Elmstead Primary School

NEWSLETTER
Friday 23rd October 2026

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End of Half Term

Ian MacDonald (Headteacher)

Today is the last day of the first half term and what a busy half term it has been! I would like to thank all of the staff for their hard work in all of they have been doing to support the children's learning.

This week we have had our two Parents' Evenings and I hope that you found them useful. I do appreciate that there are sometimes occasions when you would like to discuss matters further with the teacher. Please do book an appointment with your child's teacher if this would be helpful.

There are lots of things to look forward to next half term including: Anti-Bullying Week 2026, all the build up towards Christmas and our whole school trip to 'The Wizard of Oz the Musical' to name but a few.

In the meantime, I hope you enjoy the half term holiday and I look forward to seeing the children back at school again on Monday 2nd November.

Flu Catch-Up Clinics during half term

Please see the following information from Vaccination UK:

Respiratory illnesses and flu cases are currently on the rise. We encourage you to ensure your child receives their flu vaccination. You can choose between the quick and painless nasal spray vaccination or the injectable vaccine, which is porcine and gelatine-free.

Vaccination not only helps protect your child from becoming seriously unwell but also helps protect vulnerable family members and the wider community.

We currently have several community catch-up clinics available. Please use the link below to book an appointment. If you previously declined consent when we visited your child's school, you can still change your decision and book an appointment. Alternatively, please contact our office on **01245 984145**, and a member of our team will be happy to arrange a clinic appointment for you.

https://www.essexchildrensimmunisations.co.uk/Book-a-clinic-vaccination

Please note that GP practices are not routinely providing flu vaccinations for healthy children in **Reception through to Year 11**.

P.E. days for each class – please note that these days may be different from the first half term

On the days that your child's class has P.E., they will need to come in to school in their P.E. kit as the children will not change for P.E. They will remain in these clothes all day so do not need to bring in uniform to change into afterwards. These are the days that each class is doing P.E. starting from week beginning Monday 2nd November:

Reception: Friday
Year 1: Thursday and Friday
Year 2: Monday and Friday
Year 3: Monday and Friday
Year 4: Wednesday and Friday
Year 5: Wednesday and Friday
Year 6: Thursday and Friday

Attendance this week:

This week's attendance figures:

Year 1: 99.31%
Year 2: 95.17%
Year 3: 96.90%
Year 4: 95.86%
Year 5: 92.58%
Year 6: 87.54%

Attendance Matters ...every school day counts!

Congratulations to Year 1 for this week's highest attendance!

Wellies for the field at lunchtimes

From Monday 2nd November, if your child is in Key Stage 2 (Years 3, 4, 5 & 6) and they would like to play on the field during lunchtime, they will need to bring in a paired of named wellies and a pair of spare socks in a carrier bag to change into. This will then avoid the children's uniform getting muddy and also prevent mud being brought into school.

Year 6 Parents/ Carers – Secondary School Applications

You can now apply online for your child's secondary school (year 7) place for children starting secondary school in September 2027. Read about the secondary (year 7) school place application process. **All applications received after 31st October 2026 will be treated as late and will only be processed after all on-time applications**.

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Core Value Morning – Courage

This half term, our Core Value Morning focused on **courage**! Children from EYFS to Year 6 came together in their mixed-age groups to explore what it means to be brave and show courage in everyday life.

As part of Black History Month, we learnt about inspirational individuals, including **Ruby Bridges and Betty Campbell**, who showed incredible courage when facing challenges and standing up for what they believed in.

The children also explored how they can show courage themselves, whether that means trying something new, speaking up for others or facing their fears. They then created colourful feathers to contribute to our '**Wings of Courage'** display, celebrating the bravery we can all show, big or small!

It was wonderful to see children of all ages working together, sharing ideas and encouraging one another.

