

Willow Brook News

October 10th 2018



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Dear Parents and Carers,

Please forgive a mid-week catch up with Willow Brook's latest news – a combination of waiting for some additions and gathering final bits of information slightly delayed Friday's publication. With all that now in place, there's quite a lot to tell you!

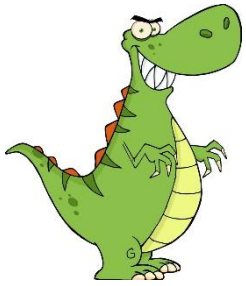
Firstly, this week, as you know, is Parents Evenings and we look forward to welcoming you at school to meet with your child's class teacher and share the first few weeks of the term in their new year groups with you. We hope that a choice of later appointments has helped to accommodate your working schedules. First appointments this evening and tomorrow will be at 3.55pm. This will enable us to safely pass children on to the after-school club and make sure other pupils stay in the care of teachers as they are collected from the playground before opening the building to you all.

Last Friday we held our MacMillan Coffee Morning. I know that I have thanked you by Parentmail, but now that our total has reached an incredible £720 I feel compelled to underline my gratitude for your kindness and support. In memory of many of our own family members, and holding Julie Cook (who as a Willow Brook parent and an incredible member of our Friends team) at the forethought of our minds, the staff were determined to make this the best MacMillan morning ever. Our very own Bake Off final saw great rivalry in the staffroom and some inspiring cakes! The competition was fierce and, with a gold medal at stake, our school cooks took their time in passing judgment! The winning entry was soon devoured and children followed suit and arrived with enough cakes to fill a coffee morning AND an after-school sale! For parents who arrived at 7.40am to help set up and serve, for those who stayed behind at 3.30 to sell the leftovers and for everyone who spent time and money making it such a fantastic event, I am truly grateful. And if this has whet your appetite for the next Willow Brook Bake Off, get planning your showstopper for Children in Need Day on November 16th where there may be a medal for a junior champion as well...



Different year groups have been out and about in the first few weeks of term and supporting their classroom learning with new experiences. Last Friday Year 6 went to Newark to visit the National Holocaust Centre as part of their topic on War. I have been fascinated by the work they have produced based on all that they saw and the stories they heard there. I know that they are in the process of writing articles to share some of this with you via the website. Mr Jones and Year 4 meanwhile, have been completely immersed in all things Roman! Today the University of Nottingham's history team spent a great day with the class and have left a treasure trove full of artefacts for them to explore. This will set the children up well for their day in Derbyshire later this term, when they will paint shields, don their armour and march towards a fortification with true Roman menace!

Having listed some forthcoming dates for your diary in my last newsletter, I'd like to give you some advanced notice of (dare I say it) Christmas play evenings... Our junior production (which will include children from Years 2 – 6) will take place on December 11th, 12th and 13th (Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday) evenings, with a matinee on Wednesday afternoon. This will have a bit of a stone age theme this year and we are all looking forward to the dinosaur auditions! Our younger children in Reception and Year 1 will be finishing the term off on a nativity note on Tuesday 18th December with a matinee and evening performance. I'm sure there will be more sheep than dinosaurs on this occasion! More details will, of course, be available nearer December...



A little nearer (and certainly more seasonal!) is our Harvest Celebration assembly on Friday 19th October. This is traditionally a day when we appreciate all that we have and try to show our sense of community by sending a donation of food and provisions to the Friary in West Bridgford. As you may know, this is an organisation that seeks to feed and support those in great need. We will happily receive your donations... however small... during the latter part of that week and will be encouraging the children to help on the day.

Finally, our Friends of Willow Brook Committee are busily organising their programme of events for the autumn term. Their 'Race Night' is next Friday (19th) and the School Disco is on November 9th. Putting the events in the diary is the easy part... having a team of willing parents to support the group and make sure that they happen is the most important part. Tom Caven-Atack has sent the following Friends update and perhaps puts this across quite neatly. To be able to put on our Christmas Fair at the end of November, your help is needed. Along with the Plant Sale in May, this has always been a highlight in the fundraising calendar so please let Tom know if and how you can lend a hand.

I hope you can make it to the Willow Brook Race Night in the main hall at Willow Brook School from 7pm on Friday 19 October. Friends events are so important for raising money to fund all those extra things that make school so enjoyable. Over the past few years, funds raised at Friends events have enabled teachers to enhance the learning experience with their donations of interactive whiteboards and new computers. Friends have helped transform playtime with contributions towards play equipment and will be donating a sizeable sum to the gym equipment about to be erected on the field. And it is not just the big things. Friends have provided the school with many little things that make a big difference. It seems a long way off now but I am sure you will enjoy watching final year students proudly wearing their Willow Brook leavers hoodies at the end of their final year - paid for by Friends.

All of these things can only happen if you get involved with Friends activities. So please come to as many Friends events as you can. They are always a lot of fun. But don't stop there. Every Friends event needs people like you to make them happen. I am sure we are all very busy but some parents make time in their busy schedules to organise these wonderful Friends events. If you can spare any time to help out, please contact me. I'm at school pick up and drop off every day, and I would be glad to hear from any parents eager to help raise money for the school. Let me know if you need any more information about the Race Night.... Tickets are available from the school office. See you at the races!



I look forward to seeing you at Parents Evening – please call in and see me too if you need any information or I can help you in any way.

With kind regards,

Louise Ballard