



Parent Digest

09 September 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome to this week's edition of the Parent Digest – our first edition for this academic year!

Please click on the relevant links which open the document or letter on the school website.

Kind regards,

The Willink School

Whole School

Fundraising Walk – Thursday 17 September

The Willink
Village School, Global Outlook

WALK FOR Talk

Thursday, 17 September 2026

Please Support our Students' 10K Fundraising Walk!

Help us raise funds for specialist audio equipment for our MFL department, giving our students the tools they need to develop their listening & language skills and build confidence. Every donation makes a difference!

DONATE

SCAN HERE

willinkschool.org.uk

The whole school will be taking part in a 10km fundraising walk through the woods and farmland surrounding the school on **Thursday 17 September**. This year, we are raising funds for specialist audio equipment and technology for Modern Foreign Languages, helping to enhance students' speaking and listening skills. We would be very grateful for any donation that you, your family or friends are able to make in support of our students' efforts. Please see the following linked letters for further details, including information about the event and the consent form required for students to leave the school site once they have completed the walk:

KS3 & 4 Students (Years 7 – 11)

Fundraising Walk Letter – [Click here](#) to read.

KS5 Students (Years 12 & 13)

Fundraising Walk Letter – [Click here](#) to read.

Please [click here](#) to make a donation for the fundraising walk.

Safe Driving, Safe Parking

We kindly ask all parents and carers to be mindful of student safety and our local residents when parking in the areas surrounding the school site. Please avoid parking on yellow zigzags, pavements, or in locations that block visibility for road users or safe access for pedestrians.

Parking inappropriately can also affect our neighbours by restricting access to their homes and driveways, and in some cases compromising their privacy. We ask that everyone parks considerately to ensure we maintain positive relationships with the local community.

Please also be aware that parking at The Willink Leisure Centre is for leisure centre users and Willink staff only. If you choose to use the leisure centre car park when collecting your child, please be mindful of this restriction and ensure that you do not obstruct parking bays or prevent leisure centre users and staff from accessing available spaces. This includes parking spaces specifically allocated for the use of disabled users, which must be kept clear at all times.

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation in helping to keep everyone safe, respected, and considerate of our local community.

School Photographs

School Photographs were taken on Thursday 3 and Friday 4 September by *Van Cols Photography* and your child should have brought home a 'School Photo Registration Card' which includes a unique QR code. You can use this to view your child's photograph and order prints, if you wish.

We will advise you when the photographs are ready to view.

- If you have already scanned the QR code on the proof and registered, you will receive an auto email notification.
- If you have not done it yet, you can still scan the QR code on your proof and follow the instructions.

If, by chance, you have not received your proof, or it has been lost, you can call Van Cols Parent Line on 01206 273711. For group photos (Year 11 and Sixth Form) you will need the school number (7210). For individual photographs you will need your child's Arbor Student ID. This is the 4-digit number written on your child's Yondr pouch. If you do not know the number, please send an email to the school office requesting the information office@willink.w-berks.sch.uk.

School Opening Times – Thursday 17 & Friday 18 September

A reminder of our planned arrangements for **Thursday 17 and Friday 18 September**:

Thursday 17 September – Early School Closure

School will close to all students at **12pm** to allow us to prepare for our Whole School Open Evening that afternoon/evening.

Friday 18 September – INSET Day

The school will be **closed to all students** for an INSET (staff training) day.
Students will return to school as normal on **Monday 21 September**.

Enrichment Activities – Autumn Term

We are delighted to offer our students a wide range of enrichment opportunities, enabling them to explore their interests, develop new skills and make new friendships. A full timetable of lunchtime and after-school clubs can [be viewed here](#).

Open Evenings and Open Mornings

This term we are looking forward to welcoming prospective students and their families to our upcoming Whole School and Sixth Form Open Evenings.

**Pursue Your Passions
At The Willink School
& Sixth Form**

We are a friendly, vibrant community with high expectations and aspirations for all. Come along to one of our Open Evenings, or register to visit and discover more about our school and sixth form.

Whole School Open Evening & Open Mornings

**THURSDAY
17th
SEPTEMBER
2026
5:30 - 8 PM**

Tour our campus, meet teachers & students, & sample our curriculum.

