



WILLOW LANE COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

October 2020

Dates for your diaries

Dear Mums, Dads and Carers,

Despite all the necessary changes, we have had a great and smooth start to the new school year. We are particularly impressed with how well Red Class have settled in to big school. Thank you to all of you for working with us to ensure that our school remains both a safe and happy environment in which we know children learn best.

At the start of the year, it's useful to remember that putting children's needs first is always the key factor behind our decisions. As well as following the government guidance to keep children, staff and the community safe, we are a school and children's learning is our core purpose. With 194 children in school, not every decision will please everyone but let me assure you that every decision will have been made thinking about how best to support children's learning within the new guidelines.

Whilst it saddens me that our 'dates for your diaries' section is very thin on the ground this year, I do want to let you know what I see day in day out as I walk through school. In every class I visit, I see happy, well behaved children engaging with creative and purposeful learning. In every classroom, office and learning space, I see smiling caring adults navigating a sea of new guidance and continuing to make learning at our school a special experience. And I know that whilst things are different at the moment, the beliefs and ethos which make our school special are still happening and I know you will be glad to hear that too.

Our popular School Blog is always worth a visit to see what and how children have been learning both in their classrooms and the outdoor environment.

As ever, should you have any queries or thoughts about your child's time or learning at our school, please do not hesitate to come and talk them through.

Yours, *Mr Mel MacKinnon*

October: Virtual Open Day on School Blog

Tuesday 20th and Thursday 22nd October: Parents' Evenings

Friday 23rd October: Halloween Dress Up Day

Monday 26th October to Friday 30th October: Half Term

Saturday 31st October: Secondary School Application Deadline

Tuesday 3rd November: Year 5 Trip to Woodmatters

Friday 27th November: Christmas Tree arrives for decorations.

Friday 18th December: School closes at 2pm.

CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS

Monday 4th January: INSET Day

Tuesday 5th January: Back to School

Monday 15th February to Friday 19th February: Half Term

Friday 26th March: School closes at 2pm.

EASTER HOLIDAYS

Monday 12th April: Back to School

STAFFING UPDATES

Mr Piper is currently on shared paternity leave following the birth of his second son. He is due back in 2021. Mrs Jones has joined our teaching team while he is off and she teaches in Year 5 and Year 6 once a week. Mrs Carless has also joined our Reception Class Team and teaches the class on Wednesdays and Friday afternoons.



PARENTS' EVENING

These will be held as telephone calls this year with parents able to book time slots. Children will also be bringing home a piece of writing which will help you to understand their strengths and development points in this area of the curriculum. Teachers will be able to answer questions on how you can best support children's learning at home and a key part of the call will be about how your child has settled back in to school and their well-being.

Please keep an eye out for more information linked to these phone calls which will be booked using our online system. Whilst parents will be able to book a time, they will need to allow 10 minutes before and after to allow for timings being slightly out.

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Following the success of last year's Ofsted and in light of the current pandemic, this year's targets are:

1. Our ambitious curriculum is resumed and built upon to meet the needs of our community.
2. Our disadvantaged children are making good and better progress across the full range of subjects.
3. Our children understand positive and respectful relationships with others and how these promote good mental-health and well-being
4. Our leaders ensure that highly effective and meaningful engagement takes place with staff at all levels to ensure good well-being and issues are addressed.



OPEN DAY

This year we have had a to hold a Virtual Open Day. This consists of 7 short videos on the School Blog which give parents insights in to what school looks like, the curriculum and how our children learn. Questions can also be asked via email or phone call. If you know anyone looking for a school place for next September, please encourage them to visit our website.



ATTENDANCE

Thank you and well done to everyone for supporting your children's attendance so well last year. We were on track for another year of good attendance and this year we shall again aim to beat the Government Target of 96%. You will be pleased to hear that despite the current circumstances we are at 97.1%. As we start a new year, please can you ensure that we have up to date contact numbers (two please) and addresses in case we need to get in touch with you either for attendance or other reasons such as illness.

You can keep up-to-date with dates, day to day learning and curriculum letters on our website:
www.willow.lancs.sch.uk