



Weekly Newsletter

Friday 11th September 2026



Message from Mrs Branton

Homework Update

We are making some exciting changes to homework this year! Instead of using **DB Primary**, every child from year 1 up to year 6 will receive a **Maths workbook**, a **Grammar and Punctuation workbook**, and a **Comprehension workbook**. Each week, teachers will set:

- One Maths page linked to current learning or revision.
- One page from either the Grammar and Punctuation book or the Comprehension book.

The workbooks include answers, so children and parents can mark the work at home before bringing it into school. Children will also continue to:

- **(Year 1)** Revise the sounds and words covered each half-term (a list will be posted on class pages on the school website at the end of each half-term)
- **(Year 2,3,4,5 & 6)** Learn their weekly spellings (posted on class pages on the website).
- Read their colour-banded reading book every day.
- Take part in our whole-school themed homework activities, which can be found on the class pages of the school website.

To celebrate all their hard work, children can earn a **Homework Certificate** for every **10 pieces of homework completed**. We look forward to seeing all the fantastic learning taking place at home! 📖★

Further information on the start date will be sent in due course.

If your child is in Cherry Class, please focus on reading their colour banded book every day.

Reading

Your child should now have brought home a colour banded book for them to read, please let your class teacher know if you do not have one. I would like to remind everybody that the colour banded book is the book that counts towards our vending machine raffle ticket incentive to read at home. If your child reads the book five times or more from Friday evening to the next Friday morning, then their name will be placed into the class raffle ticket pot. At the end of the week every Friday afternoon I will come into each class and choose a name randomly from the pot. Every child that reads at home five times a week for the whole half term will receive a certificate in celebration assembly, recognising this achievement.

Reading at home is a wonderful way to support your child's learning and development. Even just 10–15 minutes of reading each day can help build vocabulary, improve comprehension, develop confidence, and encourage a lifelong love of books. Sharing stories together also provides a special opportunity to talk, ask questions, and enjoy time as a family. Every little bit of reading makes a difference! Many thanks for your support and happy reading.



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My Child at School (MCAS)

It is wonderful to see that so many families have already created their MCAS account. If you have not yet signed up, please do so as soon as possible, as all school communications are now sent via MCAS. If you are experiencing any difficulties setting up your account, please do not hesitate to contact Miss Gadd and she will be happy to help.

BASC

Under the new MCAS system, breakfast and after school club bookings **must** be made 24 hours in advance and paid online when booking. In extreme emergencies, you can contact Miss Gadd to book your child in on the day.

Clubs

Clubs start on Monday! We are excited that we have been able to offer additional sporting clubs through Winger Academy and also a computing club for years 1,2 & 3 run by Jam Coding where they will be game building. Click on the link below to watch a short clip on the Game Building club that they are running. There is still time to book for your child on.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-yU3MLtWSk0>

Please note that for all clubs run by outside agencies, there is a minimum number of students needed in order for the club to be run. If that number is not reached, the company will contact you to inform you the club is no longer running.

Staff Update

You may have noticed that Miss Brothers is no longer working in the office. We always knew her time with us would be short-term as her children have now finished at a local secondary school and she has been able to secure a role closer to home. We wish Miss Brothers the very best in her new role and thank her for everything she has done for the Willowbrook community. We are now in the process of recruiting for a new office administrator. As I'm sure you can appreciate, the office is very busy at the start of the new academic year, please bear with us if emails and enquiries take slightly longer to deal with. Thank you for your understanding.

Cake donations for our MacMillan Coffee Morning on Friday 25th September

A reminder that on Friday 25th September, we are hosting our annual MacMillan Coffee Morning to help raise money for Macmillan Cancer Support. Any donations of cakes would be greatly appreciated, please bring these to the office from Monday, 21st September onwards. Please note that we cannot accept any cakes containing nuts, and as a precautionary measure for allergen safety, we kindly request that anyone donating homemade cakes provide a list of the ingredients used in their baking. Thank you in advance for helping us to ensure all our children are kept safe.

