and Health Care Assistants.

Nursing continues to provide many services including:

Phlebotomy, continence advice, annual nursing reviews, weights and heights, support for parents/carers and pupils, health assessments, health promotion, devising and updating care plans and hospital passports, safeguarding, collaborate working with education, allied health professionals, and parents/carers.

The Nursing Service supports children aged between 14 and 18yrs and works together with the Transition and Learning Disabilities teams in order to ensure a smooth transition experience. Parents and education staff should contact the nursing team in their child's school to discuss this process.

Nursing support with hospital passports to ensure that the parents/guardians wishes are adhered to when they go to A&E. This also helps the adult teams to get to know the child better. We have recently been reviewing all our student's care plans.

As we approach the summer break the team would like to reassure parents that any students who are leaving Primary School to begin Secondary School are being efficiently transitioned by the Nurses. Nurses are working collaboratively with education staff to ensure that this is a smooth transition.

To continue to maintain nursing standards, we are making good use of our new purpose-built training simulation suite at our Goldie Leigh base, to ensure the highest training standards are achieved and maintained for all our staff and parents alike.

Reminders for Parents/Carers



New patient online health record launched
We're excited to announce that our new patient online health record system has been formally launched.

We would like to remind you all about our new 'App' called 'OX Care' which will enhance communication between parents/carers and health professionals. This App will give an overview of client details, care plans and assessments. If anyone has an interest in finding out more about this 'App' please contact the Nursing Team in your child's school.



If any parent/carer has any **continence queries**, please can you contact:
Natalie Troy on 07990393723 or email continence on oxl-tr.cypcontinence.inclusion@nhs.net.

TIER 3 WEIGHT MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME

School Nursing are excited to announce that there is a new service currently being piloted in the Greenwich Borough which is now open for children/young people living with complex obesity. To qualify for a place on this programme the child/young person must be a Greenwich resident and be registered with a Greenwich GP. The programme runs for a period of one year from acceptance by referral. A referral can be made from the GP, Dietician, Paediatrician or School Nursing Team. For more information about this service please contact either your GP, Dietician, Paediatrician or Nancy Williams (School Nursing) on 0208 294 3122.

FEEDBACK

It is very important that the Special Schools Nursing Team continue to provide a good standard of practice for the children and families we look after. For our service to maintain these standards and make improvements it is necessary to ask for feedback. This happens in a variety of ways, word of mouth, paper surveys and electronic surveys. **If you are asked for feedback, please can you spare some time to provide this as it helps us to improve the service we provide. All feedback received is welcomed and important to our service.**

HAYFEVER, ASTHMA & ALLERGIES

A reminder for all parents/guardians with children/young people with allergies, asthma and/or hay fever to be mindful that the summer season can trigger or aggravate many symptoms.

If you plan to travel during the summer holidays, please be mindful that your child/young person may encounter different allergens and triggers to those they are usually exposed to which may exacerbate any symptoms. Please always ensure that your child/young person has access to their reliever medications such as asthma inhalers, antihistamines, and Epi Pens.

MEDICATION

Some medications may be sent home for the summer break. Nursing kindly ask parents/carers/guardians to ensure that these medications are returned, **in date**, to the school their child/young person will be attending in September 2023.

We would like to wish you all a very happy and healthy summer break and we look forward to seeing you again in the Autumn.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

The nursing Team

Just to say a HUGE thank you to all of you who attended the summer fete on Saturday. The sun shone and it was not too windy after all. Our beach theme with our giant deckchair selfie-spot, stalls, games, petting zoo and inflatable bumper cars were a huge hit.



During the day we welcomed approximately 450 visitors through our gates to celebrate the end of the year. There were lots of children and families, staff and their families, governors, old friends and members of the community. It was so lovely to see so

many of you there with your own families.

We laughed, talked and had fun. The intention of this event was never to make money, but it seems that we made almost £1700 for Friends of Willow Dene on the day, so a huge thank you to you all.

Thanks also to those of you who donated or gave up your time to volunteer, we couldn't have done without you.



This week we met with all our sixth form parents to talk about our plans for sixth form at Willow Dene.