Headteacher's Presentation 6pm & 7pm

Open Morning visits by appointment only

Sixth Form Open Evening

**WEDNESDAY
21st
OCTOBER
2026
6-8 PM**

Tour our fantastic facilities, explore subjects & student life with staff & students

The Willink, School Lane, Burghfield Common, Reading, Berkshire, RG7 3XJ

willinkschool.org.uk

- **Whole School Open Evening:**

📅 Thursday 17 September 2026
🕒 5:30–8pm

- **Sixth Form Open Evening:**

📅 Wednesday 21 October 2026
🕒 6–8pm

The evenings are a great opportunity for prospective students and their parents and carers to explore our school, meet staff and students, and find out more about learning and life at The Willink. This may include younger siblings or relatives of students already part of our school community, as well as families who are new to The Willink.

Some of our students may also be invited to help at the Open Evenings. **If your child is being asked to take part, we will send a letter home with further details and a permission slip for you to complete.**

Thank you for supporting our students in helping us to welcome prospective families to The Willink.

Diary Dates

Tuesday 15 September – Year 12 Parent Information Evening, 5:30pm Main Hall
Wednesday 16 September – Year 7 Clubs Fair (Lunchtime)
Wednesday 16 September – Battlefields Trip Pre-Departure Meeting, 5:30-6pm Main Hall
Thursday 17 September – Fundraising Walk
Thursday 17 September – School Closes at 12pm (Preparation for Open Evening)
Thursday 17 September – Open Evening
Friday 18 September – Inset Day
Friday 18 September – Duke of Edinburgh Silver Award Training
Tuesday 22 September – Year 10 Parent Information Evening, 5:30-6:15pm
Tuesday 22 September – Year 11 Parent Information Evening, 6:30-7:15pm
Thursday 24 September – Iceland Trip Pre-Departure Parent Information Evening, 5:30-6:30pm
Tuesday 29 September – Year 8 Parent Information Evening, 5:30-6:15pm
Tuesday 29 September – Year 9 Parent Information Evening, 6:30-7:15pm
Thursday 8 – Friday 9 October – Educational Visit to the Battlefields of Ypres/Somme (Year 9)
Wednesday 7 October – UKMT Senior Maths Challenge (Years 12 and 13)
Thursday 8 October – Destinations Expo: Newbury College Trip (Year 12)
Thursday 8 – Friday 9 October – Battlefields Educational Trip
Thursday 15 October – Year 7 Disco, 7-9pm
Wednesday 21 October – Sixth Form Open Evening
Thursday 22 – Monday 26 October – KS4/5 Iceland Trip
Thursday 22 October – Break for Half Term, 3:05pm Finish

Friday 23 October – Monday 2 November – Autumn Half Term Break

Tuesday 3 November – Term 2 Starts

[Click here](#) to access the whole school calendar.

PE Diary Dates:

PE Schedule of Activities 2026/27:

For all students in Years 7–11, the Scheme of PE Activities for this academic year can [be viewed here](#).

PE Fixtures Calendar:

PE Fixtures are communicated directly to the students taking part. A calendar of school PE fixtures can be viewed [here](#).

Examinations

[Click here](#) for examinations information available on our website.

Year 7

Year 7 Parents Information Evening – Presentation Slides

Many thanks to all Year 7 Parents and Carers who attended yesterday's Information Evening. A copy of the presentation slides can [be found here](#).

KS3 Design & Technology Contribution

Please [see the linked letter](#) regarding the voluntary contribution for your child's KS3 Design & Technology lessons during the 2026–27 academic year. The letter explains how the contribution helps cover the cost of materials used across Product Design, Textiles, and Food & Nutrition.

KS3 Art Equipment Requirements For September 2026

Please [see the linked letter](#) regarding the purchase of essential Art equipment for the new academic year, along with a voluntary donation to support the materials and resources used in Art lessons. Your support helps us continue to provide a high-quality creative learning experience for all students.

Food and Nutrition Ingredients Lists Autumn Term 2026

Students who are studying Food and Nutrition this term will have brought home an ingredients list for their practical lessons this term. These lists are also available on our school website [here](#), along with the recipe cards they will follow in the lesson.

Reminder: Year 7 English Homework and Sparx Reader

Please [see this linked letter](#) regarding Year 7 English Homework and Sparx Reader, an online platform that provides personalised reading tasks matched to each student's reading level.

