

NEWSLETTER

Compass
Special
Schools



Welcome to the last newsletter of the year. And what a year it has been! Hopefully by now you will have received my end-of-year briefing with more detail about all our news and updates. We are writing this in the last few days of term as we are saying goodbye to our leavers. The last two weeks has been a whirl of transitions, leavers celebrations and emotional goodbyes. Everyone who is moving on both within Willow Dene and outside has completed a visit to their new setting. This year is the first year that we have had Year 14s to say goodbye to. We had our first ever Prom with our leavers looking amazing in their finery! This was followed by a leavers celebration in school that was full of love and memories. We are looking forward to hearing what happens next in their adult lives.

Since our last newsletter we received our feedback about why we were not the chosen provider for the Transition Learning Centre in Greenwich. It appears that it was a very close competition between Compass Eko and the successful candidate. The defining point between us was that we are not already providing post-19 education and instead had to rely on our knowledge of sixth form and our aspirations. The process has fueled our motivation to be post-19 providers at some point, so watch this space! We are beginning with our Launch 19 pilot which will take place next year, initially for 1 year only. We will work for Greenwich to deliver bespoke individual plans designed to be a bridge to a purposeful adult life for some of our year 14 leavers. Look out for much more detail coming soon.

We have been very excited to be able to get into Rowan Wood School and share the new building with children and parents. The feedback has been overwhelmingly positive and one of the highlights of the year. Our Rowan Wood classes have been busy packing up and unpacking in their new classrooms this week. By the time term finishes, they will be largely set up and ready for children. Both schools will have their Inset days together in September, sharing the training.



This half term has been full of events we have shared with you. Your enthusiasm and presence for all of them has been greatly appreciated. All of the leavers celebrations, sports day, the community fun day, sibling events and annual reviews have

all happened in quick succession. Your commitment, positivity and enormous support for the children and for Willow Dene has never diminished. You are all greatly appreciated and we would like to thank each and every one of you.



This year we delivered 8 school journeys or sleepovers. They have all been hugely successful. It is a privilege to have your children overnight, and especially when some have not stayed away from home before. Trying to get the right experience for all children when we are a growing school with so much demand is a challenge but we are grateful for all your feedback and engagement which guides us.

As always, at the end of the year we are saying goodbye to a small number of our team who are moving on to new adventures. This year we are saying goodbye to Alice and Ryan Russell who have been part of our teaching team for quite some time. We wish them luck in their new Australian life.

Pauline McDonald and Debbie McLoone are both retiring, having been much loved Senior Teaching Assistants working at Willow Dene for 20 years plus. We are hoping all those who are moving on will stay in touch and come and visit.

We also end the year, remembering those members of our school community who are no longer with us. After a very sad year last year when we experienced the deaths of several children and young people and members of our staff team, this has been a year of anniversary, memory and reflection. No one is ever forgotten and family and friends remain connected to our school community.

We are looking forward to so much in 2026/2027! We can't wait to welcome and get to know our new starters and their families, watch the Rowan Wood community settle in and welcome our Rowan Wood primary groups in November and to get started on a fresh year of learning, friendship and fun. Our holiday play scheme will be running for the first two weeks of the holiday and I am sure we will see many of you there.

Don't forget the school emergency phone will be available if you need to talk to someone during the holiday:

18th July – 14th August 07716 388634 Rachel

15th August – 31st August 07857 502859 Katie

You can leave a message or text and a leader will call you back.

All that remains is to wish you a happy and safe holiday. Thank you again for all your support and positivity, without you we would not be able to do what we do. We will see you in September ready for another exciting year. **Rachel**

Willow Dene School Leavers Events 2026

This year we had a whopping forty-eight year 6 leavers, eleven year 11 leavers and fourteen year 14 leavers, that we celebrated in a week of events.

On Wednesday we said goodbye to our year 6 leavers with a ceremony that saw the hall decorated in royal blue helium balloons and the children got to walk down the blue carpet feeling like VIP's.

There was a presentation for each child, where pictures were shown of their primary Willow Dene journey.

