



Newsletter

February 9th 2024

Dear Parents and Carers,

After a busy couple of weeks in school, we make it to the halfway mark of the academic year. Here's a flavour of what we have achieved, as well as a hint as to what's in store for the spring...

Year 3 and 4 are Heroes!

There's nothing that makes me prouder than hearing that Willow Brook children have made a positive impression on the world! When Years 3 and 4 returned from their recent trip to Mount Cook, that's just the feedback I got! To hear staff at the centre say that our children had impeccable manners and impressive behaviour, was music to my ears. I know that (in spite of the blustery weather!) they had great fun and, as staying away from home was a new experience for so many Year 3's, they were remarkable! As always, I am so grateful to Miss Adam's and her team for giving up their own family time to make sure the children made the most of this experience.



Superhero Graduation

Yesterday morning our EYFS graduated from their Superhero Academy! It's been a busy half term for our intrepid Reception children, learning how to use your powers for good and walking in the footsteps of Supertato and the residents of the Superhero Hotel! In their first presentation to the whole school, they showed that they were fearless and confident... just like superheroes should be!



The Great Garden Bird Watch

Whilst our usual feathered friends were few and far between last Friday, the children enjoyed getting into the wildlife garden and school grounds to sit, watch and appreciate the great outdoors. Each year group then made a bird spotters' guide to the grounds so they can tell their blackbirds from their buzzards!



Parent Governor Elections

Due to terms of office coming to an end, Willow Brook now has vacancies for two parent governors on the Board. The official information and nomination forms (one for each parent) will accompany this letter and will also be forwarded to you via Parentmail.

There are no specific qualifications or requirements for the role - every governing board needs a balance and diversity of knowledge, skills and experience.

Whilst there is a responsibility to attend meetings (a minimum of 3 full governing board meetings and additional committee meetings each year) and build professional relationships with the leaders of the school and fellow governors, there are many other ways that members of our Board interact with the school. Vicky McEwan, a current parent governor, has summed up her role and a recent visit to EYFS...

Governor Spotlight: Vicky McEwan visits EYFS

As governors, our role is to support the school senior leadership team with the school's strategic direction, oversight of financial management and to hold them to account for the quality of the education the school provides. To carry out this role, we engage in several key activities including attending termly board meetings, writing reports and visiting school.

One of my roles on the Board is to understand how the school ensures its EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage) provision is as good as it can be. During the Autumn term, I visited EYFS to observe what happens, in order to get a better understanding and to validate what the school had already told us in meetings and reports. As a governor, visiting the school is always a huge privilege and one of the most enjoyable parts of the role.

During the visit I spoke to the EYFS staff about their planning, assessment and meeting all the children's needs. This is an annual visit; it was positive to see some of the changes the school has made over the last year and the impact of these changes on the children's learning.

After the visit I reviewed the information provided for parents in EYFS on the school website and wrote a report to share with the other governors at the Spring term meeting, explaining how my visit had further informed us, and validated what we had already been told by staff.

This term, we are looking for two new parent governors to join us. You don't need any specialist knowledge of education, but if you have an interest in helping make the school as good as it can be, we would welcome your involvement. If you want to find out about being a governor, please contact one of the parent governors who will be happy to share their experiences with you, or in the first instance take a look on the school website, under School Information > Governors.

If you would like to apply to become a parent governor, you should have received a nomination form with this newsletter. Please complete and return your completed application on or before **10am on Tuesday 28th February**. Forms will also be sent via Parentmail.

Back to the Future!



After half term we move on to a whole-school theme... Our topic is 'Back to the Future' and has grown from the British Science Week theme of 'Time'. There is an exciting agenda... we'll be making time pieces; understanding why Salvador Dali melted his clocks; getting to grips with telling the time in maths; finding Captain Connection as he rushes back from the 50's; immersing ourselves in Tom's Midnight Garden and making a booking at the 'Strangeworlds Time Travel Agency'... The author herself may even be making a visit to Willow Brook to help us create our own adventures! If you're heading to Belton House this holiday, be sure to find the time travelling statue – you'll be hearing all about how it can take you into the past when we read Helen Cresswell's 'Moondial'... All will be revealed when we return!

Whatever travels or adventures are on your agenda next week, we look forward to welcoming you back on Monday 19th February.

With my best wishes,

Lousie Ballard

Date	Event	Details
Children return to school after the half term break on Monday 19 th February		
Thurs 22 nd February	Young Voices Concert	Willow Brook choir singing at the Birmingham Arena.
Tues 5 th Wed 6 th March	Spring term Parents Evenings	Invitations will be sent out w/b 26/02 for you to make an appointment to meet with your child's teacher.
Thurs 7 th March	World Book Day	' <i>You are what you read</i> ' Come dressed as a book character to celebrate a day full of stories.
Friday 15 th March	Red Nose Day	
Friday 15 th March	School Disco	
Mon 25 th – Wed 27 th March	Year 5 and 6 residential to Duke's Barn, Derbyshire	
Thurs 28 th March	School closes at 3.30pm for the Easter break	Children return on Monday 15 th April
Mon. May 6 th	May Day Bank Holiday	
Mon. 13 th to Thurs 16 th May	Year 6 SATs assessment week. *It is important that all pupils in Year 6 are present during this week. Please avoid booking appointments and holidays.	
Friday 24 th May	School closes at 3.30pm for half term	Children return on Monday 3 rd June
Fri 21 st June	INSET day	School is closed for staff training
Wed. July 3 rd	Sports Day	1.30pm start (In the event of rain, our reserve afternoon is Wed. 10 th July)
Thurs. 11 th July	Annual Reports go out	
Fri. 12 th July	School Disco	
Wed. 17 th July	School Open Afternoon and Exhibition.	You are invited to come into school to meet your child's new teacher and discuss their annual report.
Fri 26 th July	Year 6 Leavers' Assembly 10am.	Parents and Carers of Year 6 pupils are invited to join us for your child's final primary assembly.
Fri. 26 th July	School closes at 3.30pm for the summer break	