



Dear Parents and Carers,

## WELCOME BACK!

Welcome to the new school year! We hope that the children have settled back into routine and have enjoyed the first few days of life in their new year group. There has certainly been a positive atmosphere and plenty of smiles!

Our new EYFS cohort have also settled beautifully! They took on the Willow Brook world with confidence and soon seemed 'at home'. Similarly, our two new members of staff, Miss Mistry and Mrs. Lorestani, have quickly become part of the family.

## AUTUMN TERM CLUBS

Our Extra-Curricular timetable for the term ahead has been published and this was forwarded to you via Parentmail yesterday. The staff team offer lots of activities to choose from – for which I am very grateful. You will see from the timetable how to sign up for the various activities. You would normally receive a Learning Letter from the class teacher detailing the core topic and curriculum learning for the half term ahead, but our photocopier is having an 'overworked' meltdown, so these will be with you on Monday. As you'll see, there's a strong history flavour to our studies over the next six weeks.

## READING

Your child will have come home with a new reading pouch and record book this week. As with book bags used in EYFS and Year 1, we hope that these will be treasured – they don't mix well with leaking water bottles! Please listen to your child read the books that they come home with. A primary aged child is NEVER too old to read aloud or to have a bedtime book. If we ask for nothing else during your child's time with us, we hope that you will encourage them to value reading... it is the bedrock of learning and it is no surprise that those who read regularly find success. Thank you to those who have offered their services as Reading Volunteers for the year ahead. Mrs. Roper will be in touch to finalise safeguarding checks, and I'll contact you all next week to arrange a 'what you need to know' meeting. We appreciate your time.

## ATTENDANCE

At Willow Brook pupil attendance is above average. That makes us happy and gives your children an excellent start in life. With so few children ending the year as 'persistent absentees' (i.e. with attendance below 90%) the school has, to date, not served fines on the few term time holidays that are requested. This does not mean that we do not take attendance seriously. You will find a copy of our term time calendar on the school website. Please do your utmost to book holidays in

the 13 weeks available to you. Please also note that if you request to take your child out of school early on a Friday afternoon, the p.m. session will be counted as an unauthorised absence.

## PHONES AND WATCHES

This is an opportune time to remind you that we do not allow children to bring mobile phones into school under any circumstances, nor do we permit children to wear smart watches. There are so many safeguarding and developmental reasons behind our policy, as well as recognising that such items are incredibly expensive. (Having watched many young children over the years try to navigate and manage an unsupervised social media world without the maturity and knowledge that it demands, we would **URGE** you to resist giving your child a phone until they are at secondary school.)

## DATES FOR THE TERM AHEAD

I will leave you with a list of dates below that are already in the new diary. There may be later additions, but key events (Parents Evenings, Children in Need etc) can be added to your calendars.

Date	Event	Details
17 <sup>th</sup> September	Year 5 and 6 trip to the Safety Zone	Children in 5 and 6 attend the Safety Zoen Roadshow at Holme Pierrepont for the afternoon.
26 <sup>th</sup> September	MacMillan Coffee & Cake Breakfast	Enter a cake in the annual Willow Brook Bake Off competition. Bring it along at 8am and enjoy a coffee and cake breakfast. Add your donation to support this important cause.
30 <sup>th</sup> September	Year 4 trip to Southwell Minster	Year 4 travel back in time to meet the Romans in Southwell.
30 <sup>th</sup> September	Friends of Willow Brook AGM	
3 <sup>rd</sup> October	Harvest Celebration	Your donations of food remind us of everything we have to be grateful for and are donated to The Friary Homeless project in West Bridford.
15 <sup>th</sup> 16 <sup>th</sup> October	Parents and Carers Evenings	A chance for you all to meet your child's teacher and discuss how they have settled. Letters will be sent nearer the time to book an appointment.
17 <sup>th</sup> October	Break up for half term	
10 <sup>th</sup> November	Odd Socks Day (and the start of Anti-Bullying week)	Wear your odd socks to school to show that there is brilliance in difference!
11 <sup>th</sup> November	Remembrance Day	
14 <sup>th</sup> November	Children in Need	As always, the Willow Brook community goes all out to support this important and fun-filled day.
9 <sup>th</sup> , 10 <sup>th</sup> 11 <sup>th</sup> Dec	Yrs 2 to 6 evening performances	
17 <sup>th</sup> December	EYFS/Year 1 Nativity Performance	EYFS and Year 1 will be performing their nativity at 2pm and 6.30pm.
19 <sup>th</sup> December	Break up for Christmas Holidays	

Thank you for supporting us and making the start of the new year run so smoothly. I imagine there are lots of tired people who are ready for a weekend. Now that we are settled, let the hard work begin!

You know that we are always happy and available to chat or allay any worries – you can drop us an email, give us a call or approach a member of staff in the playground. A written note will also get a prompt reply.

With my best wishes, Louise Ballard