Early evening on Wednesday, we hosted our Alumni event, where we invited past families to come back to the school and enjoy some refreshments and cake. The party was very well attended, and we had a lot of fun catching up on all they have been up to.

On Thursday morning we celebrated our year 11 leavers with their own ceremony and photos of their time at Willow Dene secondary school. Again, the room was decorated with balloons, and we announced all the wonderful AQA achievements that they have achieved.

Thursday evening saw our first even year 14 prom, where our young people, their families and members of the school team dressed up and had a beautiful party, filled with lights, music and balloons, at Penelope's in Sidcup. Everyone looked amazing and we danced the night away!

Friday morning saw our first year 14 leavers ceremony, which turned out to be a very emotional event. Some of our young people have been with us from nursery, and some have joined along the way. We enjoyed looking back at how far they have come, the amazing journey they have travelled and the incredible young people they have become.

Each of our leavers, whether they were year 6, year 11 or year 14, received a goodie bag containing a yearbook, a glossy photo in a frame and some treats.

On Friday we had one last celebration, with an Italian leavers lunch. Italian flags hung on the walls on the hall, where we had garlic bread, pizza, pasta, ice cream, treats and lemon cookies.

We are so excited to see where our children and young people go next, on to secondary, Sixth Form, college or beyond. We have thoroughly enjoyed and are honoured to be a part of your journey, and we wish you all the best for your future – we know you will be amazing!



NEWS FROM ROWAN WOOD

Monarch Class



Monarch Class have had a wonderful end to the year and have enjoyed all of the activities on offer. Our Summer Celebration Play Day was so much fun, the children particularly enjoyed the gigantic bubbles and circus performer - it provided endless fun and play opportunities for us all!

Last Friday was equally as exciting as Monarch Class took a trip to visit our new school building.

We all enjoyed exploring the new building, seeing the amazing regulation rooms and, of course, enjoying the playground. One member of the class cannot wait for us to move in in September so we can enjoy learning in the DT room!

It has been a wonderful year, filled with fun, laughter and learning. The children have grown in confidence, developed new skills and shown great enthusiasm towards a range of activities over the year. We are incredibly proud of all they have achieved and grateful for the support that has helped make this year so successful. Thank you for being part of such a positive and enjoyable year.



Peacock Class

Over the last few weeks, Peacock Class has been learning about what we can do to protect our planet and help tackle climate change. Inspired by Greta Thunberg's example, we created our own inspirational posters.

In Maths, we continued learning about time, and last week our focus was on recognising o'clock and half-past times. We have practised a lot to ensure that this skill is well established.

In Literacy, we wrote a recount of the story *There Is a Tiger on the Train*. We also discussed the importance of enjoying the present and noticing the amazing things around us. We criticised the boy's dad for being too busy looking at his phone and almost missing all the fun.

In Play and Leisure, we exercised our memory skills by playing the Find the Matching Pair game as a group. We have been trying our best to stay focused and concentrated during the game while also developing our social and interaction skills.

Ivaylo's Special Interest was a highlight of the week, during which we explored sensory trays representing scenes from his favourite nursery rhymes.

Skipper Class

What a fantastic way to end a wonderful year! We had an amazing Sports Day, and the children had so much fun taking part in all the activities, especially the foam party, which was a huge hit! We also enjoyed a very exciting visit to our new school, Rowan Wood. It was wonderful to explore the new building, and everyone is looking forward to starting there in September. Our Play Days were another highlight, with the bouncy castle bringing lots of smiles, laughter, and excitement. It has been a truly successful year filled with learning, growth, and many happy memories. Thank you to all our families for your continued support throughout the year.

We wish everyone a happy, safe, and relaxing summer holiday, and we can't wait to welcome you all to Rowan Wood in September for the start of an exciting new chapter!

Swallowtail Class

Swallowtail have enjoyed a wonderful, if very hot, summer term. We have kept cool by having lots of fun with water play, which the children thoroughly enjoyed.

We also celebrated the Summer Festival, where the children particularly loved the live music and joined in enthusiastically with the festivities.