Year 8

Welcome to Year 8

Please [see this linked letter](#) from Miss Lyons, Year 8 Head of Learning, which contains key updates and important diary dates for Year 8.

We look forward to welcoming parents and carers a Year 8 Parent Information Evening on Tuesday, 29 September, 5:30-6:15pm in the Main hall.

Reminder: Sparx Reader Homework for the 2026/27 Academic Year

Please [see this linked letter](#) regarding Sparx Reader Homework for the 2026/27 Academic Year.

****Trip Launch – Rugby Trip to Allianz Twickenham, 14 November 2026****

We are delighted to say that the PE Department has been allocated 15 student tickets for the England vs Japan match on Saturday, 14 November 2026, as part of the Autumn Rugby Internationals. This is a fantastic opportunity for students in years 8-10 to experience international rugby at The Allianz Stadium. For more information, please [see this linked letter](#). Deadline for registration of interest is **Thursday, 18 September**.

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Year 9

Year 9 Parent Information Evening – Tuesday, 29 September 2026

We look forward to welcoming parents and carers a Year 10 Parent Information Evening on Tuesday, 29 September 2026, 6:30-7:15pm in the Main hall.

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Reminder: Sparx Reader Homework for the 2026/27 Academic Year

Please [see this linked letter](#) regarding Sparx Reader Homework for the 2026/27 Academic Year.

Year 9 Battlefields Trip Pre-Departure Meeting Wednesday, 16 September

The pre-departure meeting for our Year 9 History Battlefields Trip will take place on the evening of **Wednesday, 16 September** in the Main Hall at **5:30pm – 6pm**. This will include information regarding departure timings, the places we will visit, the teacher groups students to report to and EU travel restrictions. It is important that you attend. A message has been sent out via Evolve.

Food and Nutrition Ingredients Lists Autumn Term 2026

Students who are taking Food and Nutrition this term will have brought home an ingredients list for their practical lessons this term. These lists are also available on our school website [here](#), along with the recipe cards they will follow in the lesson.

Year 10

Year 10 Parent Information Evening – Tuesday, 22 September 2026

We look forward to welcoming parents and carers a Year 10 Parent Information Evening on Tuesday, 22 September 2026, 5:30-6:15pm in the Main hall.

*****Place available***: Malaga Educational Visit, 14 – 17 October 2026**

A place has become available on our educational visit to Málaga, Spain during the Autumn Term. All students may now apply. Please [see this linked letter](#) for more information. If you are interested in taking up the place, please contact the finance office at finance@willink.w-berks.sch.uk.

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Deadline for registration of interest is **Thursday, 18 September**.

****Trip Launch, Emmanuel Centre London, 23 November 2026****

Year 10, 11, 12 & 13 **Art and Textiles students** are invited to attend a special educational visit to the Emmanuel Centre, London. Whilst not compulsory, students are very strongly encouraged to attend (especially Y10/11) as the experience will be a huge benefit to their GCSE work. Please [see this linked letter](#) for more information and how to secure a place on the visit.

****Duke of Edinburgh's Award – Silver Award Launch****

Please [see this linked letter](#) for details about taking part in the silver DofE award for 2026-2027. The training for the award will be undertaken on the INSET day at the end of next week, so turnaround is quick. If you have any questions or queries, please direct them to the school office who will forward them to me.

Please [click here](#) to access the enrolment form or visit our [DofE pages on our website](#).

Kind regards, **Mr S Burgess**

Reminder: Year 11 Careers Advisory Meetings 2026/7

Careers advisory meetings will begin in September for all Year 11 students. Please [see this linked letter](#) for more information. Please contact Mrs Connor on careers@willink.w-berks.sch.uk if you have any questions about the meetings or anything else careers focused.

Reminder: Year 10 English - 'A Christmas Carol' Book Purchase

In anticipation of next academic year, we would like to make you aware that Year 10 will be studying the novella 'A Christmas Carol' after the summer break. It is a "closed book" exam. Therefore, it is necessary for students to have their own copies to annotate throughout the year as revision tool in preparation for their exams in Year 11 on the text. We are able to offer this text at the very competitive price of £3.90 for you to purchase from The Willink. Please [see this linked letter](#) for more information. Please follow the link on Scopay to purchase. Applications must be made by **Thursday, 1 October**.

