



Autumn Term Newsletter

Welcome to the Children's Hospital School newsletter. We hope you enjoy reading about all the latest news across all our settings, Willow Bank School, Leicester Royal Infirmary, The Beacon Unit and the Outreach Team. We hope to be able to provide half-termly updates.

Dear Parents

I write at the end of a very difficult year for everyone across the World. I know how many have faced challenges they were not expecting and understand the ongoing uncertainty going forward into next year. The incredible work carried out by scientists to develop vaccines gives us hope of returning to some sense of normality in 2021.

As so often happens in these situations, what we see is that kindness, care and humanity shine out from all sections of the community. It is heartening to remember that there are so many good people around, looking out for others. I am grateful to all the key workers who have stepped forward to support us at this time.

I am sure all parents and pupils will join me in saying a huge thank you to the staff across the school. They have worked so hard to ensure school can remain open as much as possible, taught lessons online, delivered food parcels, learning materials and IT equipment. I have been incredibly proud to see staff and pupils getting on with school in such difficult circumstances.

Despite the situation, the school has continued to move forward in many ways. After almost 7 years of planning the new inpatient CAMHS unit, The Beacon, opened its doors in November. Within the unit, the school now has dedicated accommodation consisting of two classrooms, an office and access to an outdoor space.

Two weeks ago, we had our annual 'Challenge Partners' external review which was carried out virtually on this occasion. Reviewers spent 2 days meeting with staff and looking at the work we do as well as speaking to pupils, parents and governors. The report is available on our website but one quote after looking at our response to the pandemic was as follows:

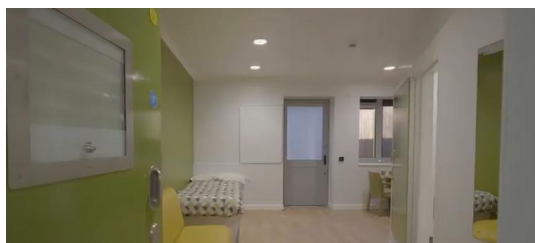
"Leaders and school staff have shown great imagination and adaptability, embracing the diverse challenges of the pandemic in each of the school settings, resulting in students' learning and emotional needs being well met. Staff have worked beyond their job descriptions."

Thank you all so much for your support this year and I hope everyone has a wonderful break. Make sure you get plenty of rest and I look forward to seeing you all in 2021. To finish off I thought I would leave you with a quote from the book 'A Christmas Carol' by Charles Dickens.

"It is a fair, even-handed, noble adjustment of things, that while there is infection in disease and sorrow, there is nothing in the world so irresistibly contagious as laughter and good humour."

Best wishes,

Stephen Deadman



We are delighted to share details of our new CAMHS inpatient facility. The first inpatients transferred to The Beacon week commencing 16th November 2020 and have settled in well.

Situated on the Glenfield Hospital site in the heart of Leicester, the purpose-built unit will provide care for young people with acute mental health needs. It has 15 inpatient beds and will enable us to support young people who require hospitalisation for eating disorders in the future.

There are dedicated sensory and treatment rooms, lounge areas, and individual en-suite bedrooms, as well as facilities for the hospital school.



CHARITY EVENTS

Jeans for Genes Day – Friday 18th September

Jeans for Genes Day is all about raising money to help some of the most vulnerable children in the UK. This helps to transform the lives of children affected by a genetic disorder.

At Willow Bank School donations of £2 were made to wear jeans for the day. Thank you to everyone who contributed towards this event, a total of **£46.10** was raised.



MACMILLAN
CANCER SUPPORT

Macmillan Coffee Morning – Friday 25th September

World's Biggest Coffee Morning is Macmillan Cancer Support's biggest fundraising event. Each year, people in the UK and worldwide host their own Coffee Morning. The donations received go towards Macmillan services.

Thank you to Claire Mooney at Willow Bank School for organising this event, a total of **£68.60** was raised.

Thank you to Rachel Scott at The Beacon Unit for organising this event, a total of **£105.13** was raised.



Children in Need funds local charities and projects to help remove the barriers that are facing children and young people, so that they can thrive. The money raised goes to supporting the young people that are the most.

Willow Bank School raised a total of **£60**, thanks to Claire Mooney for organising this event.

GRANTS & SPONSORSHIPS

We have been very fortunate since September to have received several grants and donations enabling us to provide the students with access to opportunities which otherwise may not have been possible.

We would like to thank the following for their generous support of the Children's Hospital School:

Carlton Hayes Mental Health Charity who have given us funding (£2,400) for 3 iPads and wellbeing resources to help the students generally, but in particular during this time of additional stress.