Sports Day was a great success, with every child trying their very best and taking part with enthusiasm and determination.

Perhaps the most exciting event of all was our visit to our new school, Rowan Wood. The children loved exploring their new surroundings and cannot wait to begin their next adventure in September.

Exceptional Dog Mentor Award 2026 🐾🏆

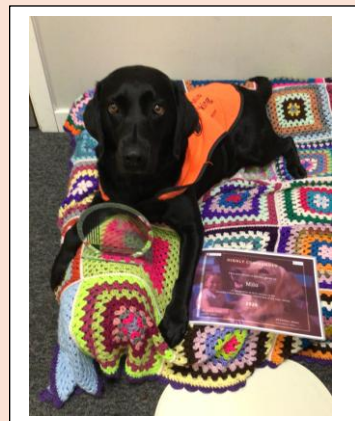
Congratulations to Willow Dene School and Milo, winners of our Exceptional Dog Mentor Award 2026.

This award recognises a Dog Mentor team that consistently goes above and beyond to support children and young people.

The dedication shown by the team at Willow Dene School, alongside Milo's positive impact across the school, has been truly exceptional. Their commitment to supporting pupils, building confidence and creating meaningful opportunities for engagement made them stand out to the judging panel.

A fantastic achievement and a very well-deserved award.

Congratulations to everyone involved, especially Milo!



TES AWARDS

We are proud that Compass Eko was awarded Inclusive Trust of the Year as part of the prestigious TES School Awards 2026.

The Trust's collaborative approach to inclusion, was highly praised, highlighting its close work with families and communities, and its commitment to ensuring no child or young person is overlooked.



IMPORTANT DATES WILLOW DENE SCHOOL

2026/2027

First day of school for children

Friday 4th September 2026

Please note **Badger, Otter and Highland** Classes
will return on

Monday 7th September 2026

due to additional health and safety training

IMPORTANT DATES ROWAN WOOD SCHOOL

2026/2027

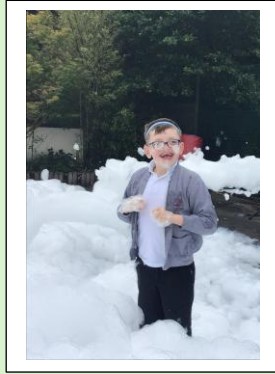
First day for current Year 7 going into Year 8 –

Friday 4th September 2026

First day for new Year 7 –

Monday 7th September 2026

Sparrow Class



Sparrow class have been really busy this term. We had a great sports day and enjoyed the foam pit and playing football!

In Science we have been enjoying learning about plants and mini beasts. We have enjoyed growing beans and watching them grow. We also went on a mini-beast hunt and found lots of ants and bees! We then made wormeries, ready to take home for the worms to live in.

In English we have enjoyed learning about space, using a space poem as inspiration. We have loved dressing up as astronauts and then pretending to go into space using rockets and going underneath the parachutes. We enjoyed visiting Mars and Jupiter.

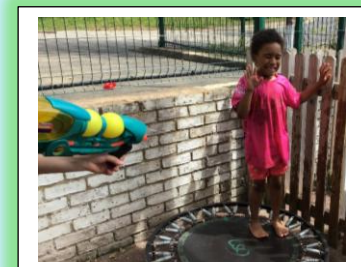
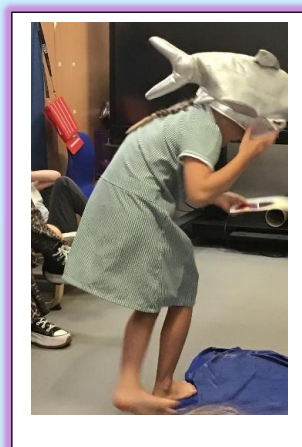
Lapwing Class

Over the last few weeks our topic in Lapwing class has been influenced by the wonderful weather that we have been experiencing. The use of water has featured significantly during our play activities as we have attempted to cool down, and it has provided lots of learning opportunities. We have been developing our physical and mathematical skills during the filling and emptying of containers, pouring and spraying, splashing and paddling. Filling clear jars with items found at the beach, shells, sand, small pebbles and water certainly piqued interest, many children liked shaking the jars to create sounds and watched as items settled at the base.

