



Dear Parents and Carers,

It has been a very exciting week of learning experiences at Willow Bank. On Tuesday, our KS2 choir attended Young Voices 2023 at the O2 arena to sing a varied collection of songs they have been rehearsing for the past few months. The children were excellent ambassadors for the school, behaving impeccably throughout the day (and well into the evening) and demonstrating our core values of respect, aspiration and kindness to the other choirs present that made up an 8000 strong wall of voices! During the event, the children had the incredible experience of singing with Heather Small, and a recording of their voices was made for a charity version of her single 'Proud' which will be released to raise money for a children's mental health charity. This morning in our celebration assembly, the choir sang for the school- we are really 'proud' of them all!

Children in EYFS and KS1 were also excited to see a live pantomime performance of Snow White on Thursday afternoon, linked to Magnolia Class' current topic of traditional tales. The production was of very high quality and the children really enjoyed watching the performance and participating in the songs and actions along the way.

This morning I had the pleasure of chairing a Year 6 debate in the hall focusing on the motion that, 'Immigration should be freely permitted-without restrictions- in the United Kingdom'. Children from Larch and Sycamore classes presented their arguments, both for and against the motion, by focusing on five key points. The children articulated their arguments with clarity and passion, backing them up with research and national data to convince their audience. They challenged their peers when they felt a point lacked substance and built upon the statements of their classmates to emphasise and embed key elements of the debate. Well done to the year 6 team for working so hard to prepare this event - may there be many more.

Finally, we will be having a big push on uniform next week to ensure every child comes to school proudly wearing our Willow Bank colours. Please ensure hooded tops are not worn to school, jewellery is left at home and the correct PE kit is being worn on PE days e.g. a plain white T shirt, school sweatshirt/plain royal or navy-blue sweatshirt and jogging bottoms. The children look so smart when they are all in our school colours and it is an important part of the identity of our Willow Bank family. Thank you all for your support and cooperation with this.

Wishing you all a wonderful weekend.

Best wishes,

Mrs Oldfield
Headteacher



Why is maths important?

As parents/carers you have a great opportunity to develop your child's maths skills at home by involving them in everyday activities. If your children can help you find the best deal for your car insurance or work out which supermarket deal is cheapest, then it's helping them understand maths in real life. It also helps develop their basic maths and problem-solving skills, which is important in the UK primary curriculum.

Here are some tips that may help you improve your child's maths skills at home:



Always start with a positive mindset.

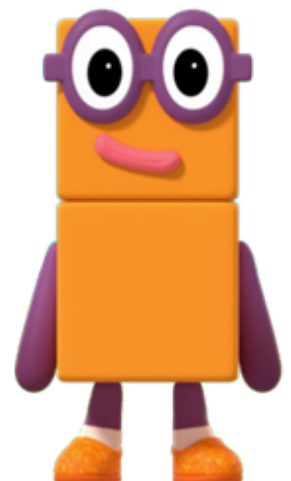
Do you ever hear yourself saying "I'm really bad at maths" or "I just didn't get maths in school"?

It's difficult to understand just how much children will pick up on any negativity towards particular subjects from their parents. Unfortunately, this can be a real barrier to their learning. Try and use positive language such as "don't worry, it's okay to make mistakes, we all do". Positivity can go a long way to improving their attitude towards maths

2

Use maths talk daily

Talking about maths is important for your child's mathematical development. Whenever you have the opportunity, try to include maths talk in their lives. This is easily done when they are playing with physical objects as you can reinforce their counting skills. For example, how many pennies are you holding? Or what shape is that object? When counting, reinforce the last number they counted as this can help their mathematical development further, for example "one, two three...three cars."





Two easy concepts to develop with your children are **doubling/halving** and **adding/subtracting**. Again, you could use physical objects such as food to reinforce this. You could ask your child to count the number of chicken nuggets or peas (or any other food!) on their plate at dinner time:

- o "If I doubled the number of chicken nuggets on your plate right now, how many would you have?"
- o "If I ate half the peas on your plate for you, how many would you have left?"
- o "If we added all my chicken nuggets to your chicken nuggets, how many would we have altogether?"

3



Play maths games together.

Many games use mathematical and logical skills that your children will need in later life – plus they're fun! Games like jigsaw puzzles help children to develop logical & spatial awareness skills. Board games with dice develop children's counting skills. Other games that may help develop your child's maths skills are darts, scrabble, and chess. Get playing!

Play maths games together

You can also support your child's learning by getting to grips with the maths methods they learn, like bar modelling. Try to learn the method that your child uses by taking a look at the Calculation Policy (on the school website), speaking to their teacher, or Googling it.

4



5



Watch out for shapes!

When you look around, everything is made from shapes. So why not encourage your children to learn the names of shapes when you're out and about to entertain them? They could identify car wheels as circles, windows as rectangles and even tiles as hexagons or whatever shape they may be!



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February 3rd is NSPCC Number Day! As part of our commitment to make maths exciting and high profile in our school, we've decided to take part in a friendly competition involving schools in the United Kingdom. It's a **1-day competition** which starts on **Friday 3rd February 2023 at 07:30 and ends at 19:30**. It's all done online via play.ttrockstars.com.

