



# Willow Brook News

February 11th 2022

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Dear Parents and Carers,

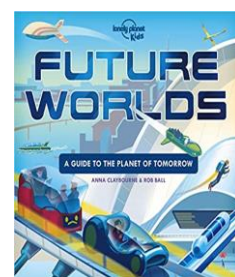
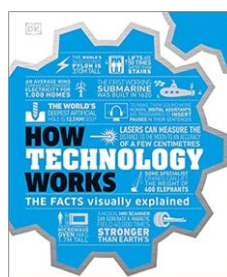
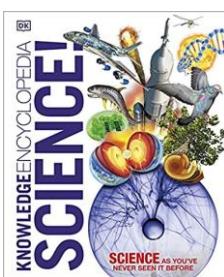
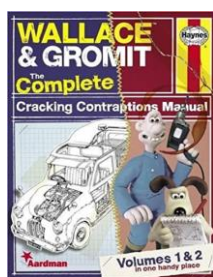
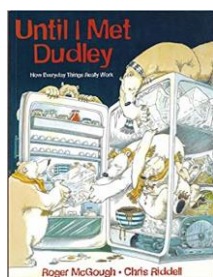
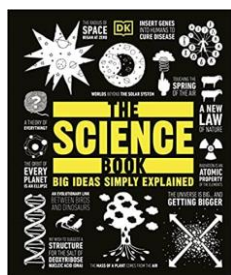
We find ourselves at half term and already half way through the academic year! It is with great relief that the last week in school has been completely Covid free for both staff and children – it (dare I say) bodes well for all that we are planning for the summer term!

School has certainly started to come to life. Year 3 and 4 have signed up for their April residential experience (for many, a brave first night away from home!) and Year 5 and 6 will soon be hearing about their planned adventure to Dukes Barn in Derbyshire in July. It is good to have Young Voices back in the diary and inter-school sports festivals are starting to fill Mr. Clarke's calendar.

Now that Covid restrictions are easing, school will return to using the one entrance to the playground. Over the past two years, Mr. Castledine has been coning off the drive to provide a safe second exit during busy times, but we now feel that this is unnecessary. Before the end of the school year we also hope to return to a 3.30pm end of the day for all.

Our next half term topic takes every year group into a sci-fi adventure! As you can see from the whole-school plan on the back page, we will be moving into Future Street when we return and exploring the world of 2050 from many different angles. We will experiment with alternative sources of energy; investigate the potential of drones, AI and augmented reality; build and programme robots and see how architects are already working with the science. Our ultimate goal will be a design challenge that will take us to a whole new world and the creation of Aquatropolis!

Books that will support our main text (*A Trip to the Future*) and theme will be listed on our website.



The **Willow Brook Waterstones Reading Challenge** continues to gain momentum! Year 6 are edging into an early lead and the impact of their enthusiasm is, without a doubt, making a difference. Again, we cannot emphasise enough how important it is to help your child to become a confident and avid reader. There are plenty of weeks left before the final circuit, so keep recording the books you share with your child and work with us to promote that positivity.

Whilst we are on the subject ...a reminder that World Book Day falls on Thursday **March 3<sup>rd</sup>** – add it to your calendar and start to plan your outfit! It will be a fun packed day full of story and reading inspiration. Over half term you might like to sort out a book for our World Book Day 'Book Swap'. Send us a book you have finished with on March 3<sup>rd</sup> and your child will have the chance to choose something new from the Swap Store.



If you live in the Nicker Hill area, you may have seen our fabulous teaching assistant, Mrs Brown, out for a run! In the past you might have seen her walking the dog, but her need for greater speed has a very good reason. After a diagnosis just over a year ago, we spent a term without Mrs. Brown whilst she received successful treatment for her breast cancer. So many of us have been affected in some way by knowing someone who has been in Mrs. Brown's shoes, and because of this, I share her challenge fundraising page with you and send our Willow Brook love and encouragement for the miles she still has left to run!

Find out more at <https://fundraise.cancerresearchuk.org/page/lizs-run-56-giving-page-6>

In other staff news, we are delighted to announce that Mrs. Sampson is expecting her second baby! She is due at the end of July so will complete most of the academic year before starting her maternity leave.



On Wednesday, Reception and Year 1 were treated to a visit from the Fire Service! As part of their work on Superheroes, they met the local firefighting team, explored the engine, climbed ladders and unrolled the hoses. It was an exciting afternoon!

Our recent Big Garden Bird Watch was also a super day in school. We joined together to learn a little more about the birds in the Willow Brook fields and had a morning of observational art. We set up new bird feeding stations around the grounds and the birds that usually flock to the feeders outside my office window now find themselves spoilt for choice! During the morning, Mr. Hallsworth joined me to take a group of children to experience the art of photography. As you can see from the pictures I've included, Maddox, Maltilda and Oliver's images captured robins and long-tailed tits perfectly. A gallery showcasing the work can be found on the website or via this vimeo link: <https://vimeo.com/674494795>

Finally, a reminder that **Monday 21<sup>st</sup> February is an inset day**, so we will see you on Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> at 8.50am. Can I encourage you to do all that you can to be on time – our statistics for lateness have certainly crept higher this year. Whilst busy family life often means that it is sometimes unavoidable, a regular stream of people arriving late adds to Mrs Roper's workload and children miss that important secure start to the day. Your help would be greatly appreciated.