During creative activity we worked on foil, using our hands or implements with paint to create a seascape and added colourful starfish painted on bubble wrap, with eye catching work created.

Thinking ahead to possible trips away we packed a suitcase with suitable items for the beach while listening to our favourite song 'Come with me to the beach'.

Ice lollies at various times of the week have been enjoyed by pupils and staff. It has been hot but lots of fun has been had by one and all!





GREENWICH SEND VOICE

Parent Carer Forum

**Presents our Summer
SEND FAMILY FUN & INFO DAY
SATURDAY 8th AUG - FREE
10am to 12:30pm**



**Connect with Greenwich
SEND Voice, Royal Borough
of Greenwich SEND Services,
Health Services and Support
Organisations in Greenwich!**

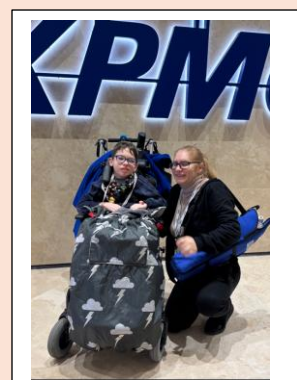
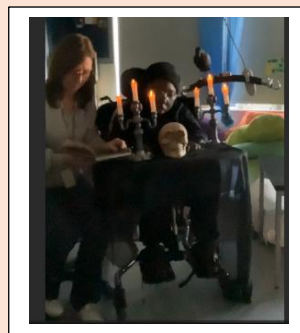
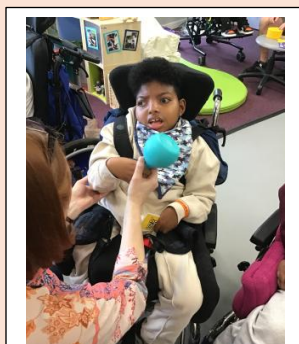
<u>Events & Activities</u>	<u>Location</u>
• Mr Bubble Man • Sensory Space • Giant Games • Arts & Crafts • Face Painting • Soft Play • Head & Neck Massage • Refreshments & more	Woolwich Works, The Fireworks Factory SE18 6HD

ROYAL BOROUGH OF
GREENWICH

NHS Oxleas
NHS Foundation Trust

www.greenwichsendvoice.co.uk
info@greenwichsendvoice.co.uk

WOODLARK CLASS



Most of us in Woodlark are in KS3 and KS4. Our oldest Woodlarks are Jesse and TJ who are both in year 10. This means that this year we have started our accredited learning. Jesse has achieved six AQA units including swimming, physical skills, playing with purpose and communication. TJ has also achieved six AQA units in swimming, art appreciation, eye gaze art and enterprise. We are very proud of them both. They have also taken all the information from their KS3 specialist interest afternoons and used this in their Futures Mapping, which is about where their interests may turn into a vocation in the future. Jesse's love of bricks and blocks turned into a visit to Canary Wharf to see buildings in real life. TJ's love of eye gaze art and design resulted in him leading a mini enterprise project, making and selling syringe holders in aid of Dogs Trust.

