



Children's Hospital School

'Better Together'

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March 2023 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, The Magpie Learning Centre, Leicester Royal Infirmary and The Beacon Unit.

Dear Parents/Carers

As we approach the Easter break I want to pass on my thanks for the support you have given the school this last term. We are busier than we have ever been, with student numbers at an all-time high across each school base. Without the support of families, staff and other agencies we would not be able to provide the high level of care we aim for.

Despite the pressures, our staff continue to go above and beyond in providing such an enriching curriculum. In addition to the academic curriculum, there is a very comprehensive offer beyond that including arts, music, sport and Duke of Edinburgh to name but a few. Some staff even organised an evening visit to see An Inspector Calls at the theatre with students and families attending.

When our young people are ready to leave, the staff across all bases work closely with other provisions to ensure a smooth transition. It has been really great to see lots of students successfully return to their home school or onto a new placement. Our outreach work to support other organisations also continues to grow and we have now trained over 100 professionals in mental health support.

Our Year 11 students are getting closer to the exam period and staff have provided some detailed revision plans to support during this time. There is information on the website but please contact subject teachers if you'd like any specific information or advice. We know it can be an anxious time, but staff are working hard to help students be at their best.

After Easter we have a new teacher, Roxanne Steane joining the team based at the Leicester Royal Infirmary. We hope to have another teaching assistant joining the Magpie Learning Centre by May.

Like me, you've probably had enough of the wet weather and are looking forward to summer. I hope you all have a restful break and can enjoy the longer and (hopefully) warmer days. We return to school on Monday 17th April.

Best wishes,

Stephen Deadman



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COMIC RELIEF

It was Comic Relief on the 17th March, staff at Willow Bank School paid to come in non-uniform, and **£37** was raised.



LEICESTER ROCK CHOIR DONATION

Thank you to the Leicester Rock Choir for raising **£332.82**, by holding a cake sale.

BOUNCEBACK FITNESS PROJECT



11-16 Bounceback Fitness Project

We are providing bounceback project sessions for young people with mild to moderate mental health illness. We can help with weekly 45 minute sessions aimed at encouraging physical activity & wellbeing as well as coping strategies. We will be offering the following;

Small group sessions – 10 spaces available
Mondays 3.45pm – 4.30pm

121 after school sessions available Monday –
Friday, please contact for session time.

For more information contact us on 0116 277
9190 or healthhub@eyresmonsellcyp.co.uk



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PARENT SUPPORT GROUP

We would like to tell you about our parent/carer support meetings we are planning to run in the summer term. The aim of these meetings is to provide support for the parents and carers of our students, where we discuss topics that are related to looking after young people with mental health and/or medical needs. These meetings are by no means mandatory but are meant to be extra support should you wish to attend. We would like to try and return to face-to-face meetings for these sessions, which will take place at our Willow Bank School site.

We would also like to offer parents the opportunity to come in for a less structured support session with myself and Emma Compton, Assistant SENCO and Art Therapist, to give parents the opportunity to discuss any concerns or ask questions regarding mental health and wellbeing and have time to chat with other parents going through similar difficulties with their young people. Our upcoming meeting dates are as follows:

Friday 21st April @ 2:00pm

Coffee & Chat with Micki Handford & Emma Compton

Thursday 27th April @ 1:00pm

Understanding Self-Harm with Lorraine Biddle, Teaching Lead at The Beacon Inpatient Unit (and or Teams if requested)

Wednesday 10th May @ 9.30am

Family Support & Supporting young people with managing stress (and or Teams if requested)

Friday 19th May @ 2:00pm

Coffee & Chat with Emma & Micki

If requested, we can make the meeting on 27th April both face-to-face and with an online Teams option should some parents not be able to make it in person. Please email the office at WAdmin@childrenshospitalschool.leicester.sc.h.uk if you require a link to access that meeting.

We are here to help you and your family to offer support and advice if needed at any time, so please do not hesitate to contact us with any queries or concerns you have. We look forward to meeting with you.

Micki Handford

Pastoral Manager

MORE NEWS FROM WILLOW BANK SCHOOL

VALENTINE DAY CUPCAKES

In cooking lessons, the students made some Valentine Day cupcakes and a cookie cake.



