



Growing Readers, Growing Futures

Ian MacDonald (Headteacher)

Reading is one of the most important skills we can help children develop. **Regular reading builds vocabulary, strengthens comprehension, increases knowledge and supports learning across the whole curriculum.** Just as importantly, enjoying books can help children become curious, confident and enthusiastic learners.

Research shows that children who read regularly for pleasure can make greater progress in areas such as **vocabulary, spelling and maths**. Reading also introduces children to new words, ideas, people and places, helping them understand more about the world around them.

How can you help at home?

Read little and often. Even a short amount of regular reading is valuable and helps establish good habits.

Let your child choose. Novels aren't the only option! Comics, graphic novels, magazines, poetry and non-fiction all count. Following a child's interests can be a great way to encourage reluctant readers.

Talk about books. Ask what they enjoyed, discuss interesting words, wonder what might happen next and share your own thoughts. Reading should feel like a conversation, not a test.

Keep reading aloud. Children still benefit from being read to even when they can read independently. It allows them to enjoy more challenging stories and hear richer vocabulary.

Be a reading role model. Let your child see that reading is something adults do for information, relaxation and enjoyment too.

Most importantly...

There is no single "right" way to be a reader. **The goal is to help every child find something they enjoy reading and make reading a positive part of everyday life.**

Every book, comic, fact, story and shared reading moment helps to grow a reader.

Don't forget to look at our **Reading Newsletter** for book recommendations and more ideas for supporting reading at home.

Happy reading!

Attendance this week:

This week's attendance figures:

Year 1: 97.59%

Year 2: 98.00%

Year 3: 95.52%

Year 4: 93.10%

Year 5: 91.22%

Year 6: 93.77%



Congratulations to Year 2 for this week's highest attendance!

Communication with School

Attached to this week's newsletter is a copy of our **School Communication Flowchart**. This has been designed to help parents and carers know who to contact when they have a question, concern or require support.

In most circumstances, **your child's class teacher should be your first point of contact**. They know your child well and are usually best placed to answer questions, address concerns or advise on the appropriate next steps. Where necessary, matters can then be passed on to the relevant member of staff.

We are committed to working in partnership with families and will always seek to support our pupils wherever we reasonably can. However, it is also important to recognise the role and remit of the school. **Our primary responsibility is the education, safeguarding and wellbeing of children while they are in our care.** There may therefore be occasions when families approach us about difficulties that the school is not able, or is not the appropriate service, to resolve directly. Where needs fall outside the school's role or expertise, we will endeavour to **signpost families to the services, agencies or sources of support best placed to help**.

Please keep a copy of the Communication Flowchart somewhere accessible at home and refer to it when you need to contact school.

Thank you, as always, for working in partnership with us.



Introducing Our New Eco Champions!

We are delighted to announce the formation of our new Eco Champions for this school year! The team members are: Maisie, Miller, Sienna, Ava, Matilda, Enya, Royal, Esmae, Liam, Joshua, Amber, Leesha, Amelia, Adara and Rocco.

This enthusiastic group of students will be leading our school's environmental initiatives and working towards applying for the **Eco-Schools Green Flag**. The Green Flag is an internationally recognised award that celebrates schools taking action to improve their environmental impact. Schools that achieve the Green Flag demonstrate a strong commitment to sustainability, showing leadership in areas such as energy conservation, waste reduction, biodiversity and community involvement.

As part of our Eco journey, all children in the school are encouraged to follow our **Eco Code**, set up by a previous Eco Team:



Elmstead Primary School Eco-Code

Every day, we care for our Earth
Litter belongs in bins – help keep our school clean
Make every drop of water count
Switch off lights when not in use
Trees are our friends – we plant and protect
Eat wisely – don't waste food
Always recycle what you can
Don't forget: small actions make a BIG difference!



Green Flag

2025

Together, we protect our planet – today and for the future!



Over the course of the year, our new Eco Champions will be selecting **three exciting projects** to focus on. These projects will aim to make our school greener, healthier and more sustainable, while giving the children the chance to develop leadership, teamwork and problem-solving skills.

Watch this space for updates, achievements and stories from our Eco Champions as they embark on this important journey. We can't wait to see the difference they will make!

This Week's Play Champions!

A huge well done to this week's **Play Champions**! We have been looking out for children who are helping to make playtimes happy, inclusive and enjoyable for everyone.

KS1 – Ada (Year 2)

Ada has been chosen for always checking on her friends and making sure they are okay. She goes out of her way to make sure that everyone has **someone to play with and something fun to do**, showing fantastic kindness and care towards others.