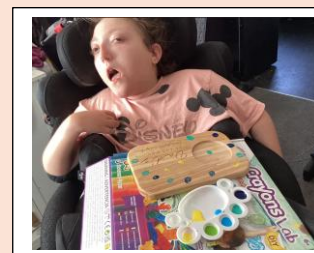
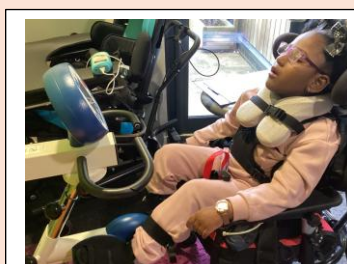
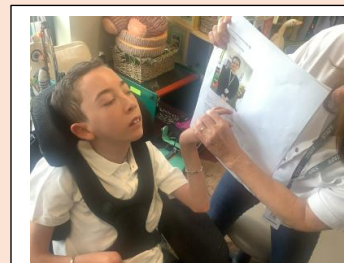
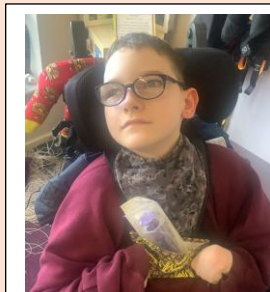
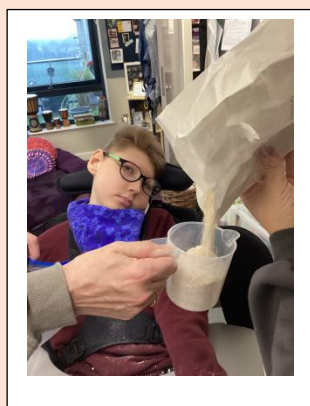
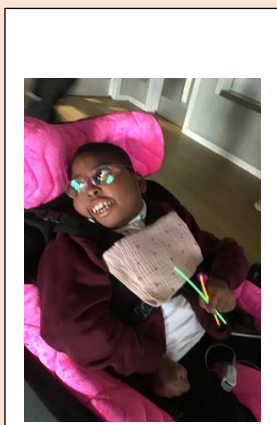
Following in their footsteps are our three year 8's. This year they held their second specialist interest afternoon. This is where we choose something that each child loves or is good at and which is something we can build on to shape their future. Ezra is our actor. Building on his love of drama he made a film acting out the dark and scary fairytale 'The Skull'. He earned rave reviews. Evidas loves dogs. Following on from his puppy yoga in year 7, he held a dog treat cookery class and then enjoyed testing his dog treats on his favourite dogs. Sonny loves to have his say. Following on from his year 7 debating society where he got the whole school talking about whether cats or dogs were better, he held a whodunnit with suspects across the school being interrogated until we found the culprit!

Our three year 7's have held their first specialist interest afternoon. Isabella loves nothing more than a good stretch and opportunity to move around. She invited all her year 7 friends to her disco aerobics class, complete with leg warmers! Mohamed loves any kind of funny noise or sound effect. His year 7 specialist interest afternoon was 'Mohamed's Sound Fest'. This was an afternoon filled with different noises and sounds including a guess the sound game and making up our own sound effect story. Jodie's favourite thing is a lovely massage, helping her body feel relaxed. Jodie held a sensory spa afternoon where her friends got to try different aromatherapy mixes, hand and foot massage and a facial spritz.

Lily-Rose is in year 5. This year she has particularly enjoyed lots of art projects. She made all her own birthday presents for her nan, mum, dad and brother and sister. She loves to get her hands into paint. You can see some of her artwork on the wall in Woodlark class.

D'Naiyah is our youngest Woodlark. After having surgery last year, she has made an epic comeback to cycling. She cycles for 10 – 15 minutes each time, independently travelling between half a mile and two miles per session. Altogether she has travelled 8.16 miles in 2026 which is more than half again of last year's total distance.

We are extremely proud of all our Woodlark's and their unique personalities and strengths.



SPECIAL SCHOOL NURSING NEWSLETTER

Our **Special School Nursing Team** continue to work across the Greenwich and Bexley Special Schools.

The current Team comprises of Nurses, Nursery Nurses, and Health Care Assistants.

STAFFING UPDATE

We are delighted to welcome **Madeleine Bradley** as our new **MATRON** for Special Schools Continence and Continuing Care. We look forward to working with her, as she brings her skills and dedication to this important position. We are confident that her contribution will make a lasting and positive difference to our school, and we are excited for the journey ahead.

We would also like to welcome Paul Mensah our new band 5 Nurse for Special Schools and Staceyann Vasseiana our new band 4 Nursery Nurse for Special Schools.