NATIONAL CAREERS WEEK

For National Careers Week, on Thursday 9th March, Leicestershire Cares organised an employability event for our students, which was a great success. Students listened to business volunteers talk about their careers and they gave the students some valuable advice. This was followed with mock interviews. The students did amazingly well and feedback from the volunteers was extremely positive. All the students that took part in the event should be extremely proud of themselves.

MOTHER'S DAY BAKING

Students at Willow Bank School baked some cakes for Mother's Day.



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MORE NEWS FROM WILLOW BANK SCHOOL

ST PATRICK'S DAY

Willow Bank School celebrated St Patrick's Day. Our fantastic chef made a cake and Irish potato farls.



WINTER SCENES

Our poor snowman at Willow Bank School was so unprepared for the inclement weather, no hat and no scarf!!



8 YEARS AT THE SCHOOL

On February 17th 8 years ago, I joined The Children's Hospital School as Head. It's been (and continues to be) a wonderful experience working at a great school, with inspirational staff, making a difference to young people with medical needs. Who knows where the next 8 years will take me?

Stephen Deadman
Head Teacher



WORLD BOOK DAY

Our amazing staff at Willow Bank School supported World Book Day. Some great outfits this year!!



WORLD
**BOOK
DAY**



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NEWS FROM THE MAGPIE LEARNING CENTRE

It's been a busy term here at The Magpie. Our garden has really taken a spring turn and we've been baking tasty delights. We've also had the joy of having many outside companies working with us! Thanks to Soft Touch, Sports Cool, Messy Senses and Kay Hewitt for their wonderful activities.

Kerry and Chris have been working their green finger magic in the garden getting it ready for spring. We've had some logs delivered for a seating area and many plants have been planted – potatoes, ginger, asparagus, dahlias, and strawberries! Spring has well and truly sprung, the garden is littered with beautiful yellow daffodils. Kerry has also sourced some frog spawn and dragonfly nymph to introduce to our newly installed pond.

As always, the students have been baking up a storm in the kitchen. We've made Welsh cakes for St David's Day – which went down a treat with staff and students. Blueberry muffins were also a winner and of course, so were mini egg brownies. The kitchen is always smelling of delicious, sweet treats.

We have been very lucky to have lots of lovely outside companies wanting to come in and offer various activities to our students. We had Lewis and Matt from Sports Cool come in and lead an Archery Session. We are also enjoying yoga on a Friday afternoon lead by Kay Hewitt. Students and staff join in for a slow paced, 45 minutes of relaxation and meditation. All the students love it and feel very chilled afterwards.

To finish off their time with Soft Touch, the students wrote their own 2 songs and went to the Soft Touch Studio to record them. The studio is a lovely centre off New Walk, offering cooking, arts, music and various other creative activities for those in Leicester. The students went into their music studio and with help of the staff at Soft Touch managed to record their 2 own songs. Look out for their singles to be next number one.

We also celebrated world book day. Susan was a Wonka ticket from Charlie and the Chocolate Factory, Charlie was Batman and Amy was Amy the Amethyst Fairy from the Rainbow Magic books. Thanks to Mr Danaher for the quiz.

On top of this we even managed to squeeze in a snow day. The students took to the garden to make snow angels, throw snowballs and of course, made a snowman! Working all together, they built quite the impressive snowman.



NEWS FROM THE LRI

WORLD BOOK DAY

On Thursday 2nd March, students at the LRI celebrated World Book Day. Hospital staff and children loved seeing our teachers dressed as book characters. Can you guess who we are?

Throughout the day, our students took part in lots of book related activities including creating Supertato from a potato! We celebrated our student's work on Twitter and were delighted to see that Sue Hendra, the illustrator from Supertato, thanked us for sharing and thought our potatoes were wonderful!



VISIT TO THE CLASSROOM

During the week we had a little friend visit the classroom called Bobby who was bonkers about books! He found his way into lots of our books. I wonder if you can guess the titles.



LEICESTER READATHON

Lots of our students also took part in the Leicester Readathon. We were lucky enough to have Wilf the Storyteller visit us on the wards. Such big smiles brought on by stories. Our students travelled around the world without even leaving their beds! Here are some of our parents' feedback.

Over two weeks our students read over 1,600 minutes. What an achievement!

Overview



1,660 minutes read so far!

Hooray! We did it! Thanks to everyone's hard work, we reached our target.



