

THE ELMS EXPRESS



Dear Parents and Carers,

What a term it has been! There have been so many different events and things to celebrate - welcome to this longer edition of The Elms Express.

This term we have launched our Elms Excellence sticker to celebrate children showing our school values. This term's value has been kindness. Please read below to find out about Elms Excellence!

This term saw two-year group assemblies from Year 5 and Year 6, Year 3 went on their first school trip to Avebury and the school enjoyed a pantomime production of Cinderella courtesy of The Elms Primary Parents Association. Pre-School, Reception and Year 1 performed a fantastic nativity, our school choir sang at the Faringdon lights switch on and All Saints Church and much much more!

I hope you all have a wonderful Christmas and brilliant New Year

Mr Jacques (Head of School)

THIS TERM'S ADDITION INCLUDES ...

- WHAT'S BEEN GOING ON?
- ELMS EXCELLENCE
- CELEBRATION ASSEMBLY PERFORMANCES
- CLASS UPDATES
- STARS OF THE TERM
- SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES
- STAFFING UPDATE
- KEY DATES
- BOOK RECOMMENDATIONS
- OTHER INFORMATION AND MESSAGES



WHAT'S BEEN GOING ON?

Year 6 Assembly

Our Year 6 children showcased their work they have produced since the start of the school year. They shared their writing of World War One letters home, poems and descriptive writing from their class book War Horse.



They also shared their brilliant artwork of the lead character Joey from War Horse and their learning of their science unit electricity.



Our Cross-Country finalist also showed off their medals.



Year 5 Assembly

Our Year 5 children shared their learning from their year so far. They performed a French nursery rhyme, acted out a scene from their class novel The Hobbit, showcased their writing and tested the adults with their number riddles.



Year 2 Tree Planting

We were kindly donated 40 trees by Woodland Trust including: Dogwood, Silver Birch and Rowan. Our Year 2 children planted these trees in our Peace Garden with the help of Mrs Woodward and Mrs Smedley.



ELMS EXCELLENCE



This term, our value across the school has been kindness and our children have been showing this in diverse ways. It has been great to see our children encourage kindness across the school with their peers, as well as towards the school, by helping to keep it tidy. We have also launched our new reward 'Elms Excellence,' where children receive a special sticker when they have shown our values. Read below to find out how our children have been showing Elms Excellence!

At lunchtime, some of our children have been helping keep The Elms school site tidy by sweeping up the leaves on the playground and litter picking across the school site. These children have volunteered for this job and are taking it very seriously organising rotas and ordering more equipment. Thank you so much children, the school site is looking fab!



Our Play Leaders are now up and running and support both our Key Stage 1 and 2 children during lunchtimes. They were trained at Faringdon Community College by Mrs Kenyon on a range of games they could play, as well as how to encourage children to join in. Our lunchtime staff have been brilliant in supporting the play leaders. They have created a rota and set up a range of different games including hockey, American football, and sprinting races. Keep up the magnificent work!



Some of our Year 5 children also created a stop littering poster and went around the school sharing it with classes. Thank you to Lacey-Mae, Darcie, and Kiara, for helping to keep our school tidy!

Lily and Ella were inspired by Anti-Bullying Week and produced posters in their own time to share with all classes.



And finally, our Ready-Respectful-Safe Champions helped Mrs Noakes to decorate our school Christmas tree. I think you'll agree, they all did a brilliant job!



CELEBRATION ASSEMBLY PERFORMANCES

During our celebration assemblies, children have been asking to perform a range of different talents which Mrs McIntosh has called Mr Jacques' Cabaret!

Three Year 5 children sung Rudolph the Red Nose Reindeer with sign language brilliantly! They taught the whole school the actions.



Some of our Year 2 children shared their Remembrance Day artwork and poetry.



Leah wrote a poem, inspired by our class names and performed it to the whole school. We love this Leah, what a brilliant poem.