KS2 – Maisie (Year 3)

Maisie has been chosen for getting the **big skipping rope** out at playtime and encouraging other children to have a go. She has helped to get others involved and shown great enthusiasm for making playtime active and fun for everyone.

Well done, Ada and Maisie! You are fantastic examples of how we can all help to make our playground a **kind, inclusive and enjoyable place to be**.

Miss Penwill





Year 2 Step Back to 1666!

Year 2 had an unforgettable Great Fire of London Day and arrived at school full of excitement and anticipation for the activities ahead. During the morning, the children carefully transformed their cardboard houses into authentic-looking homes from 1666. They thought carefully about the features of London houses at the time and worked hard to recreate them. The children also created stunning pieces of artwork, painting silhouettes of the London skyline against fiery red, orange and yellow backgrounds to represent the devastating fire which swept through the city.



After lunch, the learning continued with Great Fire of London themed mazes and challenges. The children then worked brilliantly in groups to create a series of freeze frames, retelling the story of the Great Fire. It was wonderful to see the children using their historical knowledge and teamwork skills to bring the events of 1666 to life.

The highlight of the day came in the afternoon when Mr MacDonald joined us outside in the role of Fire Marshal. The children gathered excitedly to watch as he carefully set alight our Year 2 London street. Just as the fire spread through London in 1666, The demonstration helped the children to understand how quickly the real fire spread through London, travelling from house to house through the city's closely packed streets.

The children watched with great excitement and amazement, and it was a truly memorable way to bring their learning to life. We are incredibly proud of the enthusiasm, creativity and excellent behaviour shown by all of Year 2 throughout the day. It was a fantastic experience that the children will remember for years to come! Miss Harris

Music at Elmstead

Music lessons have restarted at Elmstead and the children are showing so much enthusiasm in their weekly sessions. Tuesdays are filled with music around the school, starting the day with Singing Assembly, where our current focus is Autumn and Harvest time. The children have been learning 'Autumn Days', a classic primary school song that the grown-ups may remember from their own schooldays!

Reception have been learning about Father Crotchet and Mother Minim as well as meeting Elaine the Elephant and singing lots of lovely songs together. In Year 1, the children are learning to recognise different pitches on the stave and find the correct chime bar notes to match. Year 2 have been learning to change the timbre of their voices and describing sounds they can hear.

In Key Stage 2, we have been working on our notation skills. Year 3 are learning about the duration of different types of notes and Year 4 are recognising standard notation and playing tunes on the chime bars. Year 5 children have been learning about the first written music in Europe and some of the crazy Medieval instruments that may have played it.

In Year 6, we have been exploring music from South America (Samba and Mambo) using body percussion.

The school choir have been learning how to warm up their voices as they begin to learn new songs for the term and our fabulous iRock bands have begun to rehearse together.

Did you know that our school has a Musician of the Month? This month, we have been listening to the music of Dolly Parton, listening carefully to the different elements of the music and sharing our opinions in class. October's Musician of the Month is Ladysmith Black Mambazo, a fantastic acapella choral group from South Africa.

Mrs Minshull





School Dinner Menus

Next week, we will be on Week 2 of our Menus. The menus can be seen on the School Website at: <https://www.elmsteadprimary.com/Dinner-Menus/>. There is a special menu on Thursday next week – see attached. **School dinners can be paid for electronically on Arbor.**

Diary Dates Academic Year 2026/ 2027

Autumn Term 2026

Tuesday 20 th October	Parents' Evening – 3:30pm to 6:30pm
Thursday 22 nd October	Parents' Evening – 3:30pm to 6:30pm
Monday 26 th October	Half term holiday week
Thursday 5 th November	Year 3 Layer Marney Trip
Friday 27 th November	Non-Pupil Day
Monday 30 th November	Non-Pupil Day
Monday 14 th December	pm – KS2 Carol Service
Tuesday 15 th December	Whole School Trip to 'The Wizard of Oz Musical'
Friday 18 th December	Last day of term



Forest School Dates for this term:

Forest School – Autumn Term 1

Week 1 8 th September	Week 2 15 th September	Week 3 22 nd September	Week 4 29 th September	Week 5 6 th October	Week 6 13 th October	Week 7 20 th October
Year 6	Year 6	Year 5	Year 5	Year 4	Year 4	Year 3

Forest School – Autumn Term 2

Week 8 3 rd November	Week 9 10 th November	Week 10 17 th November	Week 11 24 th November	Week 12 1 st December	Week 13 8 th December	Week 14
Year 3	Year 2	Year 2	Year 1	Year 1	EYFS	Pantomime

Your child's teacher will tell you which of the two groups your child is in (Group 1 or Group 2) so you know which session your child will be taking part in and when to bring in their Forest School clothes.