When you drop your children to school on 25th September, please make your way into the hall where there will be cakes available and after registration our infant children will entertain you with their wonderful singing.

Harvest Festival Appeal – supporting the local food banks

Reminder: Once again, we would like to be able to offer our support to the local food banks, with a Harvest Festival Appeal. Each year at this time, with your generosity, the food banks are able to replenish their greatly depleted stock; offering a great foundation for their work throughout the year. Requests for help are at unprecedented levels and showing no sign of easing any time soon. Please help us show our support by donating any of the following items over the next few weeks: -- tinned/canned food (vegetables, fruit, meat, fish) - spreads (jam, honey etc.) - long-life milk, juice and drinks - dried pasta – rice - cooking sauces – condiments - tea and coffee – cereal and toiletries. Thank you for your support.



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Reminder: Parent Talk re Willowbrook's Commitment to a smartphone-free school

We are delighted to invite you to a parent information session led by Papaya, a company that works with schools and families to support children's wellbeing in the digital age.

 **Date:** Friday 18th September

 **Time:** 9.30am

 **Location:** School Hall

Parents are welcome to come straight to the hall after dropping off their children.

During the session, Papaya will explore why Willowbrook is committed to being a **smartphone-free school** and discuss the growing body of evidence surrounding the impact smartphones can have on children's learning, wellbeing, relationships, sleep and mental health. The session will also provide practical advice and guidance for families navigating today's digital world.

To help parents understand the importance of this topic, we are sharing the following short video ahead of the event:

 **Watch the video here:**

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Bm17QK_NEZYwnOimvRyeNQ4eulE6CBdG/view?usp=drive_link

We hope this video will provide valuable insight into the impact smartphones can have on children and young people and encourage you to join us for what promises to be an informative and thought-provoking session.

This is an issue that affects all our children and we are keen to have as many parents as possible in attendance. By working together and developing a shared understanding of the challenges and opportunities surrounding smartphone use, we can better support our children to thrive both in and out of school.

Thank you for your continued support. We look forward to seeing you on **Friday 18th September at 9.30am**.

Playing musical instruments

Children really flourish from learning to play a musical instrument – it has been proved to be an exceptionally good exercise for the brain! (enhancing all activities!). We have individual piano lessons provided by Essex Music Services and band rehearsals provided by RockSteady. If you have a child interested in either joining a band or learning a musical instrument, please use the following links:

www.rocksteadymusicschool.com

www.essexmusicservices.org

Diary Dates:

Our Autumn Term Diary Dates are included in each week's newsletter. Please do check them regularly to see what events are coming up this term. Any changes or new additions that have been added since the last newsletter will be highlighted in yellow. This term, every class will be putting on a class assembly. Parents are invited to join us on the date given for their class to find out what the children have been learning in their topic. You then have an opportunity to give your children a hug and a well done after the assembly before they go back to class.

ZUMBA!:

Morning exercise for children is not only beneficial for their physical health but also for their mental and emotional well-being. Our Key Stage Zumba sessions will be resuming from next week. Each key stage has two allocated mornings per week. On their designated morning, the children will join [members of staff in the school hall](#) to take part in Zumba fitness routines. You might even see me joining in when I'm standing at the school gate!

Our Core Values: **INDEPENDENCE** - HAPPINESS – **TEAM WORK** - CARING - **RESPECT** – HONESTY

Join us on Twitter for the latest results and news: @Willowbrk



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PE

We have had a number of children this week coming into school on PE days with earrings in. Please be reminded that on PE days earrings must be removed before school. If your child has recently had their ears pierced, we are no longer able to place tape over the earrings and therefore they will have to sit out of PE until the earrings are able to be removed. Thank you for your support.

