



# Willow Brook News

## January 12th 2020

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Dear Parents and Carers,

This is just a quick catch up from me – I know that most of you have had contact from your child's teacher and have been busy on Teams with your assigned tasks. It has been quite a week! I will attempt to keep this short and to the point, as I am well aware of the amount of information you have had to read and absorb.

Firstly, thank you for getting to grips with learning on Teams. It means that work can now come to you digitally and efficiently with a backup copy on your class page of the school website should you experience any technical issues. Again, if you have any problems accessing the work or you can't work efficiently because of your home devices, please get in touch. We can help.



At the weekend I spoke to a couple of local organisations who have the ability to recondition and recycle any old and unused laptops for the benefit of our children who may be struggling to access learning online. Laptops are wiped of all data and set up ready for pupil use. All that is needed is the device and its charger. If you have anything suitable lurking in a cupboard at home, we can make great use of it. Please get in touch and we can arrange collection.

Over the past week the staff at Willow Brook have worked to put a system in place that accommodates as many family situations and circumstances as we can. We recognise that pressures from balancing work and childcare at home varies hugely and we hear and try to offer helpful responses to your individual requests. As we start to offer more, please remember that we are sympathetic to your busy days and stress. All that we can ask is that you do what you feel able and keep your wellbeing at the forefront of your family's days. Children in school are working in mixed aged bubbles. They share the staff that are allocated on different days and are bravely battling the winter temperatures and the required ventilation! Wherever children are learning, life is far from usual and, I imagine, the grass might seem greener on the other side...

Tomorrow you will receive an invitation in Teams to a weekly Bench of Glory assembly. This will link you live to the bubble in school for approximately 30 minutes during which we will be able to share and recognise some of the effort and achievement that is happening at home and in class. I know that we won't be able to catch everyone in their busy schedules but I hope that it provides your child with an opportunity to be a part of a familiar school event if they are available. If you can't be with us on this occasion, we will send a video of the awards.



We will meet with the Year 5 / 6 bubble at 9.30am this Friday (15<sup>th</sup>)

Year 1 and 2 will be invited at 1.30pm this Friday (15<sup>th</sup>)

Year 3 and 4's assembly will be at 9.30am on Monday 18<sup>th</sup>

Reception will meet with Mrs Broadhead and Mrs Sampson at 1.30pm on Monday 18<sup>th</sup>

If you have never logged on to a Teams meeting before, it is straightforward. Respond to our invite and 'join' the meeting as it begins. Give us a call if you need any reassurance or further instruction.

After speaking to you this week, (we have two more classes to complete tomorrow), we aim to schedule a morning Teams meeting for the children who are not currently accessing school to catch up with their teacher. Whilst we can see who is logged in and when (and what they are accessing), this will be a chance for the children to say, 'good morning' and (for our older pupils) talk about how they are managing their tasks and routines. You will receive an invitation directly from your teacher when the week's rotas have been completed tomorrow. This should give you plenty of notice.

Staff have been busy today making videos (both in class and in the peace of their empty rooms) to embed in their learning. Again, these will be posted in pupils' Teams Notebooks as well as being on the website. We believe that recorded sessions can be more useful than live teaching events as you are not restricted to specific times (useful when families are sharing a device). You can also re-watch to your heart's content! Clearly, as our routines slip more comfortably into place, what we are able to produce and achieve will increase. Thank you for being patient during a busy week.

I know that a few still prefer to pick up paper copies of work and we will continue to provide those who have made this request. I appreciate your reasons. With the website and Teams providing all that you need, my need to email starts to be redundant! Get in touch at any time if you cannot access your online folders and we can talk you through and offer any assistance.

I hope you find moments of calm in the busy week ahead and send you my best wishes,

Louise Ballard