John Lewis who donated £750 towards the Happiness Boxes which means that this project can now be ongoing for current and future students to benefit from. Other companies who have donated in support of the Happiness boxes include Lush (who donated a large volume of bath bombs, shower jellies, soaps and creams), SockShop (who provided a large box of bright bamboo socks), Base Formula and LCFC. We have also received many packs of crisps from CoFresh and chocolate from 'Chocolate and Love' for staff, which has been gratefully accepted.

In addition to the above, the Science department has also received contributions towards making our practical work viable during the pandemic by ensuring that the students have individual sets of practical equipment. These contributions have included £200 from the Royal College of Chemistry and £330 from Waitrose. We have also recently heard that the Royal Institution STEM grants have awarded us funding to run 2 Drone Days in March 2021 for students in KS3 and year 10. Something to look forward to in the New Year!

We have more applications in the pipeline and are keeping our fingers crossed for good news soon.

Dr Elizabeth Hope
Lead teacher in Science



SENSORY HAPPINESS BOXES

What makes you happy?

When you feel sad, it is often doing something that makes you happy that takes away that sadness.

The Happiness Box is a visible and tangible way of creating what inner strength may look like; it enables you to practice and rehearse strategies that help you cope with your emotions, resolve inner conflict, and bring you to a calm emotional state.

In the box, you can see and physically touch the items, which helps soothe your mind.



Children's Hospital School

*****COMING SOON*****

NEW FOREST SCHOOL AREA AT WILLOWBANK!!!

This term we started preparing an area to designate for FOREST SCHOOLS.....

Can you find it?

It's got 3 large plum trees on it...it's behind the guinea pig outdoor run and the compost area..... next to the badger sett!!!!



😞 Any ideas???



I (Miss Kerry Whiteley) have started my Level 3 Forest School Leader Course this term and will be fully qualified next year.....so watch this space!

So far students in our Gardening groups have helped clear the area and to design the plot.

We hope to include a seating area, fire pit, tarpaulin area, log store and low rope area!

Very soon the space will be screened off with lovely bamboo screening...can't wait it's so exciting!

Thanks to James Stafford and his Scout group who were able to donate some super tree stumps to sit on and pallets to build things with.

Check out our 2 new pallet compost bins....

They're awesome!!!!



Also big shout out to Willow Bank staff, Loughborough Climbing Centre and also Leicester Climbing Centre 'The Tower', who donated lots of their old climbing rope for us to use.

Check out our knot tying very soon folks!!



Any ideas what this knot is called?????

and lastly

*****HOT OFF THE PRESS*****

Just this Friday, 27th November, we found out our 'Food For Life Small Grants Bid' was successful. YAY!

We will soon have £150 to fund the cooking area of our Forest School site and hope to buy lots of equipment to enable students to experience the wonderfulness of outdoor cooking and eating.

Here's to making tea, marshmallows and soup very soon!!!



Children's Hospital School

LRI TEAM UHL STAR BADGE

The LRI team have each been awarded a Team UHL Star Badge in recognition of their dedication and hard work over the last year.

Danny Riley, LRI Lead Teacher said: 'The team have worked tirelessly, in difficult circumstances, to ensure that the most vulnerable of students get the support and help they need. It is a privilege to work alongside NHS staff and be considered an important part of their team.'



HALLOWEEN

Thanks to Andrea Wood for the below pictures of pumpkins that were decorated in the Learning Suite and a Halloween cat created by one of our Willow Bank students.



THANKSGIVING

Mrs Handford presented an assembly on Thursday 26th November to all students sharing about the American holiday, Thanksgiving. Many people are not aware of the history of the holiday or why it is celebrated. It dates to 1621 when the early settlers in North America landed at Plymouth Rock arriving on the Mayflower. After surviving their first brutal winter, they held a celebration feast after their first harvest to thank God for their blessings. It was informally celebrated throughout the years until the American President, Abraham Lincoln, set it as a national holiday. According to the Thanksgiving Proclamation set forth by Abraham Lincoln in 1863, "I do therefore invite my fellow citizens in every part of the United States...to set apart...a day of Thanksgiving and Praise to our beneficent Father who dwelleth in the Heavens." Ever since that proclamation, Americans gather on the 4th Thursday of November with family and friends to share a meal together and count their blessings. Regularly practicing gratitude has proven benefits to one's overall health and wellbeing and students were encouraged to consider what they are thankful for.

The Benefits of Gratitude



What are YOU Thankful For?



Children's Hospital School



One of the biggest barriers to getting back into education for adults is how to pay course fees.

Adults who **earn up to £17,004** each year are able to benefit from **free adult courses*** subject to eligibility.

You can choose to study a wide range of full and part-time courses** without having to pay any tuition fees.

This means you could potentially **save thousands of pounds.**

To be eligible for free adult courses you must:

- be 19 or older, and
- be in full or part-time employment and earn less than £17,004 a year (you will need to provide wage slips or your last self-assessment form to evidence this), and
- want to study a pre-entry, entry, level 1 or level 2*** course.

