



# Weekly Newsletter

Friday 11<sup>th</sup> July 2025



## Message from Mrs Branton

### Chestnut Class – Layer Marney Tower

Chestnut class had an exciting day at Layer Marney Tower for our Ancient Egypt field trip. We arrived to a collection of artefacts to explore; dove into hieroglyphics; and created our own decoders for secret messages. We worked with real wheat to grind it into flour as they did in Ancient Egypt and finished off creating masks inspired by Egyptian gods and goddesses to take part in a procession routine. A great day of learning and fun!



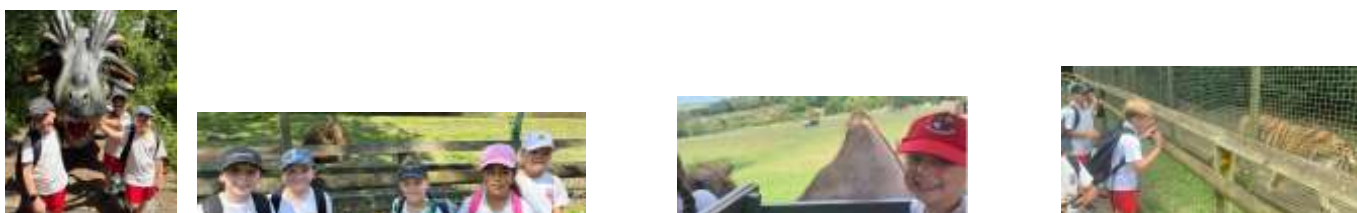
### Elm and Beech Class – Call of the Wild

Elm and Beech class had a wonderful trip to Call of the Wild on Tuesday.



### Whitebeam Class – Port Lymyne Reserve

Whitebeam had a wild adventure at Port Lymyne Reserve. They went on a real safari in trucks that drove them through the reserve, getting up close with exotic animals and learning all about wildlife conservation. They then spent the rest of the day exploring the rest of the reserve and seeing a variety of animals including getting up close to some lions and tigers! It was a day full of fun, exploration and unforgettable memories!



### Summer Fayre – Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> July

We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to everyone who made this year's Summer Fayre such a fantastic event! A huge **thank you to the PTFA, staff, volunteers and pupils** whose hard work, dedication and time made everything possible — from planning and organising to running stalls and activities on the day. Your incredible efforts created a fun and welcoming atmosphere for all.

To all the families, friends and members of our school community who came along — **thank you for attending** and supporting the event. Your presence and enthusiasm made the day even more special. Whether you joined in the games; enjoyed the delicious food; or simply came to soak up the sunshine and community spirit, we're so grateful you were part of it. Together, we made lasting memories and raised valuable funds that will directly benefit our school and pupils. Thank you once again to everyone involved — we couldn't have done it without you!



Our Core Values: **INDEPENDENCE** - HAPPINESS – **TEAM WORK** - CARING - **RESPECT** – HONESTY  
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## **🌸 Sponsored Fun Run & Sports Day – Parent Information 🌸**

We're excited to welcome you to our upcoming Sponsored Fun Run and Sports Day – a fantastic celebration of sport, teamwork and school spirit!

### **📦 What Children Need to Bring:**

- Come to school wearing PE kit
- Bring a named water bottle
- Bring a sun hat (and please apply sun cream at home before school if needed)

### **🏠 Gazebo Set-Up (Optional):**

If you wish to set up a gazebo for shade or shelter, the main playground gates will be open from 8.00am to 8.10am to allow access for this.

Please ensure all gazebo equipment is brought in during this window, as the gates will close promptly afterwards.

### **🏆 Sponsored Fun Run – Watching & Picnic Setup:**

If you are coming to watch your child's sponsored Fun Run, you are welcome to:

- Set up your picnic area in the centre of the field – you'll be directed where to go upon arrival.
- Stay and enjoy the atmosphere, cheering on other classes in their runs until the gates reopen at 11:50am for the start of Sports Day.

Year Groups	Activity	Gates will open at:	Timings of the run
Years 1 & 2	1 lap	09.50am	10.00am
Years 3 & 4	2 laps	10.20am	10.30am
Years 5 & 6	3 laps	10.50am	11.00am
EYFS	1 lap	11.20am	11.30am

### **🕒 Lunchtime & Sports Day – Key Timings:**

- 11:50am – Main playground gates reopen for all parents/carers
- 12:00pm – Collect your child(ren) from their classrooms and enjoy a picnic lunch on the field

### **If you're unable to attend and would like your child to join another family for lunch:**

- Contact the school office by phone first
- Then send written or email confirmation, as your child will be under that family's care during lunch

**Note: The bottom gate at Fawtlers Close will remain closed all day.**

Children having a school lunch will bring it outside to join you

- 1:00pm – Children return to class for the register
- 1:15pm – Children return to the field
- 1:30pm – Sports Day races begin!

After all races have finished, children will return to class and can be collected at the usual end-of-day time. If you are unable to attend sports day you will be able to collect your child from their classroom at the normal end of day pick up times.

### **Additional Info:**

A member of staff will be at the main playground gates throughout the event for anyone arriving late or needing to leave early.

After-School Club will run as normal until 5:30pm

We look forward to a fun-filled day and hope to see you there. Thank you for your continued support!

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## Reading Diaries

Just to keep you informed that all reading diaries and reading books will be collected in during the week beginning Monday 14<sup>th</sup> July. The diaries will be handed over to the next class teacher and will be given back to the children in September.



On Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> July, we have our 'Meet the Teacher' morning, where children will spend time with their new teacher in their new classroom. The children will arrive at school as usual between 08:40-08:50am. After registration with their current teacher, they will visit their new classroom for an introductory session with their new teacher. Following the usual break time, the children will return to their new classroom for another session. Afterwards, they will go back to their old classroom to prepare for lunch.

This morning is a great opportunity for children to get to know their new teacher and vice versa. Teachers typically engage in various activities such as team-building games or creating projects for classroom displays.



We look forward to welcoming you to our Open Afternoon on Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> July at 2pm. You are invited to come along to see your child's work and meet their new teacher. For those families that are able to attend, the main playground gates will open at 1.55pm (the bottom gate will not be open). Please collect your child/children from their classroom door as if it was normal pick up time. Once you have collected your child/children you will then go through the school hall to access their classrooms. Once you have finished looking at your child's work and have met new class teachers you will be able to take your child/children home. You will need to exit via the school office. If you are unable to attend the Open Afternoon you can collect your child at their normal pick up time. If you want your child/children to go home with another family please contact the school office to provide permission. **Please note that new staff members joining our school might not be present due to commitments at their current schools.**



School reports will be available for collection by parents at the open afternoon. If you are unable to attend the open afternoon you can collect your child's report from class staff at the end of the school day. For anyone not able to collect their child's report on Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> July, they can be collected from the school office on Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> July. Due to the sensitive nature of the reports they cannot be handed to the children. If you wish another adult to collect your report on your behalf please contact the school office as written consent will be required. Whitebeam class parents, please see the separate parentmail that was sent to you today in regards to your children's reports.

## Community News

Please click on the link below to find out more about events in our local community.

<https://www.willowbrook.essex.sch.uk/page/?title=Community+News&pid=85>



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## **Moving Towards a No Smartphone School Environment – A Vision for September 2026**

As part of our ongoing commitment to creating a positive, focused and healthy learning environment for all our pupils, we want to share with you an important development in our long-term vision.

From September 2026, our school plans to transition to a 'no smartphone' site for pupils. We are sharing this information early so that families can be fully informed and supported throughout the process. A structured timeline, along with resources, guidance and regular communication will be rolled out to ensure a smooth and successful transition.

### **Why Are We Making This Change?**

We are increasingly aware—both through educational research and our own observations—of the negative effects smartphones can have on young people's wellbeing, learning and social development. While technology has its place in education, unrestricted access to smartphones can lead to:

- Increased anxiety and reduced attention spans
- Sleep disruption and concentration issues
- Fewer meaningful face-to-face interactions
- Greater exposure to online risks, peer pressure and distraction

By creating a phone-free environment, we aim to give our pupils the space to be more present, more focused on learning and more connected to each other and their school community.

### **Support from Our School Community**

We're encouraged to see that this vision is already resonating with many of our families. Over 60% of our parents have already signed the *Smartphone-Free Childhood Pact*, demonstrating a shared commitment to supporting healthier habits and a more focused school culture for our children.

This move has been thoughtfully discussed over time. It has been a topic of conversation at coffee mornings, Parent Council meetings and has been formally discussed and approved at our Governing Board meetings. I have also consulted with our Local Authority, whose advice has helped shape our rollout strategy.

We are also aware that we are not alone in this journey. Other schools, both locally and nationally, are making similar changes as part of a wider shift towards creating more intentional, balanced school environments.

### **What Happens Next?**

This change will not happen overnight. Between now and September 2026, we will be working closely with pupils, staff and families to:

- Provide clear expectations and phased guidance
- Share resources on managing smartphone use at home
- Communicate regularly with updates and opportunities for discussion
- Involve pupils in shaping the change to build understanding and support

We are confident that this move will lead to a more positive, balanced experience for our pupils, both in school and beyond.

Finally, we would like to sincerely thank the many parents who have already been so supportive and helpful in considering our next steps. Your engagement and partnership are key to making this vision a reality.

If you have any questions or would like to learn more, please don't hesitate to reach out.



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## Sport News

What a marvellous Monday! Our Year 6 rounders team attended the District Rounders tournament, their match play was outstanding with great batting and fielding skills. We are so proud of the team for becoming 1st place District Champions!



On Wednesday, to finish our sporting events for 2025, our children competed in the Small Schools District Athletics at Brentwood Prep school. Firstly, some of our Year 6 girls and boys competed in the field events which included the howler throw, long jump and high jump. Some great performances from the children- well done!



Then it was the track events, where boys and girls from years 3 to 6 competed in sprint and relay races. We also had a 400m distance race for Year 6. The children showed great speed, teamwork and resilience resulting in 3rd place for Willowbrook in the Small Schools District Athletics competition. An amazing achievement for our talented athletes. We are so proud of you all!



Have a lovely weekend.  
Mrs Branton



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*This week's Headteacher superstars are:*

*Fleur W, Lois W, Corey W, Cleo J, Ronni N, Thea F, Quinn C*



*Well done*

## Diary Dates

SUMMER TERM 2025	
14 <sup>th</sup> July 2025	Sports Day
15 <sup>th</sup> July 2025	Meet the teacher morning
16 <sup>th</sup> July 2025	Open Afternoon
18 <sup>th</sup> July 2025	Year 6 Leavers assembly 9:15am
18 <sup>th</sup> July 2025	Last day of the school year