



# Willow Brook News

**October 14th 2021**

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Dear Parents and Carers,

The first half term is complete and our September start seems like a distant memory... I hope that you have managed to have a look at the school website which is a wonderful record of 7 weeks filled with history themes, outings, sporting events, singing, science, outdoor adventures, cycling and plenty of hard work! Our assemblies have seen the children getting to grips with 'Shedwords' and composers (ask any child to recognise Edward Elgar, Vaughan Williams or Aretha Franklin and they should impress you!). Our Black History focus week gave each year group a chance to explore the lives and successes of renowned black authors, world leaders and those who leave their mark on society, as well as broadening our understanding of the brilliance of diversity.

It was a joy to see so many parents in school during this week to meet with staff. Whether you chose to come into the building or took advantage of an online appointment, I hope that you were happy to meet your child's teacher and move on to the second half of the term with confidence.

You should have all received Cauliflower Card designs from class teachers at Parents Evening. If not, these will have hopefully found their way to you. If you would like to order the cards, please register online and make sure that you return the original artwork on Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> November so that these can be sent to print on time.

The half term ahead is usually filled with Willow Brook tradition. Current public health advice and on-going Covid caution may alter some celebrations and events, but we are hard at work plotting to keep the diary filled with what we consider to be some of the highlights of our calendar. Here are some potential dates for your diary and what is planned and proposed thus far...



We value our whole school drama productions. Willow Brook children develop confidence and community and learn so much from working together on a performance to be proud of. As those parents of children in Year 6 know, we have launched auditions for a performance of a contemporary musical version of Peter Pan. Knowing that it is highly unlikely that we could squeeze 140 children and 80 members of an audience safely into our hall at the moment, we are employing the services of a professional company to come and film an evening performance -

potentially on Thursday December 9<sup>th</sup>. This will be available to pay to view (and keep!) as soon as editing has made it marvellous! Whilst it won't be the same without a live audience, we hope that the project - that will include children from years 2 to 6 - will be an experience that all will remember as a precious part of their primary school experience.

Reception and Year 1 will be working on a production of their own and this will also be filmed and available to download. 'Lights, Camels, Action!' is a wonderfully witty version of the Christmas story and is going to amuse all those who spend a Saturday evening with Strictly Come Dancing! Whilst it

has not yet been confirmed, it is highly likely that their performance will take place on the evening of Monday 13<sup>th</sup> December.

Children in Need Day is on Friday 19<sup>th</sup> November and will always be an important fund raising day on our calendar. As an advanced warning, there's going to be a Peter Pan theme to our dressing up this year! Alongside Peter and Wendy, Captain Hook and Tinkerbell, in our school play there are pirates and Lost Boys, mermaids and fairies... not to mention crocodiles and a large St Bernard called Nana! Homemade costumes are wonderful and there are always so many creative ideas on a Willow Brook dressing up day theme, so we can't wait to see what this occasion will bring!



Other dates for your diary in November and December are detailed below.

Children in Year 6 and EYFS will have had a few days with Miss Weston over the past half term. She returned after a long break during which she had her two children. Unfortunately, she is unable to continue in this role due to personal circumstances. She has always added an energy to the school and is willing to turn her hand to anything! I am pleased that she has offered her services in a supply teacher capacity for the future, and I am sure that she won't be a stranger to us. After half term, I am delighted that Mrs Cotton will be working in our Reception class on a Wednesday too. This will mean that the class will have Mrs Sampson and Mrs Cotton to share the week.

Our Year 6 children forged a good working relationship with Mr. Magner last year and I am also happy that he will now take over Mr. Jones's management time on a Thursday. He is looking forward to being with the class again and has already spent time in the classroom getting reacquainted with the children. As an experienced school leader, he is a great addition to the team.

A quick message from Mrs Roper – If your child is away from school due to illness, do not email teachers. It is essential that you contact the office on each day of their absence. Sometimes messages do not get passed on and registers are submitted by Mrs Roper.

Whatever half term brings for your family, I hope that you have a happy break from the school routine, and we look forward to seeing you safe and well on Monday November 1<sup>st</sup>.