Children can play in any game mode with every correct answer to a multiplication or division question, earning themselves, their class, and the school a point. The Times Tables Rock Stars platform will calculate the class average (the number of correct answers per pupil in the class who play during the competition hours, subject to a 60-minute limit (see below)). Winning classes in the school and in the competition as a whole will be the ones with the highest average.

To support player wellbeing, there is a time limit **of 60-minutes per player**. In other words, each player can earn competition points for up to 60-minutes **between 07:30 and 19:30 on Friday 3rd February**. Once the player goes beyond 60-minutes of play on that day, they will still earn coins but will no longer earn points towards the competition.

In the spirit of the competition, please don't play on their behalf but, encourage and support them to the extent that it doesn't cause high-stress levels or impact on family plans.

The competition starts in 15 days! Good luck!





INCLUSION AT WILLOW BANK

Hi everyone, Miss White here!

This week's Lego therapy club has been a huge success. Our children made outstanding progress in listening to each others input to be able to build the Lego figure correctly and work as a team. Well done, we are extremely proud of you!

Every day we run a lunchtime club offering opportunities for colouring, Lego and games which allows the children to build social skills, sharing, turn taking and confidence building. This setting has allowed the children who attend to have that space to self-regulate their feelings and make positive choices. This has a direct impact on them throughout the day and in their classes.

The club has been working extremely well for some children who struggle to manage outside, may it be due to not being able to control their behaviour or not having the confidence to engage with other children.

During the club, I have observed confidence building which has allowed the children to form friendship groups, which is then applied on the playground!

Yayyyyyy Willow Bank!



**WE ARE RECRUITING
PARENT LOCAL ACADEMY COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

Willow Bank Primary School currently have vacancies on their Local Academy Committee for parent governors.

We are looking for parent/carers who would further enjoy being part of our school in joining our local governance team, sharing your experiences for the benefit of all of our community.

All we ask of you is a commitment to:

- Attending one committee meeting per term.
- Reading any documents provided for the meeting prior to attending.
- Respecting confidentiality at all time.
- Engaging positively with our school in your capacity as a parent governor.

In return you would receive:

- An opportunity to influence the school experience and lives of children in the school community.
- A space to share your skills and experience to improve our educational offer.
- A chance to gain deeper insight into the leadership of a school.

If you believe you would enjoy being a parent governor or want to find out more, please visit the school office or alternatively email them to register your interest:

✉ WBPOffice@watschools.org.uk

Please note that in accordance with our safeguarding policy, all successful applications will be subject to DBS and reference checks.



Willow Bank Primary School



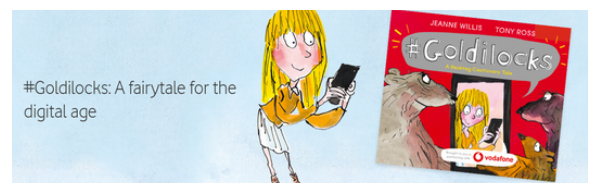
 **Safer Internet Day**

We will be taking part in Safer Internet Day on Tuesday the 7th February. In the lead up to this and beyond we will be sharing information on how you can best support your child at home.

Reading books is a great way to cover important issues in an engaging and non-threatening way that may help you have conversations and uncover any issues your child may be having on the internet.

Follow the link below to download #Goldilocks by Jeanne Willis and Tony Ross.

<https://www.vodafone.co.uk/mobile/digital-parenting/goldilocks>



The online Zoo by Daniela Drobna and Achmed Abdel Salam is another great story that can be downloaded in multiple different languages.



<https://www.ispa.at/wissenspool/broschueren/broschueren-detailseite/broschuere/detailansicht/the-online-zoo-english/>



WELL BEING

With the frosty cold weather we are having, even Willow had to wear her extra special coat this week.



Well done to:	Our target is over 96%
Magnolia - 95.5%	Yew - 95.5%
★ Hornbeam - 96.8%	★ Mulberry - 96.2%
Alder - 93.0%	Redwood - 95.9%
Laburnum - 94.1%	Almond - 95.7%
Hazel - 89.2%	★ Walnut - 99.1%
Larch - 94.8%	Sycamore - 95.2%



THINK OF THE WEEK



Don't forget that your child should be reading with you every day at home and sign in the diary when you have done so. It is helpful to write which page they have read up to and maybe even a short comment on how well they did with reading/answering questions. Adults will be checking reading records everyday.



EYFS and KS1 Parent Reading Morning

Every Thursday from 8:40-9:10am

All parents and carers welcome!

Peabody is delighted to announce that Cosy Corners have been introduced at some of our community centres. These are dedicated for the most vulnerable members of the community, for example, the elderly, isolated, and families who are struggling with energy bills or finances.

Each Cosy Corner offers something a little different. But whichever of our community centres people visit, they can find a warm and friendly space to relax, keep warm and get advice about staying warm this winter. People will also be able to visit a Cosy Corner for:

- free tea and coffee
- energy saving advice
- use of charging points
- get support and advice about cost of living

People can also speak to our community centre teams to find out about any other support we can offer you and your family.

Come in for:

- Free tea and coffee
- Energy saving advice •
- Use of charging points
- Cost of living support and advice

Cosy Corner

Everyone is welcome!



For more information:
www.peabody.org.uk/cosy-corners

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