KS4/5 Design & Technology Contribution

Please see [this linked letter](#) regarding the voluntary contribution for KS4/5 Design & Technology students for next academic year. The contribution helps cover the cost of materials used throughout the course, supporting students to access the practical resources needed for their design and making work.

Year 11

Year 11 Parent Information Evening – Tuesday, 22 September 2026

We look forward to welcoming parents and carers a Year 11 Parent Information Evening on Tuesday, 22 September 2026, 6:30-7:15pm in the Main hall.

*****Place available***: Malaga Educational Visit, 14 – 17 October 2026**

A place has become available on our educational visit to Málaga, Spain during the Autumn Term. All students may now apply. Please [see this linked letter](#) for more information. If you are interested in taking up the place, please contact the finance office at finance@willink.w-berks.sch.uk

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Iceland Trip Pre Departure meeting

We would like to invite all students and their parents/carers attending the Iceland Trip in October to a pre-departure meeting on **Thursday, 24 September at 5:30pm in the Main Hall**. The meeting will provide important information about travel arrangements, the itinerary, equipment requirements, expected conduct, and an opportunity to ask any final questions before departure. Attendance by both students and parents/carers is strongly encouraged.

Duke of Edinburgh's Award – Silver Award

Students who completed the Silver Qualifying Expedition (camping and walking) in July now need to update their eDofE account to complete the expedition section of their Award.

Please log in to your eDofE account, navigate to the **Expedition** section and enter **3 July** as your **Presentation Date**. Once this has been completed, I will be able to sign off this section of your Award.

If you have any questions, please email the school office, who will forward your enquiry to me.

Kind regards,

Mr S Burgess

KS4/5 Design & Technology Contribution

Please [see this linked letter](#) regarding the voluntary contribution for KS4/5 Design & Technology students for next academic year. The contribution helps cover the cost of materials used throughout the course, supporting students to access the practical resources needed for their design and making work.

Sixth Form

Sixth Form Guide to Degree Apprenticeship

For those looking to find out more this guide is a great starting point, offering A-Z directory of companies offering degree apprenticeships and hearing from apprentices themselves. Take the Opportunity to research and sign up to companies to hear when applications open in preparation. [Click here](#) to read the guide.

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Year 12

Year 12 Parent Information Evening – Tuesday, 15 September, 5:30pm

We hope that your child has settled well into the new term. You are invited to attend a Parent Information Evening on Tuesday, 15 September at 5:30pm. Dr Rees (Head of Sixth Form) and Mr Jubb (Assistant Head of Sixth Form) will host the event and provide information about what to expect and how to support your child as they embark on their post-16 studies.

This will include:

- Year 12/13 roadmap: key dates for assessments and reports
- Enrichment Opportunities
- Expectations and Routines (including independent study)
- Communication
- How to Support your child

The talk will take place **in the Main Hall** which is accessible via the Leisure Centre entrance.

We look forward to seeing you. Please note, Year 12 students do not need to attend this session as information will be shared with them in school. Should you have any queries relating to the evening, please do not hesitate to contact the school via sixthform@willink.w-berks.sch.uk.

****Trip Launch, Destinations Expo – Newbury College, 8 October 2026****

We would like all Year 12 students to attend a Careers Expo on the afternoon of Thursday, 8 October 2026. It is a fantastic event that showcases a wide range of career pathways and covers a multitude of sectors. Full details are [in this linked letter](#), and consent is required via a short online form from EVOLVE which you will receive shortly via email.

Iceland Trip Pre Departure meeting

We would like to invite all students and their parents/carers attending the Iceland Trip in October to a pre-departure meeting on **Thursday 24 September at 5:30pm in the Main Hall**. The meeting will provide important information about travel arrangements, the itinerary, equipment requirements, expected conduct, and an opportunity to ask any final questions before departure. Attendance by both students and parents/carers is strongly encouraged.

GCE Art & Design Studio Donation

Please [see the linked letter](#) regarding the voluntary Studio Donation for students studying GCE Art & Design. This contribution helps us continue to provide the high-quality materials, specialist resources and creative opportunities that enrich the course throughout Years 12 and 13.

A Level Mathematics (and Further Mathematics) Required Study Resources (Year 12)

Please [see this linked letter](#) regarding resources required to support course completion and academic success.

Year 12 Economics Study Resources

Please [see this linked letter](#) below for information about the Economics resources we recommend students purchase to support their learning and studies.