The Elms

By Leah

Pre-school are the youngest ones only tiny seeds,
They will grow each day from small to big into lovely trees,
Blossom is reception, they are the new beginning,
They are learning to be kind and become very forgiving,
Loral is year 1, victory was crowned with their leaves,
They were braided into crowns and wreaths,
Sycamore is year 2, they tolerate extreme weather conditions,
They must have many ambitions,
Ceder is year 3, known for greatness and the wood is light,
They can grow up to a whopping 35 metres in height,
Ash will start small but this will not last,
They will grow up so quick, the time goes so fast,
Birch is year 4, an elegant tree,
Strong and durable they will be,
Hornbeam is year 5, they will never get tired,
They will run around like crazy, it's just how their wired,
Hawthorn, a sacred tree it's guardians are fairies,
It was treated with respect and care, the tree was loved very,
Alder, said to protect the heart,
A very special gift for a lovely plant,
Beech is year 6, I swear they get taught magic,
If a spell goes wrong the consequence is tragic,
Poplar reach for success, they put in a lot of focus,
Maybe they drink potions of hocus pocus,
Oak trees are so common yet so different still,
You might even see one from your windowsill,
The nest is a safe space where anyone can talk,
To make children feel happy and will listen to your thoughts,
Mrs McIntosh is a kind, determined watering can,
Who helps with personal development and sticks to the plan,
Mr Jaques is the boss and sees children's work,
And walks into people's classes to see what they have learnt.

CLASSES UPDATE

Blossom Class

Blossom class have really enjoyed our topic of 'tell me a story' and this has opened up many opportunities for science! We enjoyed building the 3 little pigs houses out of different materials and trying to blow them down. The bricks were definitely the strongest! Making the chocolate finger sparklers to celebrate Diwali was very popular. We had lots of discussions about what was happening to the chocolate when we dipped it into the warm water. Eating them after we had dipped them in colourful sprinkles was definitely the highlight! Also, this term we have peeled and cut our own vegetables to make vegetable soup, like in the story 'the enormous turnip' and used the magnifying glasses to investigate Autumn!



Laurel Class



Y1 had the task of finding the best material for a raincoat as Ellie the Elf was getting soaked when playing in the snow at the North Pole. We experimented with a range of materials and recorded whether they were waterproof or not.

We enjoyed learning about what it would have been like to live in Faringdon in the past and how it is quite different today. We have also written some great recounts about a virtual tour of Faringdon and another piece of writing on visiting a zoo.



Sycamore Class

Sycamore Class have been working on seated balances and jumps in Real PE sessions. The children have been creating animal shapes and travelling movements in Real Gym sessions using a range of apparatus.



The week beginning 13th November was 'Anti-Bullying Week'. Sycamore Class explored the theme 'Make a Noise about Bullying'. The children thought about who they would talk to if they were being bullied and what they might say to stand up for a friend.



Ash Class

Ash class have had a jam-packed Autumn term! In science we have been looking at how rocks are made and the different types of rocks. Linking to our history topic, The Stone Age to Iron Age, we recently went to Avebury to observe the stone circle and museum. We had an amazing day and look forward to our next school trip. Before going to Avebury, we were very lucky and had a visit from Mrs Hill, an archaeologist, who brought in artifacts from The Stone



Age to Iron Age and shared her wealth of knowledge. Thank you very much Mrs Hill! As well this, we have learnt a selection of animals in French, wrote instructions in English, wore odd socks to celebrate anti-bullying week, celebrated remembrance and completed lots of burpees for Children in Need. We have also been looking at multiplication and division in maths, sewing a 3D decoration in DT, and have been loving playing Christmas songs, on the ukulele, in our music lessons.



Cedar Class

Cedar class have been really busy this term. We've been looking at how to write instruction texts, character descriptions and letter writing in English, while in maths, we have started looking at our 3-, 4- and 8-times tables.

The children continue to learn how to play the Ukelele and will be showing off their skills at the assembly after Christmas, which they are really excited about.

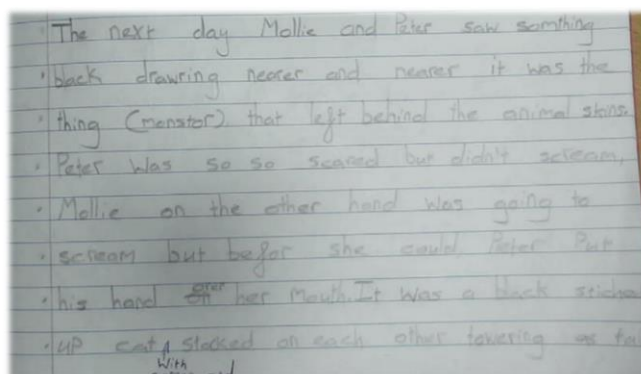


We were lucky enough to have an archaeologist come into school who told us all about the finds at Avebury before our trip there. The children had a great time at Avebury, and we were lucky it didn't rain, although it was a bit cold. The children looked at the stones and found out that some of the stones weighted over 60 tonnes. As I said, it's been a busy term.