With kind regards,

Louise Ballard



Willow Brook's  
**Big Garden Bird Art Day**  
28<sup>th</sup> January 2022





#### We are STEM students

In our spring term whole-school topic, pupils of all ages will acquire a broad range of subject knowledge and draw on disciplines from maths, science, engineering, computing and art as we explore the lively world of 'Futuropolis'. Our children will learn how to observe and hypothesise. They will experience robotics and programming, as well as understanding the potential of augmented reality, bionics and drone technology. Through the evaluation of past and present technology, children will develop a critical understanding of how science is shaping daily life and the changes that need to be made to impact on a sustainable future. This knowledge and exploration will equip children to imagine, design and articulate the science behind a brave new world, reclaiming space beneath the waves and creating Aquatropolis – a visionary and exciting Oceanscraper where, perhaps, human life will evolve with the landscape...

#### The Big Idea...

This half term we are launching a STEM focussed project to open up a wealth of knowledge and skills and inspire our young people towards the world of engineering. With funding from Rolls Royce and an agreed whole school project in mind, we will be developing the children's thinking through teaching and practical experience... through watching and making... through creativity and building an understanding of the power of going back to the drawing board to improve and explain. As Steve Jobs once said, the engineers, 'if they worked hard with other creative, smart people, could solve most of humankind's problems.' Let's start from a small beginning...

#### As mathematicians

Along with continued planned mathematical topics, half-yearly assessments and revision, we aim to apply our reasoning skills to develop engineering and science problems. Part of a scientist/engineer's role is to work mathematically and show thinking, data and methodology in tables, charts and graphs. They test shape and structure. We will be doing likewise.

#### As language specialists

We will be immersed in the art of structuring successful fact-based texts and use fictional thinking to blend the genres. Non-fiction guided reading and research will teach sentence level accuracy and grammatical precision and enable pupils of all ages to pen concise and well-structured futuristic explanation texts and stories. We will learn technical vocabulary and how to use tools such as dictionaries and thesauruses to good effect. Sci-fi facts will ignite stories and poetry and children will use books such as our themed text, 'A Trip to the Future' to develop their understanding of the genre. We will understand and collate topic based vocabulary through age-related glossaries and refine our ability to classify words and use dictionaries, encyclopaedias and search engines to broaden word knowledge.

National Poetry week will encourage pupils to explore and respond to our topic through verse.

#### Across the curriculum

**As expressive artists** we will all be using our creative skills to imagine and design new worlds. Based on the work of architects (including Zaha Hadid and Vincent Callebaut) whose work is already 'future-scaping', we will see how art and science work hand in hand.

**As fitness experts** all children will be involved in a planned programme of fitness and sport. The swimming season begins for Year 4 and Mr. Clarke will be working with our Sports Leaders to enjoy new games and active play, as well as teaching our younger children dance and multi-skills. He will continue to train the Year 5 and 6 rowing squad, and together with Miss Johnston, will involve the school in competitions and sporting events.

**As musicians** we will continue to rehearse, sing and perform songs that build individual and collective confidence, skill and wellbeing. We will investigate song structure and continue to build on our knowledge of notation and rhythm.

**As theologians and philosophers** each year group will be following individual programmes of study. They will include ethical debates and My World responses.

#### As historians and geographers

We will track the development and design of buildings and spaces through time from a new perspective. We will look at how garden cities impacted on lifestyles and how land use and population has made its mark on global development.

#### Knowledge of the World

Understanding the history and current contributions of individuals and nations in the development of science and technology will be an integral part of the topic. Through our weekly 'My World' initiative, classes will share and debate the politics of progress.

#### Citizenship and British Values

An underlying principle of our teaching will underline the fact that high-quality design and technology 'makes an essential contribution to the creativity, culture, wealth and well-being of the nation.' (NC Design Technology)

#### Ambitious thinking

Promoting the bond between learning at primary school and work in the world of STEM is a key aim. Further splinter events and national initiatives, for example, International Women's Day and Science Week, will strengthen our message and communicate that there is no gender divide in future careers.

## Mr Clarke's Sporting Back Page

On Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> January, 20 Year 5 & 6 children took part in an Athletics tournament at South Notts Academy. The Willow Brook team participated in several track and field events and despite giving it our all, we unfortunately didn't quite qualify for the finals. However, we can be proud of our efforts. There were plenty of positives to take from it and I was delighted with our sportsmanship and encouragement for our teammates shown throughout. Looking forward to the next athletics event!

On Monday 31<sup>st</sup> January, the girls' football team hosted Sutton Bonington in the 2<sup>nd</sup> round of the cup. After an end-to-end start, Sutton Bonington found the break half way through the first half after a neat passing move. The away side continued to press, but strong saves from Keira kept it at 1-0 at half time. After a quick conversation at the break, Willow Brook went out looking to get back into the game. And get back into the game we did! Great play down the left by Yasmine, the ball ended up with Jessie and she fired into the back of the net. 1-1! A couple of great bits of defending and goalkeeping and full time soon came, 1-1... penalties! I feel like I have been here before... oh yes, I have, in the last round vs Abbey Road! After eight nail-biting shots **Willow Brook win on penalties 2-1 (again)!**

After such an amazing win against a tough opposition, we move on to play away in the 3<sup>rd</sup> round vs Carnarvon or Lantern Lane. Thank you to Mr Magner for refereeing, my assistant manager, Mr Boyd, for his tactical wisdom and to the fans who helped make the Brook Arena rock! Looking forward to the next game. Well done, girls, I am delighted!

**Boys' Football** – I am pleased to confirm that we have progressed into the 2<sup>nd</sup> round of the cup due to our 1<sup>st</sup> round opponents Langar being unable to fulfil the fixture. We will play at home vs Keyworth or Bunny in the 2<sup>nd</sup> round.