



ELMWOOD JUNIOR SCHOOL



NEWSLETTER – Christmas 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

Whilst this term has been quite different from usual, the children have adapted very well to all the changes that have been put in place due to Covid-19.

All children have engaged in assessment activities to enable teachers to identify gaps in their knowledge, understanding and application due to school closure last academic year.

Catch-up Premium

The school is now receiving additional funding from the Government to ensure we have the resources to give extra support to those who need it most.

How the school is using this funding:

- New assessment resources to help teachers determine how to most effectively support all children.
- Additional qualified teachers in each year group providing 1:1 mentoring and small group tuition to address gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding
- Full time on-site Counsellor

Teacher and Parent/Carer Consultation Meeting

Due to the Covid-19 measures put in place to minimise risk to staff, pupils and parents/carers, face to face consultation meetings were not arranged for this term. Class teachers arranged a phone conversation with parents/carers to discuss their child's progress and the targets they have been set to make further progress. This was very successful and I hope you found it an informative discussion.

Meet the Teacher

All class teachers sent parents/carers a 'Meet the Teacher' information sheet that introduced themselves as their child's new class teacher and gave details of their child's individual logins for a wide range of online platforms. Teachers also included their school email address in order to provide parents/carers with a means of communication with them whilst the current situation continues to prevent face to face contact.

Remote Learning

Where a child or class, is required to self-isolate, or there is a local lockdown requiring children to remain at home, the children will switch to remote learning which will align as closely as possible with in-school provision.

Homework- Remote Learning

All Year groups have been set up to complete all homework online. ‘Paper’ homework is not being issued as the amount of material going to and from school is being minimised.

The same homework timetable is being followed for all year groups and uses the same platforms.

<u>Homework Timetable</u>	
Monday	
Tuesday	
Wednesday	
Thursday	
Friday	 Google Classroom

All children have subscriptions/logins to:

Sora gives access to a huge selection of eBooks and audiobooks. The collection spans millions of titles from thousands of publishers. Children ‘borrow’ books like a conventional library. Teachers can see the titles that pupils have read and how much time they have spent reading.

Google Classroom is being used to set Friday comprehension homework. Children can add their answers to text boxes on the virtual worksheet. Teachers will add summative comments using a bank of pre-written responses.

Readiwriter delivers interactive activities and games that help students develop a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of spelling and vocabulary. It uses best-practice gamification and established pedagogical approaches to teach spelling with confidence. Teachers can assign over 10,000 words using pre-built and custom word lists.

Mathletics allows students to find engagement through purpose and reward. It provides learners with the chance to put their mathematics skills to use through activities and challenges that are relevant and attention-grabbing.

Mirodo (Years 3-5)/SATs Companion (Year 6) is being used to set SPAG homework and ensure coverage of punctuation and grammar work that may have been missed.



We are very pleased that Elmwood Junior School has been awarded the Quality Mark Primary Award after a successful renewal assessment.

We were able to demonstrate that we meet the criteria for all 10 elements of the quality mark:

1. A whole school strategy and planning to improve performance in English and mathematics
2. An analysis of the assessment of pupil performance in English and mathematics
3. Target setting for the improvement of performance in English and mathematics
4. English and mathematics planning and intervention for all groups of pupils
5. Review of progress made by all groups of pupils in English and mathematics
6. A commitment to improving the skills of staff in the application of English and mathematics in the school
7. The use of a range of teaching approaches and learning styles to improve English and mathematics
8. The use of appropriate teaching and learning resources to improve English and mathematics
9. The involvement of parents and carers in developing their child's English and mathematics
10. An effective procedure for monitoring planning and assessing performance in English and mathematics

The process provided the framework and guidance to support the continuous improvement in English and mathematics. It prompted rigorous self-evaluation to identify strengths, prioritise key areas for development and identify the impact of our practice.

Soundstart

Despite the ongoing restrictions due to COVID, we are pleased to have continued with the Year 4 Soundstart lessons in the autumn term. Over the course of the year, children in Year 4 have the opportunity to learn a musical instrument with specialist teachers from Croydon Music and Arts. Three classes have been learning the ukulele (with two of these swapping on alternate weeks to also learn 'General Musicianship') during an hour-long lesson on a Tuesday.

Educational Workshop delivered by London Fire Brigade

On Tuesday 6th October, a 60-minute fire safety workshop was delivered to each Year 5 class reminding them about the dangers of fire. Prior to the workshop, all pupils watched a series of videos about 'Prevention', 'Detection' and 'Escape'. During the workshop, all these areas were discussed in greater depth and the basic fire safety messages introduced to the children in Year 2, were reinforced and expanded.