Year 13

Economics Study Resources

Please [see this linked letter](#) below for information about the Economics resources we recommend students purchase to support their learning and studies.

A Level Mathematics (and Further Mathematics) Required Study Resources

Please [see this linked letter](#) regarding resources required to support course completion and academic success.

Iceland Trip Pre Departure meeting

We would like to invite all students and their parents/carers attending the Iceland Trip in October to a pre-departure meeting on **Thursday 24 September at 5:30pm in the Main Hall**. The meeting will provide important information about travel arrangements, the itinerary, equipment requirements, expected conduct, and an opportunity to ask any final questions before departure. Attendance by both students and parents/carers is strongly encouraged.

Career Opportunities

Each week we will be sharing current and exciting opportunities for our students to explore.

If any students would like help in applying to any of them or would like more information, please ask them to see Mrs Connor in the Careers Hub.

Inside Army Careers: Explore 7 Ways to Serve

Join as a soldier. Train as a specialist. Discover how Army careers combine military service with professional training in everything from engineering and intelligence to catering, logistics and healthcare.

During the webinar we will look at:

- Roles available with and without qualifications
- Opportunities young people may not have considered
- Financial incentives and benefits

- Adventure training and the experiences on offer
- Apprenticeships and long-term career progression

When: **Wednesday 9 September | 6.00pm - 6.30pm**

Who for: **All parents and students**

Where: **Online**

For more information and to register, click [here](#).

Get Into STEM Virtual Event

On Thursday 17 September, 5:00–7:00pm, Young Professionals are bringing together major STEM employers from energy, engineering, technology and consulting to show you what a career in STEM actually looks like — and how you get one. Whether you're at school, college or university, this is a direct line to the people who work in the industry and hire the next generation of talent.

When: **Thursday 17 September | 5.00pm - 7.00pm**

Who for: **Year 10+**

Where: **Online**

For more information and to register, click [here](#).

Get Into Business, Accounting & Finance Virtual Event

Accounting and finance is one of the widest doors into business — and almost nobody explains what's actually behind it. Young Professionals are bringing together PwC, UBS, BDO, CIMA and S&W — with more to be announced — to talk about what the work really involves: audit, advisory, tax, investment banking, wealth management, corporate finance and consulting. Whether you're at school, college or university, this is a direct line to the people who decide who gets in.

When: **Friday 18 September | 5.00pm - 7.00pm**

Who for: **Year 10+**

Where: **Online**

For more information and to register, click [here](#).

Get into Law Virtual Event

Interested in a career in law? Young Professionals are running a free virtual event with 12 international law firms including all five Magic Circle firms. You'll hear from practising solicitors, join interactive breakout workshops, get application tips, and receive a certificate of attendance for your CV.

When: **Wednesday 16 September | 5.00pm - 7.00pm**

Who for: **Year 10+**

Where: **Online**

For more information and to register, click [here](#).

Support Our School

Easyfundraising

Did you know that whenever you buy anything online – from your weekly shop to your annual holiday – you could be raising free donations for The Willink School with easyfundraising? There are over 8,000 retailers on board ready to make a donation – including eBay, Argos, John Lewis & Partners, ASOS, Booking.com and M&S – and it won't cost you a penny extra to help us raise funds. Go to <https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/the-willink-school> and join for free.

Donate to The Willink Charitable Trust

[Click here](#) to learn more about The Willink Charitable Trust and make a donation. To support the Trust you can make a donation to the school in the form of a regular standing order or a one off annual donation; we currently receive individual amounts between £5 and £35 a month. Whatever the size of donation please be assured it will be greatly valued.

Useful Links

- School website: www.willinkschool.org.uk
- Term Dates: [The Willink School - Term Dates](#)
- School Letters: [The Willink School - Letters](#)
- Safeguarding: [The Willink School - Safeguarding](#)
- Contact us: [The Willink School - Contact Information](#)
- Reporting absence: [The Willink School - Student Absence](#)
- Payments and Online Ordering: [The Willink School - Payments and Online Ordering](#)
- Food Technology Ingredients lists: [The Willink School - Food and Nutrition](#)
- PE Activity Lists (KS3): [PE Scheme Overview 2026-27.pdf](#)
- Facilities for hire: [The Willink School - Facilities For Hire](#)