We shared information about uniforms, curriculum and how we see the future as well as some more concrete arrangements as our building is still under construction.

We unveiled our two class names. After much discussion and a school vote, we chose names of natural open spaces signifying freedom and movement. We are looking forward to working with Meadow and Moorland classes next year. One of our aims will be to show the impact of what our children can do and achieve to the wider world, so we are sure you will hear a lot about them soon!

Transport



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

If you live in the Borough of Bexley and you are moving within the Borough, you will need to contact Bexley 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.

Please ensure that you inform the school office of any change of address or contact numbers 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.



Yesterday, we rounded up a bumper two weeks with the much-anticipated performance of our newest Shakespeare Group at the Queen's House Ballroom.

Their performance of The Tempest was beautifully performed by all of our cast and well supported by the audience. What an incredible way to end an incredible year.



THE LOCAL OFFER in Royal Greenwich

ROYAL borough of
GREENWICH

Royal Greenwich SEND Local Offer Newsletter

Issue 12

July 2023

Summer Holiday
'Special Edition'

For parents and young people



To visit the Local offer
website click here or
scan the QR code

Inside this issue:

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Autistic Pride Craft Fair

GPCPF—message

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

Short Breaks 2023



What are Short Breaks?
Short Breaks are designed to help families
to care for their disabled children by provid-
ing them with regular breaks. Greenwich
also want short breaks to enable children
and young people to access positive,
meaningful activities in the local communi-
ty.

[Click here or scan the QR code to see
what's on offer over the summer](#)



School Uniform for children with SEND—M&S

Our school uniform edit for children with special needs includes staple
pieces designed for easy dressing. Expect considered design details
like flat seams and no labels for a smooth feel against the skin. Easy
rip-tape fastening helps simplify morning routines for ages eight and
under.



Holiday Food and Fun is back for this half term

FREE, funded holiday club spaces available for eligible children and young
people. If your child is aged between 4 and 16, and receives or is eligible for
free school meals, they'll be able to claim a spot at one of our participating
clubs. 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.

From football, to arts and crafts and youth clubs – there's something
on offer for everyone this half term.

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

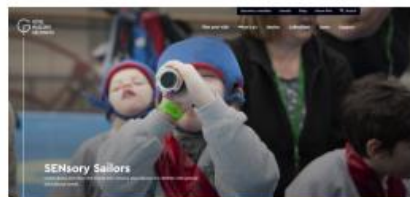


SENSory Sailors

Come along to National Maritime Mu-
seum and enjoy this brand new sen-
sory play session for children with
special educational needs.

Once a month on Saturdays

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



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Royal Greenwich SEND Local Offer Newsletter

Top Tip - changing the language

Don't forget you can choose the language dis-
played by making a selection from the drop-
down menu.



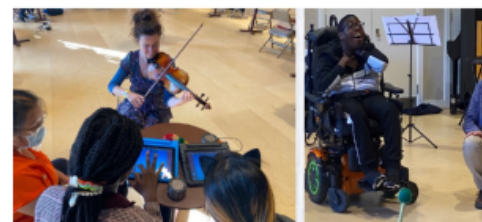
Resources for parents

A range of resources
designed to support you
and your family and pro-
vide information to de-
velop positive relation-
ships within your home.

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



Royal Philharmonic Orchestra



A free inclusive music-making opportunity
for young people with special educational
needs and disabilities and their par-
ents/carers.

Thursday 27 & Friday
28 July 2023
Woolwich Works

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



Autistic Inclusive Meets

2023 Autistic Pride and Craft Fair. Come
and listen to amazing autistic speakers,
and incredible poet and a fabulous singer.

July 30th 2023, 1-4pm

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



Message from the GPCPF

GPCPF would like to thank all parents and carers for
actively participating regarding our SEND children &
Young People as the academic year is ending. We
have had consultations regarding Short Breaks, hous-
ing and SENDIASS to mention but a few and look for-
ward to continuing to be a voice for our children and
Young People... We hope more parents can join our
membership

From everyone at GPCPF we wish you a wonderful
summer holiday.



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