



Willow Brook News

February 26th 2020

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Dear Parents and Carers

It was with a great sense of relief to hear Boris Johnson announce that (all being well) schools would reopen on March 8th... I am sure that joy was shared!

Over the past couple of days different year groups have been sharing their thoughts and feelings about coming back. I know it will stir a mix of emotions for children and adults alike, and what will be eagerly awaited by some will be an anxiety for others – especially over the coming week as you anticipate and prepare.

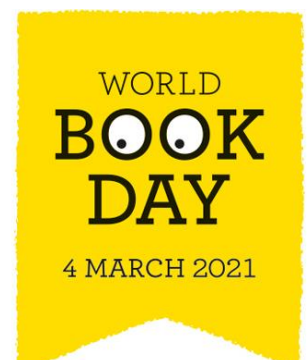
There will, of course, be clear guidance from us next week. We are still required to work within a pandemic risk assessment, and I have every confidence that, as a community, we will be keen to protect and uphold the wellbeing of our children and the staff as well as each other.

I think it is important to underline at this stage that every child is expected to attend full time from Monday 8th. With vaccinations of elderly and vulnerable members of our families providing a strong level of immunity, and evidence still supporting a very low transition rate amongst primary aged children, I hope that you will have confidence. Our staff are all carrying out lateral flow tests twice a week and the additional health and safety measures will continue to be thorough. Thus far, all has been well. Requests for leave of absence until the end of the summer term will not be approved unless they fall within 'exceptional circumstances'.

I just want to underline that it is (and will continue to be until further notice) mandatory to wear a face covering on our school site and to maintain social distancing.

And so to our last week of home learning. The Trivial Pursuit game takes us to *Poetry*. There is a rich world of words to explore and we hope that the children will find out that there's a joy in playing with concepts and ideas. I am looking forward to the Willow Brook anthology!

On Thursday next week it is World Book Day. The children's tokens are in school and I would love you to call by next **Thursday or Friday** to collect yours. As well as giving you a brand new book (and there's some good ones this year) it might help some of you who have not walked to school since January 4th a chance to rehearse your journey ready for Monday! As I always ask, if you don't wish to keep a book for yourself, please collect a copy and donate it to school. We would be very grateful.





At some point on Thursday we will meet with each class. As we have told the children in assemblies and live sessions this week, if you could reinvent yourself as a book character and appear live on screen, we would love that. If you are feeling artistic, we also invite you to design your own backdrop for the Teams meeting and put yourself into a story setting. Many children have already discovered the art of changing their 'meeting room' to something more glamorous. Today we met Ella in front of the Golden Gate Bridge... Noah was in a spooky town and Finton was at the beach (lucky boy!). If you draw or paint a book scene, take a photo and upload your picture, you could transport yourself into the pages of a book. There will, of course, be prizes for the best! If you have never done this and you're not sure how, this might help: https://youtu.be/vd7_Wtv-vXI

For children in school on Thursday – you could also come as a book character. Keep your ideas simple and 'prop- less' and that will work. Please do not feel obliged. There will be plenty of book related activities during the day and a chance for the children in school to create that story scene.

Finally, if you have walked past Willow Brook over the past week, you may have noticed the crocus bulbs in full bloom on the grass. Many years ago the school raised money to send polio vaccinations to Africa. A bulb was planted for every vaccination we funded. It has been many years since the flowers have had the chance to grow without being stood on! It has been a poignant reminder to see them this year and to know that this vaccination has now completely eradicated polio on that continent – the lives of millions of children worldwide have been changed. Once a distant hope, now an achievable goal.



With my very best wishes,

Louise Ballard