I hope you all have an enjoyable Christmas.

Birch Class

November has been an exhilarating month in Birch class! Our geography lessons have delved deep into the fascinating realms of earthquakes and volcanoes. We've explored where they are likely to happen, how they work, and discussed vital safety measures to protect ourselves. Meanwhile, our math sessions have been buzzing with times tables mastery, enhancing our numerical skills. In English, we've embarked on a creative journey, weaving our own mystery tales inspired by Ted Hughes' "The Iron Man," inventing unique creatures to populate our narratives. As we wrap up this term, our curiosity continues to drive our learning forward, promising more exciting adventures ahead in the months to come! Have a wonderful festive holiday Year 4s. Well done on a fantastic term 2!



Alder Class

For outdoor PE we have been building our stamina, strength and control through Circuits! We have completed the dreaded Beep Test and we have learned how to properly execute a squat and a lunge. We have built on our understanding of Yoga from last term, and we have set ourselves personalised goals to reach. We have been critical friends, checking for good form and careful practice.



Hawthorn

At the end of each day, I draw lollipop sticks out of a mug and ask, "What has been your favourite part of the day?". I can't think of a single day when a multitude have not said "story time!". This is something we do each day, and even when I was without a voice for a week, we managed to do it with puppets and children's voices. This term, we've been enjoying *The Clockwork Crow*, by Katherine Fisher. It's a Victorian era story, which ties in with our study of Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*. It's full of magic and uninhabited houses, snowy fields and icy lakes. Perfect for this time of year. We've finished it now, but in this newsletter, I will be giving you a list of holiday reads for your children to enjoy. Hawthorn class throw themselves into all our activities and are very well behaved at all times. We look forward to next year, terms crammed full of learning, laughter and enjoyment of school.



Hornbeam

In Science this term, year 5 have been learning about forces! We have learned, in simple terms, that a force is a push or pull which makes an object move, stop or change direction. We have learned that gravity, friction, air resistance and water resistance are all types of forces. We have



also learned that

resistance is when two

forces are acting against each other. We have had great fun

investigating these making 'the best paper aeroplane', the

slowest sinking piece of plasticine and finding out who had the

grippiest shoe!



Beech Class

This term in Beech class, we have been continuing with our World War One topic in history; this included a fantastic day at Hill End near Oxford, where we all experienced the trenches; these were the training trenches used for soldiers prior to World War One and they gave us a great insight into how life must have been for those who were involved in the war. We were also invited to the Remembrance Exhibition at the Old Town Hall; our thanks to the staff and volunteers who showed us around and explained the displays to us. As I write this, we have just finished our last assessment for the term; I have been incredibly impressed with how well the class have completed these, with a maturity and diligence which does them all great credit. I hope that everyone has a very happy Christmas and enjoys a well-deserved break.



Oak Class

Oak class have had another fantastic term in Year 6. We have continued learning all about World War 1, including the Battle of the Somme, the importance of animals in the war and how it all ended. We have written our diaries and have also written letters home from the perspective of a soldier in the trenches. We have also done some exciting work in science where we have been investigating shadows and how they behave: including whether the type of material or the distance from the object affects the shadows they produce. The children have also enjoyed spending time using an online app for Computer Aided Design (CAD). We started off by drawing a picture of what our dream bedrooms would look like and then they were set the task of creating it on the app. There is an abundance of creativity in this class, and I cannot wait to see the finished designs!



Poplar Class

Poplar Class have had another successful term, and we are proud of how hard they are working. Their progress in maths, reading and



SPAG will be realised in forthcoming assessments, with great advances made with arithmetic, punctuation and word classes.



We have continued to enjoy the journey and characters of War Horse by Michael Morpurgo alongside the World War One topic, learning about the famous battles, animals during war and the role of women in wartime. This will finish with the Christmas Truce. Their written work has gone from strength to strength with some great soldier diaries and letters home from the trenches. Highlights this term include the brilliant trip to Hill End to

spend a day in the muddy trenches and sewing pockets for a class advent calendar in DT, using a variety of skills, materials and techniques. The children have also braved the weather for some fantastic rugby sessions, produced some excellent war horse artwork and learnt to speak confidently about family in French. We wish them all a very happy Christmas when it arrives - they deserve a break after all their hard work!