I will leave you with some dates for your calendar and a copy of our whole-school curriculum for next half term... not to mention Mr. Clarke's Sporting Back Page!

With my kind regards,

Louise Ballard

Remembrance Service	Thursday November 11 <sup>th</sup>
The Willow Brook children mark this important morning with a service of their own. We lay poppies and wreaths and understand the significance of the 2 minutes silence. A trumpeter sounds the Last Post in the playground.	
Children in Need	Friday November 19 <sup>th</sup>
See above for details of our Peter Pan themed dressing up day. I doubt we will be able to top last year's incredible £1,700 raised for the charity, but we will certainly try!	
Christmas Dinner and charity Jumper Day	Wednesday December 15 <sup>th</sup>
The whole school joins together for a cracker-pulling festive lunch! For a donation of £1 you also get to wear your best Christmas jumper. The money we collect goes to the work of the Salvation Army... who may be generous enough to play in our playground to end the term.	

# Adventures in Neverland



Autumn 2021

*'I don't want to go to school and learn solemn things... instead, I'll teach you how to jump on the wind's back and away we go!'*

As our school production takes us past the second start to the right and straight on till morning, our curriculum embraces a journey where fact and fiction blend, characters and plot are explored and children are convinced that, in many ways, there's a great deal to be gained from never growing up.

*Tell me a story of dragons and heroes and pirates who fly to the moon...*

Scripts, stories and drama will be at the heart of our half term as we focus on a Peter Pan themed project. The imagination of J.M. Barrie will introduce key characters and worlds of fantasy and pupils will become experts when it comes to plotting and constructing narratives in this genre. Children will be able to articulate the language of *hero, protagonist, build up, conflict, resolution* as they create a bed-time story book for Peter Pan. To inspire a love of reading, the class will study extracts and stories from new and familiar authors that fit with the fairy tale genre in guided lessons. Books will show progression across the year groups and will reflect National Curriculum aims.

Pupils will all continue to work on age related grammar and sentence level techniques to improve all elements of the English Primary Curriculum. Drama and scripts will be a key part of the half term as we bring to life a well-loved story in a performance. Without an audience, we will still be determined to bring the world of Neverland to life in story, script and song.

## Across the curriculum

### As expressive artists

We will be working together to create a Willow Brook production. Alongside drama, our creative skills in music and dance will progress as we work cooperatively towards a quality performance. Christmas and winter both offer opportunities to investigate seasonal art. There is a focus on colour and mixed media and the chance to learn from renowned artists.

### As French speakers

Years 3 – 6 will continue to make progress in French. Again, seasonal themes will complement and broaden the children's understanding of culture and tradition.

### As musicians

We will work towards our main production, singing a range of songs from 'Peter Pan' and our infant nativity. The Junior Choir will be working towards Young Voices and performing to different audiences. Year 3 will continue to receive whole class tuition and enjoy playing toots. The lives and works of key musicians will be shared in music-focused assemblies and will include classical composers and contemporary global genres. Traditional carols are taught to all children and are included in assemblies and concerts.

### As computer specialists

We will see how technology is used to record and produce our school play.

### As theologians and thinkers

Each class will continue to explore their individual curriculums for R.E. Concepts for PSHE are included below.

### As fitness experts

We will dedicate curriculum and extra-curricular time to promoting fitness and healthy lifestyles. Together with Mr Clarke's planned specialist input, we will participate in dance, team sports and active play.

## PSHE

*'The moment you doubt whether you can fly, you cease forever to be able to do it'. We will look at self-belief and confidence, how to encourage the talents in others and how to offer praise.*

## Citizenship and British Values

The Disney portrayal of Peter Pan offers opportunity to challenge stereotypes (Native Americans, princesses in peril and the fact that it was only boys who were lost!) How have such stereotypes changed since JM Barrie's day and how do we continue to challenge?

## As mathematicians we will...

Our maths focus week will bring reasoning and problem solving to the fore. Haunted by the sound of the clock ticking from within Croc's belly, the objectives relating to 'time' will feature. From our EYFS children mastering telling the time to the hour to our oldest children working to the nearest second. The half term will also develop children's internal 'number sense' by teaching the skill of estimation. Children will work with different units of measurement to estimate everything from the length of Peter Pan's shadow in centimetres to the weight of Captain Hook's treasure chest. All the children will also develop their arithmetic skills by playing the sort of dice and card games that Quartermaster Smee and his crew enjoyed playing aboard the Jolly Rodger. Other key elements of the year group's curriculum will be covered.