Many courses are also free for people in receipt of certain benefits, including Job Seekers Allowance, Universal Credit and Employment and Support Allowance.

If you are unsure about your eligibility take a look at our fee disclaimers or contact us.

You can choose to study more than one part-time course a year if you want to and it doesn't matter whether you already have higher qualifications, so long as you are applying to study something different.

Courses are available in a wide range of subjects

You may also be interested in our level 2 distance learning courses, which are all free to anyone who is 19 or older.

* You must be 19 or older on 31 August 2020. Tuition fees remission is subject to eligibility criteria. If you are unsure about whether you are eligible, or if remission is available on the course you are interested in please **contact us for advice, 0116 224 2240** or see full details of our course fee disclaimers.

**We have tried to list courses which are eligible for funding, but there are occasionally anomalies. Please check individual courses for details.

***A full level 2 qualification is equivalent to five or more GCSEs at grade 9 to 4.

To find out more visit:

<https://leicestercollege.ac.uk/study/free-adult-courses/>

WELLBEING WEDNESDAY

Firstly, thank you for all that you do to support your child and us as a school in providing the best education for them, at what is sometimes a difficult time. Each week on a Wednesday we will be sharing some ways to support your child's wellbeing. You may find the suggestion useful for the whole family.

Supporting your child during coronavirus: If your child feels worried or anxious, our conversation starters are then a good starting point to talk about these feelings and worries.

James Stafford
Assistant Head Teacher

GENERAL

How are you feeling?

What do you want to talk about?

What was the best and worst bit of your day?

If you could start today again, what would you do differently?

What did you do today that you are most proud of?

SERIOUS

What was the biggest problem you had today?

Do you want to talk about what's going on?

How can I support you through (issue)?

Is there anything that you need from me? Space, time to talk, time to do something fun

FUN

What's your favourite song at the moment? Would I like it?

If you were an animal which one would you be?

If your life was a movie which one would it be?

What's your favourite thing about school and why?

If an alien had landed in your class today, what would you have been embarrassed for them to see?

You're the leading expert when it comes to your child. You can tell when they aren't in the mood to talk, or when they aren't responding to your attempts. Reassure them that if they don't want to talk now, they can talk to you at any time. You can also follow up conversations with encouragers:

ENCOURAGERS

I love you, nothing can ever change that.

You can talk to me, I'm here for you.

If you need to talk to someone else, that's okay too.

If you talk to me about what is worrying you, I can do my best to help.

Even if I don't understand, know that I want to.

We're going to get through this together.

If you are concerned about anything that has come up in a conversation, try your best to tell them how you see things, and be clear about any actions you are going to take. Try to provide comfort and reassurance. If you need help or support, please contact our parents helpline, Young Minds 0808 802 5544, youngminds.org.uk, Mon-Fri 9.30am – 4pm





CHRISTMAS TREE DONATION

A big thank you to Hawgrip Plant Centre & Nursery in Enderby



FREE SCHOOL MEALS

Your children may be eligible for free school meals if you receive:

- income support
- income-based jobseekers allowance
- income-related employment and support allowance
- national asylum seeker support
- child tax credit (providing you're not also entitled to working tax credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- the guaranteed element of state pension credit
- working tax credit run-on – paid for four weeks after you stop qualifying for working tax credit

Applying could also help your school get extra funding through the Government's Pupil Premium scheme.

Visit: <https://freeschoolmeals.leicester.gov.uk/>

NEW STAFF AUTUMN 2020

Welcome

Cate Moss – Office Manager, Willow Bank School
Michelle Poynton – Administrative Assistant,
Willow Bank School
Pihla Gross – Inclusion Support Worker, The
Beacon Unit

TERM DATES

Autumn Term 2020

School closes: Friday 18th December 2020

Spring Term 2021

School opens: Tuesday 5th January 2021

Half term break: Monday 15th February to
Friday 19th February 2021

School closes: Friday 26th March 2021

Summer Term 2021

School opens: Monday 12th April 2021

May Day Bank Holiday: Monday 3rd May 2021

Half term break: Monday 31st May to Friday
4th June 2021

School closes: Friday 9th July 2021

Menu

Traditional Christmas Lunch

Wednesday 16th December

Roast Turkey with all the
Trimmings

Home-made Stuffing
Pigs in Blankets
Rich Turkey Gravy
Selection of Vegetables

Vegetarian /Vegan Butternut
Squash & Spinach Roulade

With Festive Vegetables

Traditional Christmas Pudding
Or Flaky Apple Streudel

All meat is UK Farm Assured



and finally

We wish you a merry Christmas and a happy new year