Little Saplings

Little Saplings Pre-School have had a very busy term. We have celebrated, 'All About Me', Diwali, Poppy Day, Firework Night, Autumn and Christmas. We have been working on 'Our Own Name' recognition, counting objects 1-10 in order and looking at shapes and colours. Lots of learning has taken place through play, singing and having fun, learning our daily routine and 'Golden Rules'. Keep up the great work Little Saplings.



STARS OF THE TERM



Bella
Saplings



Aidan
Blossom



Pavlo
Laurel



Amelia
Sycamore



Ida
Ash



George
Cedar



Evie
Birch



Abigail
Hornbeam



Reid
Hawthorn



Harris
Alder



Bella
Poplar



Lydia
Beech



Rose
Oak

SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES

At the start of every academic year, the Senior Leadership Team sets out a school development plan (SDP). This is the school's action plan and focuses on the areas they would like to improve further. It is important to add, all schools are on a journey to improve the education for their children.

Our 3 main priorities this year are: High quality of teaching and learning, reading/early reading and the Curriculum. In our The Elms Express Newsletters, I will keep you updated of what progress has been made towards improving these priorities.

Key priority 1: High quality teaching and learning every day

- ✓ Learning walks are showing children are knowing more and remembering more.
- ✓ Our staff meetings have been focusing on the teaching of reading and we now teach reading every day.
- ✓ In staff meetings, teachers have shared how they are scaffolding for all learners and working together to share good practice.

Key priority 2: Early reading/reading

- ✓ We have now finalised our The Elms Reading spine which can be found on our school website here - [Curriculum | The Elms Primary School](#)
- ✓ We hosted a Reading Writing Inc development day which took a deep dive into our phonics provision highlighting areas of success and next steps.
- ✓ We have been donated money from a local charity to buy £3,000 worth of books.

Key priority 3: Curriculum development: ensuring the effective implementation of a broad, balanced and ambitious curriculum

- ✓ Staff meetings have focused on teachers using retrieval activities and sharing the subjects learning journey, so children know where they are working towards.
- ✓ Mr Moore, our curriculum lead, has been working with our Science and History lead to adapt and evaluate their subjects and highlight their next steps.
- ✓ A learning walk showed children are passionate about their learning and loved showing and articulating their work.

STAFFING UPDATE

FOND FAREWELLS

This term, we say goodbye to some members of staff. We are very sad to see them go but wish them good luck in the future – make sure you come back and visit us!

Mrs Pendelton

Mrs Pendelton has been in at The Elms for two years and has taught in year 1 and Year 3. She is starting a new career outside of teaching after Christmas and Wednesday 20th December will be her last day with us. She has been a brilliant teacher working tremendously hard to teach exciting and engaging lessons while building positive relationships all children. We are all going to miss her kind and caring nature and positive attitude. Good Luck Mrs Pendelton.

Miss King

Miss King has been at The Elms for 6 years and in that time has taught in a range of year groups across the school. She has supported our journey from a Junior to an all through Primary, teaching in both Key Stages. Miss King has also been a brilliant RE lead, writing our curriculum and supporting staff. We will miss your 'can do attitude' and determination!

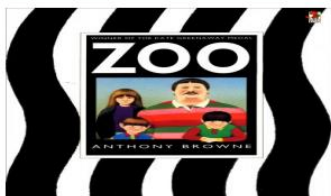
Mrs Gledhill

Mrs Gledhill has been a fantastic addition to the team, working hard to ensure our children receive exciting and engaging lessons which have inspired children to complete extra learning outside of the classroom. This culminated in a brilliant Year 5 assembly. We wish Mrs Gledhill and her family all the best and we hope to see her soon when her new baby arrives.

Mrs Spence

Mrs Spence our Pastoral Lead will be leaving after 6 years at The Elms. Over the years, she has worked in different roles supporting our children in and outside of the classroom. She is not moving far, and I know she will be keeping in touch with us all. In her most recent role, Mrs Spence has gained positive relationships with children and parents/carers working hard to ensure our children have a nurturing space to visit. Thank you for all your amazing work!

BOOK RECOMMENDATIONS

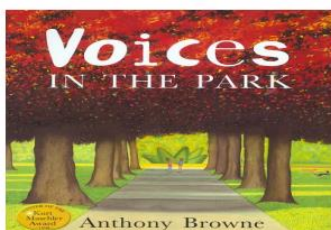
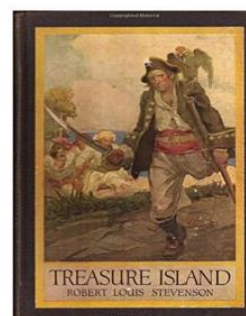


52 - Zoo by Anthony Browne

Dad, mum and two brothers spend a day at the zoo, looking at the animals in the cages - or is it the animals that are looking at them?

