



# NEWSLETTER

December 4<sup>th</sup> 2024

Dear Parents and Carers,

We are fast approaching the end of term, and with so much on the agenda for the final two weeks, I thought I'd make sure you were fully up to speed with dates and details. I'll be as concise as I can!

## Superstan!

Rehearsals are running at a pace for our main school production next week - our performances start at 6.30pm on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings and the matinee on Wednesday begins at 2pm. I know that it takes huge effort (and logistics) to get to this point and we really appreciate your encouragement and support with costumes, attendance and stamina! If your child is unwell and unable to attend an evening performance, please give the office a call. We hope that the children reap the reward they deserve for their hard work. All evening performers need to be back at school at 6.10pm.

## Pantomime Trip

Live theatre is amazing! Whether you are under the lights and enjoying performing, or sitting in the audience, the escapism and joy of a story told through drama has the power to take you to another world. Consequently, I am determined to make sure Willow Brook children experience both! In return for their hard work and energy rehearsing Superstan, **Years 2 to 6** are going to Newark Palace Theatre on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> December to watch a professional panto!

Because of theatre timings, we are going to have an early lunch and will be leaving school at 12.45pm. The performance finishes at **4.30pm, which means we hope to be back at Willow Brook at 5.30.** (Any delays will be communicated to you via Parentmail.) There will be ice creams at half time (Mrs Roper has already let the theatre know of any dietary needs and they are being accommodated) and hopefully a lot of Christmas spirit! What's more, there is no charge for the trip. The cost of the tickets and transport are being met by the Friends of Willow Brook and our own ticket sales.

If you have any issues with the above arrangements, please get in touch with me. **We will assume that you give permission for your child/children to attend and you understand that your child will need to be collected from school at 5.30pm unless we hear otherwise.**

## The Willow Brook Writing Competition

In the excitement of Children in Need and Odd Socks Day, I neglected to give a huge congratulations to the finalists and winners of our 2024 Story Writing Competition. Reading inventive stories about mysterious objects and inspiring places was so entertaining! We had stories set abroad and in libraries... there were ghost stories in graveyards, alien abductions, comedies with the contents of shop windows, and cars on the Fairway having rather sinister adventures in the dead of night!

Narrowing down over 100 entries to the final 20 took Miss Adams and me quite a time... In the end we had to settle on 21 finalists!

Every story that made it to the final deserves a mention... so well done to (in ascending order from EYFS to Year 6) Arthur, Isla, Luke, Isla-Rose, Odhran, Wilf, Harry, Eleanor, Harry, Charlie, Hermione, Solomun, Reggie, Oliver, Angus, Evie, Samuel, Ophelia, and Chloe!

Our three winners received Waterstones vouchers, badges and magic writing pencils (which, I am told, make handwriting perfect!) for their originality and style.

**Wilf in Year 1** wrote a witty rhyming book which made us all laugh out loud when it was read in assembly!

**Solomun in Year 3** used an intriguing photograph of 4 dogs and a low flying plane at the Keyworth surgery to spin a creative narrative.

**Chloe in Year 6** chose the full moon as her object, and told us a mesmerising tale of dancing with the stars.

The winning stories will be on the school website at the weekend.

## After-School Clubs end this week

Because of the school productions and other events, please note that teacher led clubs **end this week**. A new Extra-Curricular Timetable will be published in preparation for the spring term.

The school choir are working hard to prepare for the Young Voices trip in January. Our final three rehearsals start on Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> January. If you have not booked to come to the Arena, be not afraid... we will treat parents, grandparents and carers to a quick rendition of our favourite numbers on Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> January at 4pm. (Choir will meet at 3.30, as usual.) There is so much to learn – it's always a challenge to have lyrics and dance routines under our belts before the big day, so the children know that every rehearsal matters. Commitment is one of our 5 C's and we encourage every child who signed up to the project to give their all at the all-important 11<sup>th</sup> hour.

## The Christmas Fortnight

Our final fortnight of 2024 is filled to the brim with festive events. As well as the productions and the pantomime visit, we have '**Festive Jumper Day**' on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup>, which is when we will be serving our whole-school Christmas dinner. Wear your Christmas jumper instead of your school sweatshirt and bring a £1 coin to donate to the Salvation Army's Christmas appeal.

**Nativity Day is on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup>**. As well as EYFS and Year 1 presenting their rendition of the Baaarmy Bethlehem nativity, we'll have a more traditional day of art and carols. **On Thursday 19<sup>th</sup>** we host our annual Carols by Candlelight afternoon, which is always my favourite Christmas event of the season.

**We break up for the holidays on Friday 20<sup>th</sup>**. As long as I've been at Willow Brook, Duncan Cameron and his Salvation Army friends have joined us for carols on the playground to end our term. Duncan relocated to London a couple of years ago, but we are determined and manage to rally some brass players to help us out. You are more than welcome to bring some joy and join us at 2.30pm for a traditional sing!

A big thanks to our Friends group for their energy in organising this term's disco! As always, it was a blast! The event raised over £800. You will have seen the flyer for their next event – the Christmas Fayre - on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> December. As well as contributing towards our pantomime trip, they are in the process of rebuilding the playhouse in the EYFS area and funding a reading hut in the outdoor classroom. Please give them your support.

Finally, a big shout out to Moore's Garden Centre for our Christmas tree! They are always so generous and their gift is gratefully received.

If there's anything else you need to know, just ask in the playground or drop me an email. In the meantime, we continue to keep Father Christmas informed of great deeds, brilliant work and positive children!

*Mrs. Ballard*