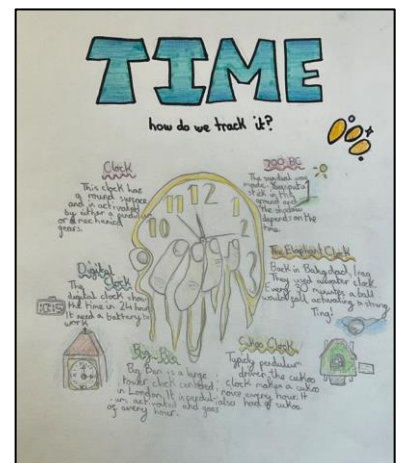
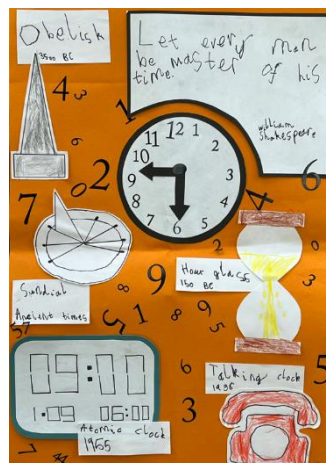
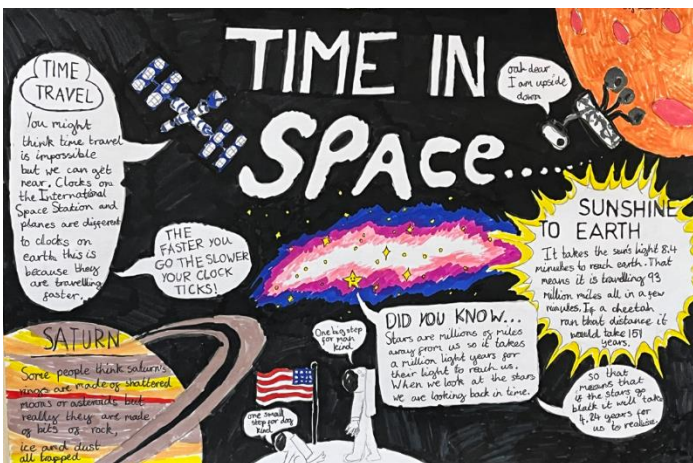
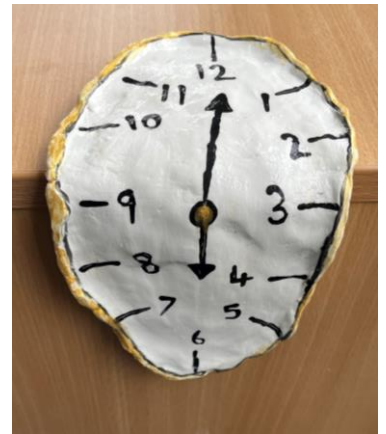


Newsletter – 26th March 2024

Dear Parents and Carers,

Spring has certainly been in the air this week and I hope that this has set the scene for the Easter weekend.

Our *Back to the Future* half term has been a great success, and the children have been introduced to so many different aspects of time. From sand clocks, pendulums, STEM projects and 3D art, we now understand Salvador Dali, time slips and Chopin's Minute Waltz. We've read books with time-travelling portals and invented our own worlds, and we even met a famous author who thought our work was marvellous!... And the half term was only five weeks long! The children's latest homework posters where they summed up their learning were a perfect finale.



I hope that you have had a chance to catch up with the many news articles and photos on the school website. Teachers have been adding to it regularly with classroom and extra-curricular news. You'll find updates on Red Nose Day and our World Book Day celebrations. You will also see the latest updates to our calendar of events for the rest of the school year.



Duke's Barn

It's always a gamble to take children on a residential experience in March... In previous years, this week has seen both snow and blazing sunshine! But our Year 5 and 6 children have just walked through the door after three fabulous days away. They have climbed up, abseiled down, gone underground, eaten new foods, got up at dawn, paddled canoes, scaled high ropes and climbing walls and come back with weary smiles on their faces!