Miss Penwill



Anti-Bullying Week – 16th November – 20th November 2026

Anti-Bullying Week in England is coordinated by the Anti-Bullying Alliance and this year takes place from the **16th – 20th November.**

The theme this year is 'Break the Silence'. The call to action is:

'Millions of children and young people experience bullying every year. Many never tell anyone. They stay silent when they are being bullied, when they see it happening, and sometimes when they feel drawn into it themselves. When silence persists, bullying can grow.

In today's world, bullying can happen in new and more complex ways. It happens face to face, online, and through new technologies. And in a world that can feel more divided and less kind, young people feel the impact.

But we can change that. When people come together, speak openly, and choose kindness, bullying loses its power. Every conversation, every act of support, and every voice raised against bullying makes a difference.

This Anti-Bullying Week, we are encouraging everyone to start the conversation about bullying. We are calling on children and young people to speak up and share their experiences, and on adults to listen, support, and act.

Across schools, communities, and organisations, people will come together to take meaningful action against bullying and create kinder, more supportive environment where all children and young people belong.'

Even though we will be taking part in Anti-Bullying Week, with a special assembly and lessons going on in each class throughout the week to raise the awareness of bullying, we are committed to preventing and responding to bullying throughout the year.

To find out more information about Anti-Bullying Week go to:
Anti-Bullying Week 2026: Break the Silence



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A Sea of Colour in Year 3

This half term, Year 3 have been diving into a world of colour, inspired by artist Paul Klee! The children explored primary colours and discovered how to mix them to create secondary colours. They experimented with adding white and black to make colours lighter and darker and used lines to divide their designs into interesting sections. To bring their learning together, our budding artists created their own under-the-sea masterpieces to match our classroom theme. Their colourful sea creatures showcase their imagination, creativity and all the skills they have learnt.
Well done Year 3 – you should be very proud of your wonderful artwork!
Miss Martin







Play Champions of the Week

A huge well done to this week's fantastic Play Champions!

🏆 **KS1 – Archer (Year 1)**
Archer has been awarded Play Champion for always playing kindly with others and taking great care of our playground by making sure equipment is tidied away. What a superstar!

🏆 **KS2 – Isabella (Year 3)**
Isabella has been awarded Play Champion for always looking after our playground equipment and going above and beyond to tidy away things she hasn't even played with herself! She sets a wonderful example for others to follow.

Well done Archer and Isabella! Thank you both for helping to make our playground a happy, safe and tidy place for everyone! 🌟 Miss Penwill



School Dinner Menus

We have new menus coming after half term. We also have two special menus for 5th and 13th November. These menus will be sent out to parents/ carers during next week via Arbor.

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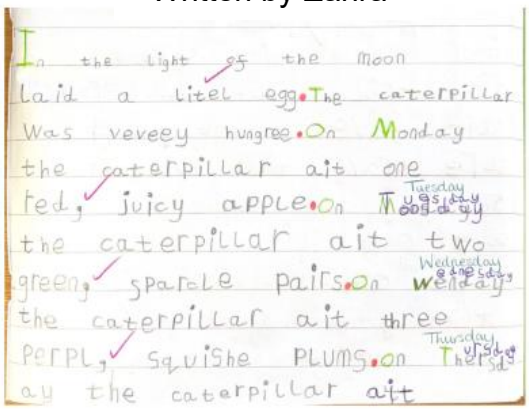
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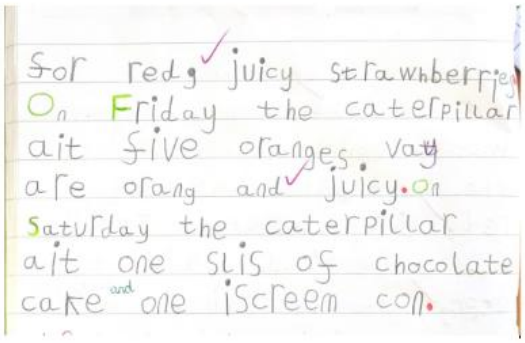
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Year 1 – The Very Hungry Caterpillar

Year 1 have been working incredibly hard in English, writing their own retellings of '*The Very Hungry Caterpillar*'. The children have been practising using capital letters, full stops and adjectives to make their writing even more exciting!
We are very proud of the progress they have made and wanted to share a wonderful example of one of our budding authors' fantastic writing.
Well done Year 1!
Miss Penwill

Written by Zahra





Fizzing Pumpkin Science!