Sadly, we have had to say goodbye to Heather Lee-Chin, Jill Standing, Grace Setford and Nancy Williams. It has been a privilege to work alongside such a compassionate, dedicated and supportive team. Their commitment to improving the lives of children, young people and their families has truly been inspiring. We wish them all continued success and happiness in their future endeavour's

Nursing continues to provide many services including: Phlebotomy, continence advice, annual nursing reviews, weights and heights, support for parents/carers and pupils, health assessments, health promotion, devising and updating care plans and hospital passports, safeguarding, collaborate working with education, allied health professionals, and parents/carers.

The Special School Nursing Team support with sharing hospital passports for 14yrs to 18yrs as to ensure that hospital visits and any transition to hospital is effective.

To continue to maintain nursing standards, we are making good use of our new purpose-built training simulation suite at our Goldie Leigh base, to ensure the highest training standards are achieved and maintained for all our staff and parents alike.

CONTINENCE

Here are the contact details for any of our families with children/young people who use continence products, or require help or advice with continence:

Parent contact number for the continence service: 0800 030 4466

Email address: oxl-tr.cypcontinence.inclusion@nhs.net

MEDICATION

As it is the end of the summer term, we are sending home your child/young person's unused medication, including any emergency medication.

Please ensure that all medication is returned to school at the start of the new term and that it is in date. If any medication has expired, please contact your GP to obtain a new prescription before returning it to school.

We would also like to remind parents/carers to check that the pharmacy label is correct and up to date, and that this is supported by secondary evidence if not issued by the GP. If this is not available, a supporting clinic letter or discharge summary should be provided along with any specialist plans.

Please expect a follow up call from our team to confirm you have received any of your child's-controlled drugs.

Please be aware that any medications prescribed to be administered three times a day should **NOT** be sent into school, as these can be given at home i.e., Morning, after school and bedtime. Only medications that are prescribed to be given four times a day should be sent in to school. The exception would be if the prescription label specifies an actual time for a medication to be administered that falls during school hours.

HOSPITAL PASSPORTS

Please can parents/guardians of all young people over the age of 14yrs ensure that the information is correct on their hospital passport, and that it is shared with nursing. If your young person's hospital passport requires updating, please email Nursing on: - oxl-tr.cypinclusionteam@nhs.net

Nursing have been reviewing the supply of enteral syringes for those pupils that are on the list to receive them, in line with what our service users have said about sustainability.

Enteral syringe deliveries will now be received every four months and the amount your child/your person receives will be in line with their individual care needs.

If you feel your child/young person's needs require more than the allocated number of syringes, please email oxl-tr.cypinclusionteam@nhs.net

If you receive Disability Living Allowance this can also be used to purchase more syringes.

ASTHMA/ALLERGIES

A reminder for all parents/guardians with children/young people with Asthma to be mindful that even though the weather is warming up asthma symptoms can still be triggered.

Common triggers in the summertime include pollen, temperature shifts, air pollution from increased vehicle use, indoor irritants such as dust, cleaning products and smoking.

Your child/young person should have a written asthma plan from their GP surgery and should be offered regular asthma reviews. If your child/young person has not been invited for an asthma review for some time, please contact your GP to make an appointment.

Owing to pollen and Mold allergies such as hay fever can emerge and worsen in summertime.

Hay fever symptoms include: - sneezing, coughing, runny or blocked nose, itchy, red or watery eyes, itchy throat, mouth, nose and ears, loss of smell, pain around the sides of your head and your forehead, headache and feeling tired.

If your child/young person requires more of their inhaler, or has prescribed medications for allergy relief, please inform the school nursing teams so that we can accommodate your child/young person's needs in school.

SUMMER ILLNESSES

Summer illnesses typically involve heat-related stress, gastrointestinal bugs and viruses that thrive when kids are in close contact.

Common issues include heat exhaustion, food poisoning, Hand-Foot and mouth Disease and Summer Colds.

HEAT-RELATED ILLNESSES

Heat Exhaustion: Look for pale/clammy skin, dizziness, heavy sweating, headache, nausea and an elevated temperature up to 39.4 degree Celsius

Heat Stroke: A medical emergency. Symptoms include hot, dry, red skin, rapid pulse, and confusion.

