



Willow Brook News

April 26th 2021

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Dear Parents and Carers

With a week full of warm sunshine and everyone back in the fold, last week was a very happy start to the summer term. With the added excitement of playtimes on the field and the wonderful freedom that comes with not being hemmed in by orange cones, it feels like everyone has found their stride and settled well.

Thank you for taking the time to meet with the staff last week. Again, we are sorry that it was a conversation rather than a meeting in person... hopefully next time.

Purple Mash

The school has subscribed to a new educational learning platform. Purple Mash has the potential to offer our children a range of resources to support learning at home as well as being a bank of games and activities that support the primary National Curriculum.



It gives children a safe forum to explore subjects and access a range of texts and challenges, as well as being a platform where teachers can direct learning and assign tasks. Familiar sites (such as 2Code and Logo) will provide guides to support coding, for example, and there are plenty of maths games where children can log in together to compete!

Attached to this letter is your child's user name and password and some more information. Please have a browse of the site (making sure that you use Willow Brook's unique URL as detailed on the card). Over the term the teachers will introduce different features. Enjoy!

As I have indicated in the past, schools are required to follow government guidelines on how we operate. Whilst I imagine that social distancing and bubbles may continue into the summer, small steps will be taken over the term to reinstate whatever we have the capacity and confidence to do. Our peripatetic keyboard and woodwind teachers were back in school last week and are able to operate in a safe environment with our young musicians. Mr Clarke and other local coaches will work on extra-curricular outdoor sports alongside class lessons, and we will make tentative steps towards pencilling in some key stage sports afternoons before the academic year ends. We continue to take directive from the Department of Education, Local Authority and Public Health England as we come back together and will do as much as we are safely able to do within their guidance.

PE Kit

As the opportunity to get outside increases and PE lessons and coaches start featuring more in the school day, it is so important that children have the correct kit at the ready. For safety as well as comfort we ask that children have appropriate footwear and a uniform change of clothes. Without these they cannot participate actively in the lesson. We ask children have something to tie back long hair if that is appropriate and we will expect them to remove earrings for the session. Keeping a kit in school all week also means that we can make the most of the field on sunny days and change a timetable if we need to. If you are unsure about our uniform for PE, please see the website or get in touch with your child's teacher.

Food

Today we welcome two new children to Willow Brook. It is fabulous that our population continues to grow! As well as welcoming our reception children, 15 pupils have joined other year groups over the past year. My reason for sharing this with you is that, with recent additions, there are now 4 children in school who have severe nut allergies. I thought it a timely moment to remind you that we request that you do not send your children to school with nuts as snacks or as part of their packed lunches. School meals follow a strict dietary plan to accommodate every member of the community and we hope that you be as vigilant as we work together to keep every pupil safe.

The debate over healthy eating and childhood snacking has always been a contentious one. Different households have different opinions and food is a minefield when it comes to ranking its 'goodness'. As a school, we pay to have quality fruit delivered daily and this is available for every child in key stage 1 every morning. It is good! Making healthy choices is a fabulous habit for children to get into and a part of our curriculum. Staff do their best to encourage fruit as a first choice for a breaktime eat. Whatever your views, our teachers and TA's will actively discourage chocolate bars, packets of crisps and sweets as breaktime snacks and we ask that you work with us to support our best intentions.



As always, if you have any questions or issues, please get in touch. My email address is at the top of this newsletter.

With my very best wishes to you all,

Louise Ballard