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MOTHER'S DAY

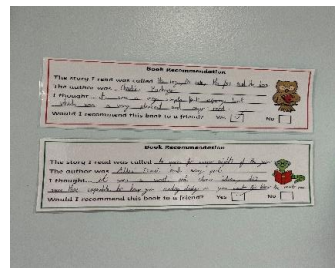
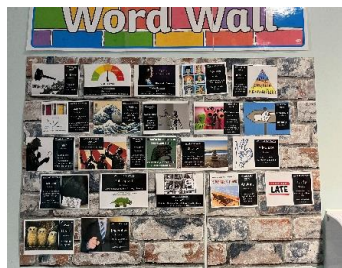
For Mother's Day our young people followed an online tutorial by Create Art School, where they created these beautiful images using acrylic paint. These images were then scanned and transferred onto cards, this was a popular activity, and we were extremely impressed with the result.



LANGUAGE SKILLS AND READATHON

In all our lessons we consistently explore and build on our language skills. We promote this in many ways, one way is through our word of the week wall.

Also, we have been promoting reading this month in our Readathon, ran by Read for Good. The young people have tracked the amount of time they have dedicated to reading their favourite books and novels that they are studying in their English lessons. Once the young people have finished their book we ask them to leave a recommendation as a suggestion for others. Read For Good have kindly donated a box of new books with a variety of genres to suit all, which is amazing!



ARTS AWARD

It's been a productive month at the Beacon. In Art our young people continue to work towards their Arts Awards. This acrylic painting on canvas was created by one of our young people who really challenged themselves in learning a new skill. What a beautiful piece of art!



Welcome to our Spring Term update of news from the Children's Hospital School Governing Body, the purpose of which is to keep parents informed of some of the activities of the school governing body.

Governors have continued to visit the school over the course of the Spring Term.

A 'Getting to Know' visit took place at The Beacon as well as a number of monitoring visits across the school bases:

- Intervention and Transition at the Magpie Learning Centre
- Reading
- Health & Safety
- Safeguarding
- Teaching and Learning at the LRI

Visits provide the opportunity to monitor key areas of the school, meet staff and students and bring into context information and reports shared at meetings.

Monitoring

Some of the key areas looked at this term included:

- Individual Health Care Plans – the way in which they are used in the school to support the needs of students, and how the school supports other stakeholders with this.
- Presentation from Paul Gibson, Leader Teacher of English, on the outcomes and impact of the English peer review which took place in October.
- Film Studies presentation from Steve Pepper (Film/Drama teacher) focusing on the GCSE curriculum, teaching and learning and assessment.
- Presentation from Nikki Cole (Head of Magpie Learning Centre) on the provision offered at the Magpie for early intervention placements including curriculum, student experience, transitions and progress made since it's opening in August 2022.
- The Headteacher's Report from the Spring term was discussed, including the PE and Sports Premium, updates from each Base, an overview of the outcomes from the work scrutiny which took place across the school in February and an update on referral data this academic year.
- An update on the School Improvement Plan, including the progress made towards the school's objectives.
- Management Accounts discussed and scrutinised by the Finance Committee, including approval of the Schools Financial Values Standard.

Meet the Governor

Nikki is currently the Staff Governor and a member of the Curriculum and Standards Committee. She joined the Governing Body in September 2021.

Nikki teaches Health and Social Care and RSE. She is also currently completing a Post Graduate Certificate in Understanding Domestic and Sexual Violence at The University of Worcester.

Before joining The Children's Hospital School, Nikki was involved in youth work, leading North Warwickshire Young Carers.

Nikki is the link Governor for SEND and Creativity.



There are now only **4 school weeks** remaining until the beginning of the GCSE exams. Students should have received their **revision guide, revision planner and revision bag** (full of goodies to help with their revision!)

Exam packs have been sent home which contain a statement of entry and individual timetable. It is important to look through these and ensure all information is correct. A copy of the exam timetable can also be found in the revision guide and on the school website.

The **Easter holiday** is a great opportunity to continue with revision and plan for the remaining weeks leading up to the start of exams. The revision bag contains an Easter booklet with suggested activities to complete. It is also important to have some **relaxation time and fun!**

REVISION TIPS



**Eat healthy snacks
and drink lots of
water.**



Declutter your study



**Make a timetable
but be flexible.**

**Think confident &
feel good about
yourself!**



**Sleep well and
avoid late nights.**



TRIPS UPDATE

SOFT TOUCH

This term, students from the Magpie have been taking part in a music project led by Soft Touch Arts. They have had the opportunity to learn the guitar, bass, drums and keyboard and we have had a brilliant time learning hits from the past chosen by teachers and modern tracks chosen by students.