Share a thank you

Please see a link below to share a special thanks for a member of staff for this term:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfNrd6PyxKW_b8tvMFyuCLSJ_Da-OWv11rlqQjMdkMuKr3Qig/viewform?usp=publish-editor

If a member of staff has gone above and beyond for you or your child, please give them a special mention. Your kind words make a real difference, brightening staff members' days and recognising their hard work. Thank you for helping us spread positivity and support throughout our school community!

Community News

Please see the link below to our community news page, you will find lots of useful information and activities each week: <https://www.willowbrook.essex.sch.uk/page/?title=Community+News&pid=85>

Have a lovely weekend.

Mrs Branton

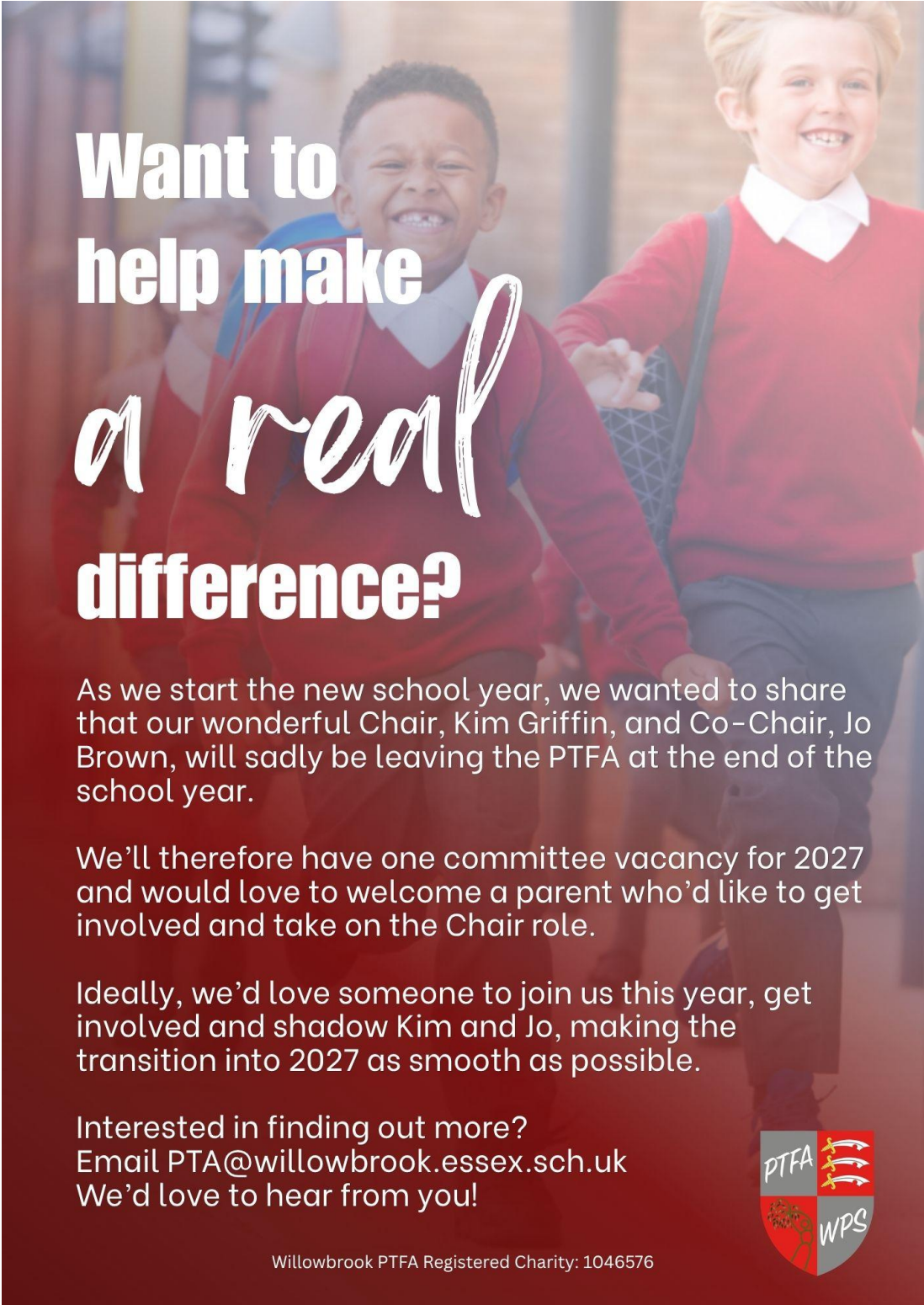


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PTFA FEATURE NEWS



**Want to
help make
a real
difference?**

As we start the new school year, we wanted to share that our wonderful Chair, Kim Griffin, and Co-Chair, Jo Brown, will sadly be leaving the PTFA at the end of the school year.

We'll therefore have one committee vacancy for 2027 and would love to welcome a parent who'd like to get involved and take on the Chair role.

Ideally, we'd love someone to join us this year, get involved and shadow Kim and Jo, making the transition into 2027 as smooth as possible.

Interested in finding out more?
Email PTA@willowbrook.essex.sch.uk
We'd love to hear from you!



Willowbrook PTFA Registered Charity: 1046576



PTFA EVENTS SCHEDULE

2026/27

16 **FRI**
OCTOBER

TRICK OR
TREAT POP UP

19 **THU**
NOVEMBER

WINTER DISCO

19 **FRI**
MARCH

ST.PATRICKS
DAY QUIZ

28 **FRI**
MAY

COLOUR RUN

24 **THU**
JUNE

SUMMER
DISCO

3 **SAT**
JULY

SUMMER
FAYRE

MORE EVENTS
STILL TO BE CONFIRMED...



Willowbrook PTFA Registered Charity: 1046576

This week's Headteacher superstars are:

Zoie E and Charlotte M



Well done

Words of the week

'Wonderful words of the week'

Key Stage 1

Year 1 Maple – history

Year 2 Holly – gently

Key Stage 2

Year 3 Elm – immaculate

Year 4 Beech – ominous

Year 5 Whitebeam – fen

Year 6 Chestnut - torrent

Core value pupil



Well done to the core value pupil from Chestnut class who received this week's award for Happiness in the celebration assembly.



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Celebration Assembly



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DIARY DATES

	AUTUMN TERM 2026