## As historians we will

The Darlings lived in a grand Victorian house (14 Kensington Gardens). As historians we will be looking at houses through time. In key stage 2, learning will progress from Iron Age round houses and Roman villas, through Anglo Saxon long house and castles, and on to the Edwardian age.

Key stage 1 will look at the exterior features, internal decor the Darling family would be used to and move through to the homes their grandparents would have enjoyed, and on to more contemporary times. A *House Through Time* will open up historical connections and an understanding of chronology.

*'To note connections, contrasts and trends over time... complete a study of an aspect or theme in British history that extends pupils' chronological knowledge...'*

## As geographers we will

Investigate the geographical features of Neverland. Understanding and broadening vocabulary involved in island life (e.g. coast, forest, biomes, climate, distribution etc.) Using simple maps, children will learn about grid references, symbols and keys.

## As scientists

Practical investigations will take on Peter Pan themed work and provide opportunities to observe, test and record thinking. Just like Peter Pan, children will get a chance to play with shadows as they explore light.

Taking a journey to the 'second star on the right and on till morning' will have some classes studying the night sky and the planets that exist along the way.

In STEM there will be opportunities to investigate flight. Kites will be more realistic than flying children!

## Ambitious thinking

We should never grow up! Children believe in magic... they play... write stories... they have imagination... where does that go when you grow up? Would the concept of growing young be a better idea? We will debate!



# Mr. Clarke's Sporting Back Page!

## Cross Country Champions

On Monday 11<sup>th</sup> October, Evie, Alice, Rowan, Jessica, Elliott, William, Jonah and Robert represented Willow Brook at a fun run competition at Rushcliffe Country Park. The children were tasked to run around the course in twos, taking it in turns and getting as many laps as we could in an hour. They did me and the school very proud, it was so wonderful to see that it was not only me who thought our teamwork was super - the person who was running the event, also said the same! Unfortunately, the laps were not officially counted but I believe we were in the top three schools for laps completed - amazing! Such a lovely afternoon out. Well done Willow Brook!



## Crossdale Home Match

On Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> October the boys football team (Billy, Cameron, Max, Finton, Charlie, George O and George D) and the girls football team (Mirabelle, Mya, Millie, Keira, Yasmine, Annabelle, Jaime, Pia, Jessie and Matilda W) both played Crossdale sides in friendly matches at Willow Brook. The first game saw the boys play. After a difficult start which found us 2-0 down in the early stages, we responded fantastically well... a lovely ball across the 6-yard box caused panic in the Crossdale area and I am honestly unsure who got the final touch, but what mattered most was that we were back in the game. We pressed on well, but Crossdale scored another. However, our heads did not drop and we reacted quickly... a brilliant long range strike from Charlie saw the half time score being 3-2 to Crossdale. The 2<sup>nd</sup> half was our half. We played some "flowing" football but just couldn't quite find the back of the net. Crossdale in the last minute killed the game off when we were caught short trying to find the equaliser. Full time, 4-2 Crossdale. Plenty of positives - especially in that 2<sup>nd</sup> half.

The girls soon followed, and all the early chances were down at our end. We deservedly took the lead when Pia found the back of the net from close range. We took a 1-0 lead into half time - a very professional performance so far. The 2<sup>nd</sup> half started brilliantly, and we doubled our lead thanks to Jessie's low strike. Crossdale responded with a goal to half the deficit almost immediately, then 5 minutes later scored another, 2-2 now. Despite the momentum being with Crossdale, the girls didn't back down and kept working hard. With two minutes to go, a late corner for us, could it be? Yes, it could! A great first time finish from Pia saw us back in front, we held our nerve for the final minute, and it was a first win for the girls of the season!

Two cracking games against Crossdale, plenty of positives, plenty to be proud of and it was amazing to see such a good support from both sides for the games. I can't wait for more football games in the future!