The students even wrote two of their own songs and went to record them at the Soft Touch Studio on New Walk. Listen out for radio-play for our upcoming single: 'Space'.



CURVE THEATRE - AN INSPECTOR CALLS

On 23rd March 2023 there was a trip to Curve Theatre to see a production of the play An Inspector Calls, as part of the GCSE English Literature curriculum.

This was a brilliant opportunity for students to see the play as Priestley intended and it helped to develop their knowledge and understanding of it in preparation for the Literature exam.



BROOKSBY CAMPUS VISIT

On Tuesday 14th March, a selection of year 11 students, interested in animal care, visited Brooksby College for a campus tour.



INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

SMILE FOR KIDS SATURDAYS

Saffron Lane Dental Practice, are proud to announce that they are now accepting new children under the age of 18.

We understand the high demand for an NHS dentist at the moment and wanted to let all parents/carers know that they are accepting new children.

You can contact them in practice or via phone on (0116 2832612)

They are also offering Saturday appointments to work around school times.

Address: 591 Saffron Lane, Leicester, LE2 6UN.



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ONLINE SAFETY

Keep your child safe on TikTok



What is it?

A video-sharing app that's very popular with children and teenagers. You lip-sync to music or do comedy sketches, and can add effects to your videos. You can also gain followers ('fans') and watch other people's videos.

The age recommendation is **13 and above**, but it's easy for younger children to sign up too.

What are the main things to watch out for?

- Sexual lyrics and swearing in songs
- Content about eating disorders (known as 'pro-ana') and bullying
- 'Challenges' that users take part in that are potentially dangerous
- Emojis that are seen as sexually suggestive, like the aubergine

Under-16s can't send or receive private messages. But once users have made contact, like through comments on videos, they could still switch to another app like Snapchat to chat privately and swap images and videos.

7 steps to keep your child safe

Full details can be found on our school webpage for Online Safety

1. Use family pairing (also known as family safety mode)
2. Keep their account set to private and limit profile information
3. Set age limits so your child doesn't see inappropriate content
4. Consider setting a time limit on use
5. Restrict in-app purchases to block spending
6. Check settings on interactions like duets, direct messages and comments
7. Make sure your child knows how to report content and users

FREE ONLINE PARENTING COURSES

We are delighted to announce that a range of free online parenting courses are available for all residents of Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland from today.

The Solihull Approach courses cover concerns that parents often face with children, from before they are born to early adulthood, including physical and mental health, understanding their feelings and how to build better relationships.

The courses include the same content as you would receive in a typical face-to-face parenting group run by health visitors. They are available in 108 languages, with voiceovers in English and Urdu. Each course has a number of different components, and they can be accessed at any time and any place.

The courses include:

- Understanding pregnancy, labour, birth and your baby
- Understanding your baby
- Understanding your child - 0-19 years
- Understanding your child with additional needs
- Understanding the impact of the pandemic on your teenager
- Understanding your teenager's brain
- Understanding your brain
- Understanding your child's feelings
- Understanding your child's mental health and wellbeing
- Understanding your relationships
- *Further courses are currently in development, including a specific course for supporting children and young people with possible neurodevelopmental conditions.*

All courses are free to access for anyone with an LLR postcode – it just requires users to create an account to access them – and they are available for the next two years. More details, including how to register and access the courses, are available at: <https://solihullapproachparenting.com/online-courses-leicestershire>

For more information please see: <https://www.leicspart.nhs.uk/news/new-free-online-courses-for-parents-in-leicester-leicestershire-and-rutland/>



INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

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>
[Free School Meals | Leicestershire County Council](#)

CONTACTS SHOULD YOU NEED ASSISTANCE

Urgent contacts for Early Help and Prevention and Children's Social Care

Leicester City Council – 0116 4541004

Leicestershire County Council – 0116 3050005

Rutland County Council – 01572 758407

TERM DATES 2022-23

Spring Term 2023

Last day of Spring term: Friday 31st March 2023
Easter Holiday: 3rd April to 14th April 2023

Summer Term 2023

Start of term for pupils: Monday 17th April 2023
May Bank Holiday: Monday 1st May 2023
Extra May Bank Holiday: Monday 8th May 2023
Half term holiday: 29th May to 2nd June 2023
Last day of Summer term: Friday 14th July 2023



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