



Willow Brook News

May 9th 2022

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Dear Parents and Carers,

With the Platinum Jubilee celebrations only three weeks away, Willow Brook's summer term has, unsurprisingly, got off to a very royal start! Lessons and assemblies have been filled with facts and traditions, and the children are already proving that their knowledge of London and the Queen is growing at a pace.

This week our EYFS children wrote letters to Her Majesty; we all learnt the words to the National Anthem (and why not every verse is sung these days); understood two more paintings from the National Gallery; can recognise a piece of music by Elgar as soon as it starts; have got to grips with the concept of the 'Commonwealth' and I think we all understand a little bit more about the job of a King or Queen!

We will finish this half term with a Jubilee Day on Thursday 26th May. Weather permitting, we will take our street party into the playground and create a memorable celebration. We invite the children to come dressed in red, white and blue on that day, and crowns and flags are warmly encouraged too! The school meals service will be providing a picnic lunch on that Thursday, which we hope to add to with traditional cakes and royal biscuits. Mrs Armitage has been in touch with those who offered their sewing services for bunting making and I was also delighted to be given some ready-made decorations too. I still have the silver coin that was given to me for the Queen's Silver Jubilee when I was at primary school. Knowing how proud I was to get such a treasure, prompted me to make sure that your children will receive a gold coin to mark the occasion and remember the day.

Our 4th Plinth creative homework task is causing a stir! The conversation around the dinner table always seems to come round to the clever ideas and statements that are being put into works of art. If you haven't started yet, there's still time... A reminder that these are due in on Friday May 20th.

Now that our extra-curricular enrichment clubs are back in full force, Willow Brook feels busy from the moment it opens at 7.30am to when we walk away at 6! Nature club and our Go Green Eco Club are new on the agenda, as is a taste of Greek with Mrs Best! Another super new addition is the OWLs reading lunch. This is under the capable leadership of Freya in Year 6, who was passionate enough about sharing her love of reading with our youngest children, that she gathered her classmates and got to work! Mr. Clarke and Miss Johnston are busily organising football clubs and sports experiences – his latest bulletin is on the back page.



The choir is in fine voice and more than ready for their trip to Birmingham next week to take part in the national Young Voices concert. Willow Brook children sing with such confidence, volume and after too many years, I know that their parents will love hearing just a few of their favourites at their last rehearsal tomorrow.



Years 3 and 4 returned with exhausted smiles from their first residential experience last week. We often underestimate how much is achieved in just 24 hours away, and whilst parents and carers often go through more worries than the children, there is so much to be proud of. As always, the fact that our staff were willing to give up their family time (and sleep!) means that there is opportunity to learn new life skills, have fun and embark on an adventure. Find a full report and more photos on the school website.



This week our Year 6 children focus on their SATs tests. They have worked so hard during their time with Mr. Jones, and with the added wisdom of Mrs Armitage and Mr Magner, they are prepared and ready. This morning's Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling test was suitably challenging but there was nothing that they hadn't met... not even those past progressive/third person form of the subjunctive verb tenses!

When parents and carers ask what they can do to help their children achieve at primary school, there is just one answer that is guaranteed to make a difference... reading! Getting into the habit at an early age of listening to them read every day, enjoying a bedtime story and helping your child to understand that good books are the key to making sense of what they see, hear and think is worth its weight in gold. What's more, there is no greater pleasure than sharing that experience with them. Our *Race to Waterstones Challenge* was designed to reinforce and encourage such reading habits. Today the race was won by our Year 6 class with a resounding 100% of children sharing a book with an adult at home on at least three occasions over the past week. Their reward, as promised, is a trip to Waterstones! They will have a super morning with the staff in the children's department who have a few treats to share. They will also get a healthy budget to buy a new library of fiction books for the school. I have a feeling that they will leave the Year 6 classroom well stocked for next year's children... Whilst the official race is over, *please* keep reading! It is everything that you need to do to make sure that your child will be ready and able when it comes to their turn to meet a SATs paper!

On Friday we re-start rehearsals for Peter Pan. We are hoping that our hard work from the autumn term will slot back into place, and, with a slightly shorter script, we will be ready to perform on 21st, 22nd and 23rd June. It is an action-packed term, but we are determined!

After half term we are reverting to a 3.30pm finish for the whole school. Now that people are starting to feel more comfortable in larger gatherings, we feel it would be the most sensible option. We trust that those who continue to take a more cautious approach to social situations will have the space to feel welcome and safe. We also hope that this notice gives you enough time to plan any adjustments. In the meantime, we would kindly ask that you remind your children not to jump over the bow or stern of the pirate ship. They know that this is the rule at playtimes and understand that as well as guarding against broken limbs, the presence of a nine-legged octopus and a shark mean that you should keep your wits about you. It's something that they tend to forget when they are in the playground without us!

On a final note, please can I remind you as we head to warmer weeks in school that our school uniform policy details that children should wear tailored grey or black shorts. If children wear open-toed sandals, socks must also be worn. Whilst we understand that school shoes start to wear out as we head to July, footwear should be black or dark coloured. Children should not wear walking boots or trainers. We do all that we can to keep our uniform simple and affordable and would be more than happy to offer financial support if it is needed in any way.

We have our fingers crossed for Year 6 for the rest of their week, and hope the warm weather continues so that they can enjoy those traditional post-SATs ice-creams they *think* might be coming their way!

With my best wishes,

Louise Ballard

MR CLARK'S SPORTING BACK PAGE

Just before we broke up for Easter on Friday 1st April, the girls played Carnarvon in the quarter final of the Rushcliffe Cup. We battled incredibly hard against a challenging opponent but, unfortunately, we came up short in a 2-1 defeat. We kept in the game throughout and never gave up. Well done, girls!

The team came back with strength on Saturday 23rd April when they took part in a schools' tournament at St Peters, Ruddington. I was absolutely delighted with our performance throughout the competition. We came 2nd in our group, just missing out on qualifying for the semi-finals in our match against Heymann.

Willow Brook 1 – 0 Jesse Gray (Goal scorer: Yasmine)

Willow Brook 2 – 0 St. Edmund Campion (Goal scorers: Yasmine and Matilda W)

Willow Brook 0 – 1 Heymann Primary

Willow Brook 0 – 0 Abbey Road Primary

4 games played, 2 wins, 1 draw, 1 defeat. 1 goal conceded all morning. We were all gutted that we didn't get through, but I am so proud of the team, and I can't wait for the next game.

On Saturday 30th April, the boys followed the girls in taking part in the St. Peters Football Tournament. It was a tricky morning for the boys, coming up against some tough opponents. The results in our first 4 games didn't quite go to plan, but we got a resounding victory in our final game, beating Keyworth 2-1 (goals scored by Cameron and Finton) and finishing the tournament on a high. It is a result we can build on for future games. Well done, boys!

On Tuesday 3rd May, six children from Years 3 & 4 participated in a football festival at South Notts Academy. They had a lovely time practising and showing off the dribbling, passing and shooting skills they had been taught throughout the festival. A great time was had by all and a smart Willow Brook team were a credit to the school.

