

# NEWSLETTER

Compass  
Special  
Schools



This is the second newsletter of this half term and the last newsletter of this term. The weeks have flown by and it is hard to believe we are already preparing for the spring holiday.



This half term we have been working closely with our colleagues in Royal Borough of Greenwich (RBG) as the Rowan Wood (Hargood Road) build continues. I was able to visit the site on 13<sup>th</sup> March to see the progress for myself. There has definitely been a lot happening and it



is exciting to see the buildings and grounds taking shape. There is still a lot to be done before our move in date but the end is definitely in sight. We were able to share photographs of the building in progress with Rowan Wood governors last week. We hope to be able to offer an open morning for parents of our current Rowan Wood cohort and this is provisionally booked for Saturday May 16<sup>th</sup> in the morning. The building is going to be beautiful. It is light and spacious with some brilliant learning spaces.

If your child has a Rowan Wood placement for September, we will wait until we move in and offer some visits so you can see the school with children in it.

You may think the 16<sup>th</sup> May sounds familiar! This is because it is the day of our 'Community Cultural Celebration Day', which we postponed earlier this term so that everybody could join in. This event takes place in the afternoon so it will be possible to have the Rowan Wood open morning beforehand and for people to enjoy both. The Community Cultural Celebration Day will be a great opportunity to enjoy spending time together, have fun and to celebrate our unique community.

On Friday 6<sup>th</sup> March we were invited to attend the Royal Borough of Greenwich Civic Awards in a ceremony at the Town Hall. We were surprised and humbled to be awarded the Mayor's Special Achievement Award amongst other awards to people and organisations making a difference in the Royal Borough of Greenwich. We are particularly excited about this award (which will soon be taking pride in our main entrance) because although we are a big and strong community, sometimes the hardest place for our children and young people to be valued and recognised is the world outside our school. It was lovely to hear the cheers and the congratulations to our whole school community which means that we are seen.



At Willow Dene, as usual there will be more children than places available at our Oakmere Road site. We do plan to open two new classroom spaces in the former PDC part of the building but we know that our secondary placements exceed this. As we do every year we will ask what you think before making any decisions. You will receive a letter next half term so we can get your thoughts.

If your child is currently in Year 5 and you are making decisions about secondary transfer we will be offering visits to Oakmere Road on 20<sup>th</sup> May and 3<sup>rd</sup> June, more details will be coming soon. Once we move we will also publish some dates for visits to Rowan Wood, Hargood Road.

Last week was our final admissions panel of the year where we looked at placements for Willow Dene primary and Rowan Wood primary which will be temporarily based at Horn Park school from October 2026. This was a mammoth task because there were 190 applicants for a significant smaller number of placements. At these panels, the multi professional team involved treat every child and family with respect and give time to each one. This panel lasted for 10 hours and the decision making was a very difficult process. We know that many of you have been in this position yourselves and so we wanted you to know that we have tried our best for every child no matter what the outcome.

As you will know from our core priority, we have been prioritising destinations for our first group of year 14 leavers later this year. This has been a lot of learning for us, as we have found out more about what is available and appropriate for our cohort. This has led to an intense period of collaborative working with RBG to come up with some new options and solutions. We are looking forward to telling you more about these after the holidays. You may be aware that RBG are currently running a competition to secure a provider for their Post 19 transition learning centre to open in 2027. After really thinking about this carefully we have made the decision to apply. We believe that, although Post 19 education would be a new arena for us we are experts in our young people and families. The application process begins after the Easter holiday, and we will of course keep you updated about what happens.

You will have seen the letters that we sent out earlier this week about the meningitis outbreak in Kent. We have no reason to be concerned about the possibility of meningitis in school at the moment as cases have been confined to the older student population. However, we are always vigilant as we know how quickly things can change and prefer to be fully informed. Should anything change you will be the first to know.

We would like to wish you a happy and safe spring holiday. As usual the school emergency phones will be available if you need to speak to somebody. The numbers for this holiday are:

Week 1: 07716 388634

Week 2: 07857 502859

You can text or phone and leave a message and a leader will call you back.

We would like to thank you for all your support and positivity, as always. We are so proud of everything our children and young people have achieved so far this year and this would not be possible without you.

*Rachel*

## **IMPORTANT DATES**

First day of 1st half of summer term – Monday 13<sup>th</sup> April 2026

May Bank Holiday – Monday 4<sup>th</sup> May 2026

Polling day – Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> May 2026

Last day of 1<sup>st</sup> half of summer term – Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> May 2026

Inset Day – Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2026

## NEWS FROM ROWAN WOOD

### Monarch

In TPPC this term, the children have enjoyed learning about London; they have learnt about different types of transport and famous landmarks/tourist attractions; creating their own maps of London. They particularly loved experiencing a traditional afternoon tea and learning about Chinatown - creating some lanterns to decorate our class with and trying some noodles!

In Science, we have been learning about electricity. We identified electrical and non-electrical items around the classroom and investigated how electricity travels. The children were given a battery, tinfoil and a bulb and were asked to make the bulb light up. They demonstrated brilliant scientific thinking and problem-solving skills as they explored different ways to complete the circuit and successfully make it work.

### Peacock

This week in Literacy, Peacock Class has been enjoying exploring poems about birds. The children have learned new nature-related vocabulary and have been discovering how rhyming words can enhance a poem and make it more engaging. In Numeracy, we have been developing our measuring skills. The children practised using rulers to measure the length and height of various objects around the classroom, building both confidence and accuracy.

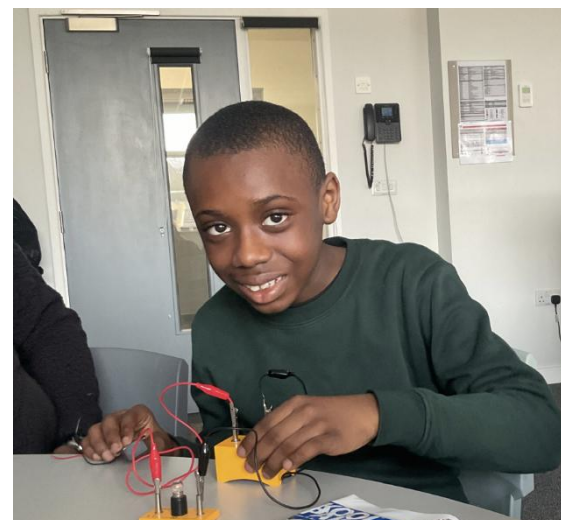
In Art, we focused on printmaking techniques using natural materials such as twigs, pinecones, leaves, and flowers. The children enjoyed experimenting with different textures and patterns to create their artwork. As part of our RSE learning, we watched a video about Ramadan and learned about its importance to the Muslim community, helping to deepen our understanding of different cultures and traditions.

### Skipper

Skipper Class has been busy with a range of creative and enjoyable activities. For Mother's Day, the children delighted in planting flowers, proudly taking home a thoughtful gift for their families. World Book Day was another highlight, with everyone thoroughly enjoying reading *Gina Kaminski Saves the World*. After a period, full of celebrations, the class embraced St Patrick's Day by creating colourful collages of clovers using a variety of materials. To round things off, the children practised their cutting skills while preparing delicious fruit salads. It was wonderful to see how many of them explored new textures and happily tasted their creations.

### Swallowtail

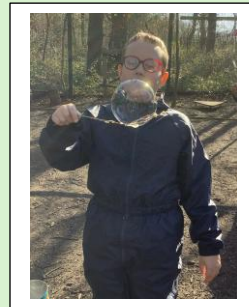
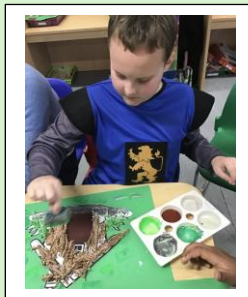
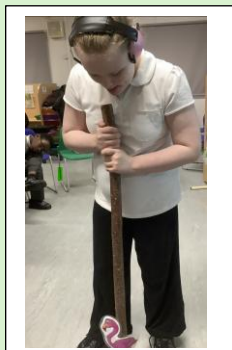
Swallowtail Class have been enjoying the warmer weather and have taken some of their learning outdoors. Using chalk, the children explored making long and short lines in the playground. We have also continued to enjoy our Specialist Interest afternoons, including a relaxing pamper session and preparing a delicious fruit salad.



## PHEASANT CLASS

Pheasant class have had a great Spring 2, and as short as it is, we always manage to pack in a lot! Some of us participated in the Shakespeare for Schools festival and everyone was very proud of what we achieved.

World Book Day was lots of fun and we spent the day participating in activities related to *The Café at the Edge of the Woods*. We created our own unconventional dishes out of a variety of ingredients, we made our own cafes in the woods and we enjoyed some drama.



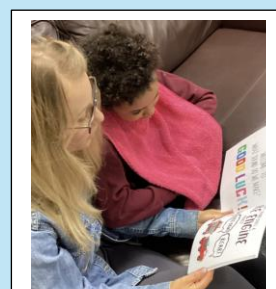
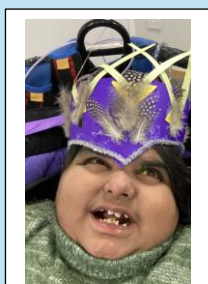
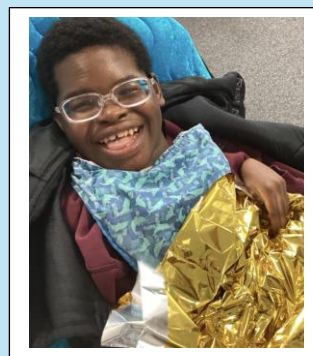
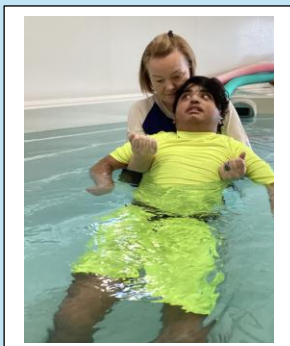
Forest School is one of our highlights of the week and we've been blessed with some sun on more than one occasion! With a focus on technology, we have enjoyed making bubble wands using natural materials and birdfeeders to name a few. Every week we always look forward to our exploring time, when we can immerse ourselves in the things we love, such as using the swing, relaxing in the hammock, climbing trees, engaging in role play, digging and generally enjoying being outside in nature.

Our story this half term has been *Alice in Wonderland*, and it's really supported our drama, reading and writing skills. We have particularly enjoyed some of the character quotes and have fun taking on the roles of characters to perform them. Some of us developed this into our writing by learning how speech marks are used and the rest of us are developing our independent writing skills.

Pheasant Class love any excuse to celebrate and learn about the world, so we naturally enjoyed Saint Patrick's Day! We immersed ourselves in Irish culture by learning dances, creating art linked to Irish myths and of course made some soda bread!

## HEDGEHOG CLASS

Despite it being a short term, Hedgehog Class have been very busy! We have been enjoying our story 'Hello Spring' and exploring a range of resources to help us understand and enjoy the changing of the season. We have also been enjoying our poem about a Fire Horse - the new Chinese New Year. We made bright and colourful fire horses of our own to celebrate! During music we explore calypso music based on the story 'Drummer Boy of John John'. We had our own carnival with headdresses we made too. Continuing our work on Funds of Knowledge we have loved having visits from some of our parents during our TPPC sessions. As always, we have continued to work on our health and fitness through using all available spaces and equipment, such as the pool and medi-motion bikes. Milo the dog has been in for regular visits to support us with our confidence and well-being, which we always look forward to.



The Tate have some great workshops over the Easter holidays please see below:



## UNIQLO TATE PLAY LINDA BELL: LOOP. SWING. SHAKE. REMAKE

Uniqlo Tate Play activity, designed by Action Space artist [Linda Bell](#).

[Linda Bell: Loop. Swing. Shake. Remake.](#) (Free - Drop-in)

Date: Daily between 28 March 2026 - 12 April 2026 Time: 10.30am–18.00pm (last entry 45 minutes before event ends)

Location: Tate Modern, The Tanks, Bankside London SE1 9TG

Explore colour, movement and creativity in an installation by Linda Bell. Inspired by her playful work, you can view and interact with Linda's sculptures and make your own by expanding on her use of materials, colour, movement and repetition.

Relaxed Hours: 10:30am -11.30am on Tuesday 31 March and Tuesday 7 April for [Relaxed Hours](#).

This session is primarily for neurodivergent children and adults, and any other visitors with sensory needs who prefer a more relaxed experience, plus their families, friends and carers. Please book a free space online if you wish to come during the relaxed hours.

**FREE!**

# Bollywood Community Dance Club

**UNITE, DANCE, CELEBRATE**

A beginner friendly, fun and upbeat bollywood themed inclusive dance class

Dance for yourself, dance for your health!

Adults and children welcome, just turn up and have fun!

**EVERY FRIDAY**

**TIME: 5:30-6:30**

**LOCATION:**  
SPORTING CLUB  
THAMESMEAD  
BAYLISS AVENUE,  
THAMESMEAD, SE28 8NJ

**SCAN HERE**



**FOR MORE INFORMATION** 📞  
MITALI PANDYA : 07999436701

**Peabody**

**Bexley Community Champions**

## ADMIN NEWS

### Important numbers

School telephone number	020 8854 9841 option 1 for Swingate Lane and option 2 for Oakmere Road
Willow Dene contact email	<a href="mailto:willowdene@compassps.uk">willowdene@compassps.uk</a>
Rowan Wood contact email	<a href="mailto:rowanwood@compassps.uk">rowanwood@compassps.uk</a>
Willow Dene School website	<a href="http://www.willowdene.compassps.uk">Willow Dene School - Home</a> www.willowdene.compassps.uk
Rowan Wood School website	<a href="http://www.rowanwood.compassps.uk">Rowan Wood School - Home</a> www.rowanwood.compassps.uk
School Instagram	@WillowDeneSch

#### My Child At School

Did you know that you can contact the school administrative team via your child's MCAS account by clicking on the envelope icon in the top right-hand corner of the app.

#### School Office Hours

Opening hours:  
8.00am – 4.30pm  
Monday to Friday

#### Royal Borough of Greenwich travel application

[Application for home to school travel assistance | Instructions](#)

#### Change of details

If you are moving, change your mobile number or have a new place of work please remember to update the school with your new details.

#### Illness

If your child or young person has vomited and or has diarrhoea, they should remain off from school for 48 hours after their last episode.