The photos will, no doubt, be on the website in due course, but I just wanted to share a message left by the staff at Dukes Barn. Our teachers said that your children were wonderful, but to receive such praise from others makes me incredibly proud!

As always, without the commitment and kindness of the Willow Brook adults, trips like this would not happen. To Mr. Jones, Mrs. Armitage, Mr. Litchfield and Mrs. Bugden – thank you for your time and energy. A special thank you to Dr Baker, Ted and Tomas's Dad, who volunteered to complete the team. He is most certainly a Willow Brook hero!



A message from the Friends of Willow Brook

'A couple of weeks ago saw the return of the hugely popular School Disco! A fun evening was had by all, lots of tuck and tattoos sold and most importantly plenty of monies raised in aid of the Outdoor Reading Hut. The next one is already booked with the date for your diary, Friday July 12! A special mention must go to our volunteers; it was great to have some new faces amongst us. We simply cannot hold events without your help so thank you again for your support. As a committee we are keen to host a family orientated event before the Summer Holidays; if anyone has any ideas, wishes or ways they could help please get in touch by email at friendsofwillowbrook00@gmail.com, or speak to one of us on the playground. Laura Cleal'

Mr. Jones

As you know, today we are saying a sad farewell to Mr. Jones. He joined Willow Brook in September 2010 as a brand new teacher. You can see from the photo how young he once was! I still recall his interview with the then headteacher during which he spread out an Ordnance Survey Map and described his life and experience as a journey full of adventures as his finger dotted around the counties. We knew then that he would have lots to contribute to our community.

I have been proud to have had Jamie as my Deputy for the past 5 years... He's always willing to give his all to support a Willow Brook child-focused experience. We will send him off today with lots of love and with many happy memories.

Year 6 wrote letters to Mr. Jones last week. I was amused by one or two that suggested he 'didn't have to do anything now he was a headteacher'... I wish him the best of luck with that one!



Mr. Clarke's Spot!



If nothing else, Mr. Clarke is an amazing example of commitment! The start to Willow Brook's football season has served to prove that when the going gets tough, the tough keep going! With a water-logged pitch and our new victory song still not yet sung, it is great to see that Mr. Clarke's energy and encouragement is still making sure that lots of Willow Brook children are involved in festivals and matches. Our Football Day on International Women's Day was great fun and got so many involved.



A Polite Plea on Attendance and Lateness

You will have seen in the media over the past year in particular, that there is growing concern over school attendance and punctuality. In law, your child has a right to an education and it is your duty as a parent or carer to do your utmost to ensure give your child the best chance as they start their life-long learning. Children are required to be in school for 190 days of the year, leaving (an almost equal) 175 in which to organise holidays.

If your child's absence in those 190 days falls **below 90%, this is called 'persistent absence'**. By the end of the year, 90% attendance equates to having one day off in every fortnight, which is quite significant.

Attendance and punctuality is reported termly to a school's Governors and we are answerable to the Department of Education and Ofsted for how we manage our registers and challenge on-going issues. But far more importantly, AND WITHOUT A DOUBT, this level of absence has a long term impact on your child's education and life chances.

We will continue to work with you to minimise absence and lateness.

To be clear about our policy on lateness:

- If your child arrives after the bell and subsequently misses the 8.50am register, a late mark will be recorded.
- If you arrive after 9.15am without informing us in advance of an exceptional reason, this has to be recorded as an unauthorised absence for the morning session.

After Easter, you will be asked to report the reason for your lateness and this will be recorded as part of our monitoring. If you need any help, support or advice, we would be more than happy to work with you. Together we can make a difference.

We will see you bright and ready for the summer term on Monday 15th April.

With my best wishes,

Louise Ballard



Key Events in next half term's diary		
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.	
Wednesday 22 nd May	Year R and 1 trip to Yorkshire Wildlife Park	
Friday 24 th May	School closes at 3.30pm for half term	Children return on Monday 3 rd June