Black History Week:

From 12 October 2020 to 16 October 2020, Elmwood celebrated Black History Week. This year, each year group studied a famous poet, Benjamin Zephaniah, James Berry, Grace Nichols and John Agard. The week began with each class being shown a power point presentation and video of their chosen poet and they enjoyed finding out about the lives of these famous people and their impact on the world. At the end of the week, they had a better understanding of how they had overcome issues in their lives and the children were able to show off their knowledge and artistic skills by creating a poster representing this information. Some were even inspired to try their hand at writing some poetry.



This year the school took part in the children in need activities 'Five to Thrive'. The BBC Children in Need collaborated with Joe Wicks to give a focus on fitness and well-being. In class, the children completed daily workouts with Joe Wicks and then completed various activities concentrating on mental health and well-being. Each day had a different focus: Connect, Take note, Get Active, Be Curious and Give. In these sessions, children had the opportunity to reflect and develop ideas around friendships, conversation, well-being, setting yourself goals, achieving and acts of kindness.

On Friday 13 November the School joined Joe Wicks and other schools across the country for the final 20 minutes of his 24 hour workout. The children were invited to wear yellow and donate £1. The children enjoyed the day and were encouraged to think about others who are in need.

Year 3 Egyptian Day

On Wednesday 2 and Thursday 4 December, Year 3 took part in an Ancient Egyptian Day to help extend and consolidate their learning of the topic. The day started with a virtual, interactive session with a lecturer from Durham University, which took place at The Oriental Museum Durham. The children were able to look closely at Egyptian artefacts and ask questions to find out exactly what they were and what they would have been used for. They were also shown a real sarcophagus from Ancient Egypt.

The children really enjoyed the day. They showed great enthusiasm for all activities and finished by making and decorating a 'death mask'.

Christmas Jumper Day

On Friday 11 December, the school took part in "National Christmas Jumper Day". Christmas Jumper Day is an annual fundraising campaign in the UK organised by charity Save the Children where we are encouraged to raise funds for Save the Children by wearing a Christmas jumper and making a minimum donation of £2.

Thank you for helping us support this very worthy cause.

Christmas Dinner

The school Christmas dinner was served on Wednesday 16 December and was a very festive occasion with Christmas music, cracker pulling and xmas hats. Everyone enjoyed the lunch prepared by Harrison Catering who kindly donated the 'Harrison Bear' for a school raffle.

iRock

We have not yet been able to resume the band lessons provided by iRock School of Music as the children are still maintaining their class bubbles. However, iRock hosted a live stream Christmas Concert that the children enjoyed in their classrooms and the musicians performing were fantastic!

iRock lessons make learning music fun, building confidence, promoting musical progression and exploring the importance of teamwork when performing in a band. The children have the opportunity to join their very own rock band and choose to become either a drummer, keyboard player, vocalist or guitarist.

We look forward to arranging lessons again once it is safe to do so.

Christmas Pantomime

We have made sure that the children have not missed out on all the usual ‘festive fun’.

As we were unable to take the children to the pantomime this year, we brought the Pantomime to them through two virtual performances:

Robin Hood and his Socially Distanced Men - saw ‘Sherwood Forest coming out of quarantine, even Ye Olde Tesco is open with a one-way-system and a plentiful supply of loo rolls!!!! Robin attempts to outwit the evil but obsessively well-sanitised Sheriff of Nottingham; all done from a suitable social distance of course’.

Cinderella - a fully interactive live show that allowed the children to participate through pressing buttons for ‘Boo, Laugh, Cheer, Clap, Shout, “Behind you”’.

The children completed activity packs for both pantomimes and thoroughly enjoyed the performances.

Website

We are continually updating the ‘**Latest News**’ section of our website so please visit regularly at www.elmwood-jun.croydon.sch.uk

Staffing

Miss List will be leaving Elmwood Junior School at the end of this term. We thank Miss List for her commitment and contributions and wish her well for the future.

This term we have also said ‘Goodbye’ to Miss Spicer and Miss Iffland who have both returned to Australia and to Miss Van Zyl who has returned to New Zealand.

We thank them for their contributions to the school and wish them well for the future.

NHS Nasal Flu Vaccine

If your child missed their nasal flu vaccine in school, the Croydon Health Service will be running some additional clinics during the Christmas break. Please contact the team on 0208 2746453 and they will be able to make you an appointment at their Lennard Road clinic.

Finally, school closes today Thursday 17 December and reopens on Monday 4 January 2021.

If your child tests positive for COVID-19 after school closes and up to and including 23 December 2020, please email office@elmwood-jun.croydon.sch.uk as we will need to advise the parents of pupils in your child’s class that their child will need to self-isolate.

On behalf of all the staff, I wish you all a very safe and happy Christmas and best wishes for the New Year.

Yours sincerely

Ann Read
Head Teacher