15 th September 2026	Whole class swimming starts for Whitebeam and top-up swimming for selected Chestnut pupils. (11 weeks)
14 th September 2026	Lessons begin for those children that have signed up to Essex Music Services for Piano lessons (10 lessons)
14 th September 2026	Extra-Curricular clubs start
18 th September 2026	Parent Talk re Willowbrook's Commitment to a smartphone-free school 09:30am school hall
21 st September 2026	Cherry Class phonics workshop for parents – 9.05am
22 nd September 2026	Drama4All - Superheroes Save Planet Earth Cherry, Maple, Holly and Elm Class. Dress up as super heroes
23 rd September 2026	Author Visit for years Maple, Holly, Elm and Beech Class
23 rd September 2026	Year 6 SATs information meeting for parents via TEAMS 4:45pm
25 th September 2026	Parent Macmillan Coffee morning- Cherry, Maple & Holly to perform to parents.
28 th September 2026	Individual and sibling photos
1st October to 31st October 2026	Black History Month
2 nd October 2026	Elm Harvest Class Assembly. 09:05am. Parents invited.
6 th October 2026	Prospective Parent Tour 5 till 6pm
7 th October 2026	World Inclusion Day - It is a day dedicated to ensuring that individuals of various abilities, backgrounds, ages, races, religions, genders, and other characteristics are accepted, welcomed, and treated fairly. Wear non-uniform and we will have collection buckets at the main playground gates for anyone wanting to make a voluntary donation for the charity SNAP
8 th October 2026	Year 6 Respect session provided by Essex Fire and Rescue
9 th October 2026	Chestnut Class Assembly
12 th October 2026	Whole School Firework and Halloween Safety assembly provided by Essex Fire and Rescue
12 th October to 16 th October 2026	Book Fair will run alongside parents' evenings – dates and times to be follow
13 th October 2026	Parents Evening (All year groups)
14 th October 2026	Parents Evening (EYFS only)
15 th October 2026	Parents Evening (All year groups)
16 th October 2026	Cherry Class Assembly. 09:05am. Parents invited.
19 th October 2026	Don-Rae Drama workshop with Chestnut and Whitebeam Class
20 th October 2026	Whole school flu immunisation
20 th October 2026	Last day of term
21 st -23 rd October 2026	INSET DAYS
2 nd November 2026	Towers and Turrets Holly Class Workshop- letter to follow
2 nd to the 6 th November 2026	Year 6 residential trip
6 th November 2026	Beech Class Assembly. 09:05am. Parents invited.
6 th November 2026	Prospective Parent Tour 10am till 11am
10 th November 2026	Whitebeam One Plan meetings- AM / PM
11 th November 2026	Maple One Plan meetings - AM