PREVENTION

HYDRATE CONSTANTLY: Encourage children to drink cool fluids before, during, and after outdoor play.

DRESS SMART: Put children in light weight, loose fitting, and light-coloured clothing.

AVOID PEAK SUN: Limit outdoor activities to cooler times of the day early morning or late afternoon).

NEVER LEAVE CHILDREN IN CARS: Car temperatures can reach deadly levels (over 40 degree Celsius) in just 20 minutes.

ACTION STEPS (FIRST AID)

1. **Move to Shade/AC:** Bring the child to a shaded or air-conditioned environment immediately.
2. **Cool the Body:** Apply cool, wet towels or sponges to their skin, and fan them.
3. **Rehydrate:** If the child is alert and able to swallow, offer cool fluids like water or sports drink.
4. **Seek Emergency Care:** Heat stroke is a medical emergency. **Call 999 or your local emergency number** immediately if a child stops sweating, is confused vomits repeatedly, or loses consciousness

RASHES & COMMON CHILDHOOD ILLNESSES

The nursing teams are happy to advise if children/young people are presenting as unwell and will do our best to signpost to other medical professionals. Please remember that the nursing team are unable to diagnose. Any rashes and/or symptoms of common childhood illnesses should always be diagnosed by an appropriate medical professional.

Please adhere to medical advice received and do not send your child/young person back to school until they have fully recovered and are deemed no longer contagious. This will ensure that the other vulnerable children attending the special schools will be protected.

BASELINE ASSESSMENTS

Nursing undertakes baseline yearly observations on children with complex needs that attend our special schools. These assessments involve: temperature check, oxygen saturations, respiratory rate, blood pressure and heart rate. These observations help nursing and other allied health professionals to recognise the signs and symptoms of any illnesses that may present in our client group and act quickly and appropriately to ensure that every child remains in the best of health.

WELLBEING

Prioritize Physical and Mental Health: Take advantage of the pleasant weather by going for bike rides, swimming, or walking in local green spaces. If you are feeling overwhelmed, give yourself dedicated 'worry time' and let go of the pressure to have a perfect summer short enjoyable outdoor activity can help boost mood. Keeping active with even gentle movements can help with stiffness.

Maintain good nutrition and hydration.

Frequent hand washing to prevent infection.

Make sure vaccinations are up to date.

Mental and emotional wellbeing: - routine and predictability are key along with visual schedules and checklists.

Sensory Support: - weighted blankets, soothing sounds and lighting help with sleep and regulation.

Stress Management: - incorporate hobbies, meditation and journaling can help.

Safety and Preparedness: - have a backup for medical equipment during power outages. Register with utility companies as a vulnerable customer.

Home Safety: - check heaters are safe and serviced regularly and have fire safety measures in place.

Ventilation: - balance warmth with good ventilation to reduce the spread of germs.

If your child/young person is resistant to wearing certain items of clothing or is an independent dresser try visual storyboards showing different types of weather and appropriate clothing. If unsuccessful speak with school staff about incorporating this in their class activities.

Explore Fun Ideas This Summer Break

If your child/young person is between the ages of 4yrs to 16yrs and are receiving benefit-related free school meals, they may be able to qualify for a free holiday club space. Each family can sign up to four sessions of free holiday provision through the scheme.

Spaces are usually available for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

There are also many free and affordable activities available to explore throughout Greenwich and Bexley Boroughs which include museums, toy libraries, open spaces, recreation parks and water parks. Often local leisure centres offer sessions dedicated to children/young people with special needs.

PATIENT FEEDBACK

It is very important that the Special Schools Nursing Team continue to provide a good standard of practice for the children and families we look after. For our service to maintain these standards and make improvements it is necessary to ask for feedback. This happens in a variety of ways, word of mouth, paper surveys and electronic surveys.

If you are asked for feedback, please can you spare some time to provide this as it helps us to improve the service we provide. All feedback received is welcomed and important to our service.

Please use our QR code for submitting feedback:

