

Willow Dene News

Friday 8th July 2022



Head Teacher's Message



This newsletter is coming to you at the end of another busy week. We are very much enjoying the school being open and using our capacity for visitors and events to our fullest extent. A lot has happened in the last few weeks and a lot is planned for the last two weeks of term and beyond. Hopefully, you will have received the link to the most recent parents briefing, which gives you further detail. If you did not receive the link for any reason, our office team can resend it.

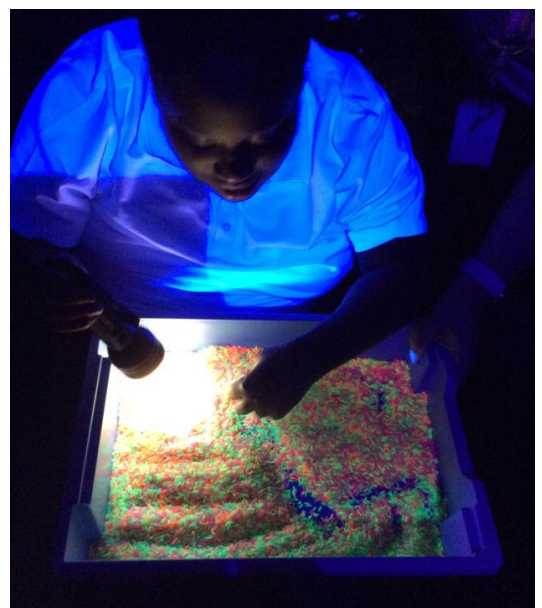
On Wednesday night we held our first Informal Summer Parents Evening and Information Fair since 2019. Approximately 140 parents visited school to meet informally with old and new class teachers, talk and share information as well as meeting some of the representatives of our many community and local authority services. There was such a positive, enthusiastic atmosphere in school. It was lovely to see you all.

At Parents Evening we were able to meet some of our new families for the first time and to welcome them to Willow Dene. Three of our new teachers; Sangita, Danielle and Mollie were all able to attend and meet some of their new parents. They will be joining the wider group of Compass Teachers and attending our conference for new teachers on Monday 11th July. This event is hosted at Willow Dene so that teachers can have a tour of the school and spend some time in classes. We are looking forward to working with them in September.

This week we also enjoyed 'A Day to Create' which celebrated the Arts and brought together all of the curriculum opportunities for our children in the areas of art, poetry, drama and dance. Children in every class enjoyed the opportunity to learn new dance skills and choreography, try out some art techniques and enjoy some uplifting performance poetry. As a school we are working towards The Artsmark Award, which is the only creative quality standard for schools and education settings, accredited by Arts Council England. It is designed to support arts, culture and creativity which are all areas we value at Willow Dene.

We are ending this newsletter with the exciting news that we received a Highly Commended Award for our Careers Programme and our contribution to the London Careers Hub. Careers is very exciting areas for us and one that we have focussed on getting right for our children over the last few years, so we are very happy to have been nominated and to receive this acknowledgement. Our certificate will be on display in reception soon.

Rachel



KESTREL

Kestrel class have been having a fun filled summer term!

We have been enjoying being able to go for weekly trips and have been developing our road safety skills when we are out. We will all stop at the edge of the road and when prompted will look left and right to look and listen for vehicles. We have been learning to say if it is safe or not to cross! We are a very active class who always love to be on the move, and we have been developing our climbing and balance skills by using a range of playground equipment and learning to share favoured equipment with others.

We have loved our music sessions this half term and all enjoy being able to express ourselves through music. We all have our own preferences for instruments and love to let everyone hear us play.



Lapwing

Lapwing class visited Godstone Farm, in Surrey this week, their first educational trip and what a successful and fun trip it was!

Changes to daily routine, experiencing a new location, different sounds, smells, and people may have been a daunting prospect but Lapwing class took it in their stride and made the most of the opportunity to explore with enthusiasm.

The soft play area and adventure playground were favourite spaces, where the children ran, climbed, crawled, and balanced on a variety of equipment and there were so many slides and swings to try out! The sand pits were also a hit with several children.

After eating lunch in a cabin, the children had the opportunity to see a range of animals; pigs, geese, chickens, donkeys, and sheep and those brave enough allowed the guinea pigs on their laps, stoking them with their hands or a brush.

A tiring day in the summer sunshine but a lovely trip out to end a wonderful year with Lapwing class.



Transitions

Preparations for our leavers in Year 6 and Year 11 are well underway. We have been working with receiving schools to make sure that children have the opportunity to visit their new school where this is possible.

This includes children who are moving to Willow Dene Oakmere Road from Swingate Lane. The other part of saying 'goodbye' to our leavers centres around our leavers events.

Yesterday the freshly printed Yearbooks which will be presented to the children at our leavers events arrived in school. This is always a bittersweet moment for us. We have seen our children's journeys first-hand during their time at Willow Dene and are so, so proud of them. We are excited for the next part of their journey, whatever that may hold but very sad to see them leave.

During the last week of term we will be rolling out our purple carpet and setting up our VIP guest areas for our graduation events and we hope to see many of our families there. Our leavers parents have known us for a very long time and you have supported us in everything we do. We have shared a lot of history; so it is hugely important for you to know that wherever your child is going to be in September, you will always be part of the Willow Dene family and welcome at any of our coffee mornings and events, to visit or to phone us for advice or a chat!

Friends of Willow Dene

We have just had our forward planning meeting where we have identified some of the fundraising activities that we will be running next year. It looks as though it will be a good year of exciting activities so watch this space!

We are keen to welcome more volunteers. If you are interested please contact Katie Dooley, we would love to hear from you.

Once again, thank you for supporting us over the last year.

COVID

Unfortunately, over the last few weeks we have seen a steady rise in the number of COVID cases in school.

This is reflective of the growing numbers in the community. To combat this we have reiterated the need for all classes to be vigilant around control measures like touch point cleaning, handwashing and good ventilation.

Where there have been COVID cases in classes we are advising staff to consider wearing a face covering, although this is no longer a measure we can enforce due to the changes in government guidance. We hope that cases will reduce so that we can enjoy the last few weeks of term with everyone together.

IMPORTANT DATES

Children's Leavers Lunch

13th July 2022

Family Community Picnic Event

15th July 2022

Leavers Events Swingate Lane

19th July 2022

Leavers Events Oakmere Road

20th July 2022

Last day of Term

22nd July 2022 (Finishing at 1:30pm)

Summer Playscheme

26th July 2022 – 5th August 2022



We have been posting Tweets about Willow Dene since

2014. We have sent over 4000 Tweets at this time, all about our children, our news and the learning happening here.

We follow almost 4000 people and organisations that we can learn from and communicate with.

Twitter provides followers with the most up to date news about what's happening at Willow Dene... so if you aren't already link to our Twitter account please do follow us and help us reach the 3000 follower milestone!

London Philharmonic Orchestra OPEN SOUND ENSEMBLE

THURSDAY 4 & FRIDAY 5 AUGUST 2022



lpo.org.uk/opensound
APPLICATIONS
NOW OPEN!

OPEN SOUND ENSEMBLE THURSDAY 4 & FRIDAY 5 AUGUST

Join the London Philharmonic Orchestra's free inclusive music ensemble for young people of secondary school age with special educational needs and disabilities and their parents / carers.

Thursday 4 & Friday 5 August
Woolwich Works, The Firework Factory,
Royal Arsenal, London SE18 6HD

Morning group: 10.30am–12.30pm | Afternoon group: 1.30–3.30pm

We will be making music in groups using both traditional and accessible digital instruments, playing alongside friendly musicians from the LPO.

"It was great to take part in such collaboration in creativity where it felt all involved were on the same level just having fun making music together regardless of skills or levels"

Open Sound Ensemble parent, Spring 2022

To find out more or to apply, visit

lpo.org.uk/opensound

If you have any questions please
get in touch with us:



Email: hannah.foakes@lpo.org.uk or Phone: 0207 840 4227



The LPO Open Sound Ensemble is kindly supported by the Borrowers Charitable Trust, the Boshier-Hinton Foundation, the John Horniman's Children's Trust, the Souter Charitable Trust, the David Solomons Charitable Trust, the John Thaw Foundation, Sir William Boreman's Foundation and The Viney Family and the BlueSpark Foundation

WHAT'S ON

Love Greenwich Park but find the hills and slopes tricky to walk now there's an answer.
#goodtoknow
#greenwichpark #mobility

FREE Mobility Buggy Service
12pm – 4pm
Weekends and school holidays



Driven by volunteers, the buggy runs about every 20 minutes between St Mary's Gate and Pavilion Café and back.

Priority is for those with mobility impairments but if there's space, we can take others. The buggy seats 4 passengers and a wheelchair user. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

For more information email:
greenwichparkrevealed@royalparks.org.uk

Open Sound Ensemble is an inclusive music group for young people
of secondary school age with SEND who are interested in:
• Making music
• Being creative
• Meeting new people
You do not need an instrument or previous experience
to join us.
Our next sessions are at Woolwich Works in South East London

4 & 5 August 2022
on 4 & 5 August 2022.

We would love to meet you!



Please visit the Royal Society for Blind Children Website at [Calendar of Activities - RSBC](#) for information on local activities for July and August.



Get our help



Support us



For young people



For families



About us



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Calendar of Activities

Sign up for RSBC activities by filling in one of the booking forms on an event page.

If you haven't attended an RSBC session before, or would like to book a 1:1 Employment or Assistive Technology session, please email us at connections@rsbc.org.uk or phone on 020 3198 0225 to get involved.