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12 th November 2026	Year 6 Online Safety session provided by Essex Fire and Rescue
13 th November 2026	BBC Children in need day – wear non-uniform with a Pudsey theme (eg something yellow; something spotty; or both!) Collection buckets will be at the school gates for anyone wanting to make a voluntary donation
13 th November 2026	Maple Class Assembly. 09:05am. Parents invited.
13 th November 2026	Whitebeam Class year 6 residential parent meeting via TEAMS 4:45pm
16 th November 2026	Anti-Bullying Week
16 th November 2026	Odd Socks Day - All you need to do is wear odd socks! Odd Socks Day is all about embracing and celebrating people's differences and helps to launch Anti-Bullying Week.
16 th , 17 th , 18 th , 19 th , 20 th November 2026	Year 6 Bikeability course
17 th November 2026	Beech One Plan Meetings – AM/ PM
18 th November 2026	Elm One Plan Meetings - AM
18 th November 2026	Beech One Plan Meetings - PM
19 th November 2026	Year 6 cyber bullying session provided by Essex Fire and Rescue
19 th November 2026	Chestnut One Plan Meetings - AM
19 th November 2026	Cherry One Plan Meetings -AM
19 th November 2026	PTFA Winter Disco
20 th November 2026	Catch-up for those who missed the flu immunisation
20 th November 2026	Whitebeam Class Assembly. 09:05am. Parents invited.
24 th November 2026	Parent Coffee Afternoon 2:40pm start in the school hall- Find out more about our PTFA, governors and parent council. Performances from school choir and Chestnut class.
26 th November 2026	Holly Class Assembly. 09:05am. Parents invited.
26 th November 2026	Year 6 Online exploitation session provided by Essex Fire and Rescue
27 th November 2026	Christmas House Morning
1 st December 2026	Last swimming lesson for Whitebeam and top-up swimming for selected Chestnut pupils.
1 st December 2026	Year 3 & 4 Show for parents at 2:15pm
2 nd December 2026	Whole school Panto Trip
3 rd December 2026	Prospective Parent Tour 1:30pm till 2:30pm
4 th December 2026	Year 5 & 6 Show for parents at 2:15 pm
7 th December 2026	Last week of clubs
10 th December 2026	EYFS & KS1 Nativity for parents at 2pm
11 th December 2026	EYFS & KS1 Nativity for parents at 9:20am
14 th December 2026	RockSteady Concert for parents at 2:20pm
16 th December 2026	Christingle Workshop for all classes
17 th December 2026	Children's Christmas Bazaar
18 th December 2026	Christmas dinner and Christmas jumper day
18 th December 2026	Last day of term