



# Family Liaison Worker News

July 2024

Dear Parents and Carers,

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your commitment and support over this last year. It has been wonderful working with you all. For those families who are leaving The Willows and starting a new chapter in their educational life, I would like to wish you all the very best for the future and for those families who are remaining with us for the new academic year, I look forward to continuing to work alongside you and your families. I hope that you all have a wonderful summer's break and that you look after yourselves.

*Debbie Downie*

## School Holidays

It is lovely to spend time with your child, however do the school holidays bring you joy or does it give you a sense of anxiety? Are you asking yourself "How am I going to entertain my child for the whole summer?"

For some of you without the structure of school and the natural daily routines, life at home could become difficult. Bedtimes could extend into the late hours; you may have to battle with personal hygiene and screen time could become more of an issue. Does this sound familiar?

As much as we want our children to have fun, it is still important to maintain some kind of routine throughout the summer. Routines are important to them as they know what to expect and this gives them the security of knowing what comes next. This in turn can help to stop those power struggles at home taking place, therefore encouraging a happier summer for everyone!

Here are a few ideas for creating a sense of routine within your home in the summer holiday:

- Sit down with your family at the start of the summer holidays and create a "Summer Bucket List" this would enable your children to have a voice in deciding what they would like to do. It also gives them something to look forward to and a timeline to know what to expect.
- Maintain morning and evening routines especially if your children need the structure to avoid meltdowns. Whilst you can let the children sleep in, plan some set times for brushing teeth, bathing, meals, reading, outdoor play, screen time, television, bed time and any other activities. Older children may benefit from having such tasks presented as a checklist.
- Create a visual schedule and maybe for your younger children turn this into a creative activity where they can cut out or draw pictures of activities such as: cleaning teeth, screen time, bed time and at this stage if you have not already, maybe introduce some chore time!
- Try to maintain a consistent bed time routine. Even though there is no school the next day, your children still need to sleep! And helping your child to wind down after the day's events can be a good time to check in with them, talk about their favourite part of the day or what they love most about the summer holidays.



### Summer Holiday Activities and Food programme (HAF)

Through the HAF programme of healthy food and fun activities, children and young people can develop new skills, take part in creative and physical activities, learn about food and cooking, and enjoy free nutritious meals each day.

The holiday programme is open to school-aged children from reception to year 11 (inclusive) who are educated, live or under local authority care in Hillingdon and receive benefits-related free school meals.

Please click on the link below to see what the HAF programme has to offer.

[Summer HAF programme - Hillingdon Council](#)

### Foodbanks

The food bank network helps people break free from poverty by providing additional support to help people resolve the crises they're facing so that they don't need to use a food bank again in the future. This could include things like debt advice, mental health support, or benefits guidance. Food banks rely on the support of their local communities to support people in crisis. Find your nearest food bank [here](#).

### Coffee Mornings to resume in September 2024

Coffee mornings are a great way to get to know your school, meet other parents, gain support with your child's learning, get some parenting advice and eat cake!

Look out for the flyers which will tell you the date, time and focus for the first session and further sessions to follow. Virtual sessions available.

Watch this space!

### Relaunch of our PTA Friends and Family of The Willows

Our current PTA need new parents/carers to join our existing team for September 2024.

The Parents Association supports the school with various events throughout the year including special fundraising events and school enrichment activities.

The support of our wonderful parents/carers is fundamental for the school being able to offer exciting experiences for our children.

If you are interested please email:

[office@willows.hillingdon.sch.uk](mailto:office@willows.hillingdon.sch.uk) or call and

speak to Mrs Downie on: 0208 841 7176

LET'S START SEPTEMBER WITH A BANG!!

### Cost of Living

With money feeling tighter thanks to the cost-of-living crisis, ***please click on the link below*** to see a handy guide to places that let children eat for free or just £1.00 over the summer school holidays. Hopefully this will help to make eating out as a family easier and more affordable.

<https://www.squaremeal.co.uk/restaurants/best-for/where-do-kids-eat-for-free-in-london-and-the-uk>

### Summer Reading Challenge 2024

This summer, children aged 4 to 11-years-old will be invited to fire up their imaginations and unleash storytelling and creativity through the power of reading. From puppets to portrait making, junk modelling to storytelling, there will be events and activities for everyone.

Please click on the link below for this and other events that your children can get involved with.

<http://discover.hillingdon.gov.uk/events>

### MENTAL WELLBEING

Spending time with your children can be fun and it is very important to do so, however, do not forget to prioritise some time for yourselves also.

### National College Online Safety

Support your child with being safe on line. Click on the link below then scroll down to Guides for Parents and Carers – download and read.

<https://nationalcollege.com/categories/online-safety>

### Autumn Term

First Day of Term	Monday 2 <sup>nd</sup> September 2024
Staff only – Inset Day	Tuesday 3 <sup>rd</sup> September 2024
First Day of Term for Students	Wednesday 4 <sup>th</sup> September 2024
Half Term	Monday 28 <sup>th</sup> October 2024 to Friday 1 <sup>st</sup> November 2024
Last Day of Term	Friday 20 <sup>th</sup> December 2024 1.30pm early finish
School Holiday Dates	Monday 23 <sup>rd</sup> December 2024 to Friday 3 <sup>rd</sup> January 2025