53 - Treasure Island by Robert Louis Stephenson

Treasure Island is an adventure novel by Scottish author Robert Louis Stevenson, narrating a tale of "buccaneers and buried gold". Its influence is enormous on popular perceptions of pirates, including such elements as treasure maps marked with an "X", schooners, the Black Spot, tropical islands, and one-legged seamen bearing parrots on their shoulders. eventually to the surprise discovery at the back of the toy cupboard, in this mysterious, beautifully illustrated picture book.

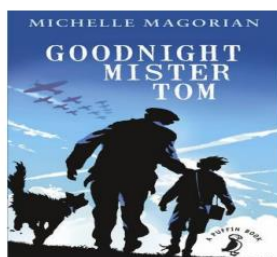
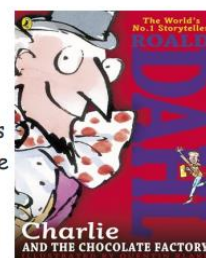


54 - Voices In The Park by Anthony Browne

Four different voices tell their own versions of the same walk in the park. The radically different perspectives give a fascinating depth to this simple story which explores many of the author's key themes, such as alienation, friendship and the bizarre amid the mundane.

1 - Charlie And The Chocolate Factory by Roald Dahl

The famous story of Charlie Bucket and his Golden Ticket, and Willy Wonka and his amazing chocolate factory. Mr Willy Wonka, the most wondrous inventor in the world, opens his gates of his amazing chocolate factory to five lucky children. Gobstoppers, wriggle sweets and a river of melted chocolate delight await - Charlie needs just one Golden Ticket and these delicious treats could all be his!

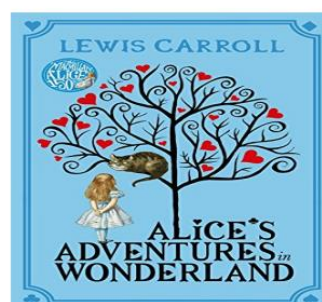


2 - Goodnight Mister Tom by Michelle Magorian

Young Willie Beech is evacuated to the country as Britain stands on the brink of the Second World War. A sad, deprived child, he slowly begins to flourish under the care of old Tom Oakley - but his new-found happiness is shattered by a summons from his mother back in London . . .

3 - Alice's Adventures In Wonderland by Lewis Carroll

Curious Alice, the bossy White Rabbit, the formidable Queen of Hearts and the Mad Hatter are among the best-loved, most iconic literary creations of all time. Macmillan was the original publisher of Alice in 1865 and is proud to remain true to the vision of its creators. Every bit as iconic are Sir John Tenniel's remarkable black line illustrations, perfectly capturing the combination of the ordinary and the extraordinary at the heart of Wonderland.



SAFEGUARDING UPDATE

One of our most significant responsibilities at school is to safeguard the children in our care. We have a strong culture of promoting the wellbeing of all our children and part of this is to have designated staff who support and manage safeguarding for our school. These are:

**Keeping
children safe
is everyone's
responsibility**



Designated Safeguarding Lead – Mr Calum Jacques. The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead – Mrs Shelley McIntosh. Our school Safeguarding Policy can be found on our website under Key Information > Safeguarding or via this link: <https://www.theelmsprimary.co.uk/safeguarding/> Please note that if you have a concern about any child or family, you can make a referral directly to the Oxfordshire Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). They can be contacted on 0345 050 76

REMINDERS

Our office staff are continuing to work hard to obtain updated child information. We are hoping to set up The Elms on social media and need to know if you give consent for your child's pictures to be used. Please contact the office on office@tep.faringdonlearningtrust.org.



You Move is an Oxfordshire initiative which provides low cost and free activities to families. Benefits include 50% of membership and pay as you play activities for the whole family.



"YouMove is here to provide free or low cost activities for families living in Oxfordshire. If your child or children are in receipt of benefits related free school meals, then we have a fantastic range of activities to enjoy together, including during weekends and school holidays. In addition, YouMove is here for children in need of support; this includes refugee children, young carers and children in or on the edge of care." - YouMove: Vale of White Horse | GO Active (getoxfordshireactive.org)