Year 1 had a spooktacular time becoming scientists this week with our exciting Halloween pumpkin experiment! The children made predictions about what might happen when we mixed bicarbonate of soda, vinegar and food colouring together. We then watched in amazement as our pumpkin began to fizz, bubble and overflow with colourful foam!
The children used their observation skills to describe what they could see and recorded their findings like real scientists. It was a fantastic way to explore how materials can change when mixed together, whilst having lots of Halloween fun!
Miss Penwill



Breakfast Club

The children have been getting creative at Breakfast Club this week! There has been lots of imaginative play with children busy building impressive structures, becoming fashion designers and bringing their ideas to life. It has been great to see the children working together, sharing ideas, problem-solving and supporting one another with their creations.
What a fantastic way to start the school day!







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From Royalists to Recycled Masterpieces!

Year 5 had a fantastic day bringing history to life as they became historians and explored the Siege of Colchester! We were delighted to welcome our wonderful visitor, Mrs Bignell, who spent the whole day teaching the children about life before, during and after the Siege, exploring the key events, important people involved and the impact of the English Civil War.

The children learnt lots of new vocabulary, including *Parliamentarians* and *Royalists*, before taking on the role of King Charles I to write powerful speeches explaining why they were important. Lots of groups proudly performed their speeches to the rest of the class, demonstrating fantastic confidence and teamwork. The children also discovered how the siege unfolded, learnt about the key players involved and explored the different types of food people would have eaten during this time – a revelation that certainly caused a few gasps! Throughout the day, the children were fantastic historians, showing real curiosity and enthusiasm, asking lots of insightful questions.

The highlight was a huge creative building challenge, where the children worked brilliantly in groups to construct important buildings from the time, including the Priory, Castle, Town Hall and houses, using recycled junk-modelling materials. They showed fantastic teamwork and imagination, creating some truly impressive models. Mrs Harmer then joined us to judge the finished creations and announce the winning groups based on creativity and accuracy! There was plenty of laughter throughout the day, particularly when the children saw me dressed up for the occasion! It certainly raised a few smiles from both the children and parents at home time! I am incredibly proud of how engaged the children were and how enthusiastically they embraced every activity.

A huge thank you to all the children and parents who collected and brought in recycling materials for our creative challenge. We were lucky enough to have an enormous supply of boxes and other materials to work with which made the day even more successful.

The children should be extremely proud of their hard work, creativity and teamwork. It was a wonderful day full of history, learning and fun!

Miss Hastings









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Run Pudsey 2026 – Sign Up and Get Fundraising!

On **Friday 13th November**, our whole school will be taking part in **Run Pudsey** to raise money for BBC Children in Need!

During the school day, every child will run their part of our whole-school 2,026 metre challenge on the school field. All children will take part, whether they have signed up for fundraising or not.

What do parents need to do?
All you need to do is sign your child up and collect donations! We will organise the running at school.
Step 1 – SIGN UP!
Scan the QR code or follow the link to register your child for Run Pudsey. (runPudsey - Take Part)
Step 2 – USE OUR SCHOOL CODE!
Enter our school code: **A546**
Step 3 – COLLECT DONATIONS!
Share your child's fundraising page with family and friends and encourage them to sponsor your child.
Step 4 – RECEIVE YOUR MEDAL! 🏅
Children who have **signed up and are receiving donations** will receive a special Pudsey medal and certificate!

Important information for parents

- **ALL children** will complete their part of the 2,026 metres on the school field during the school day on Friday 13th November.
- **Parents do not need to organise any running!** Your child will complete their run at school. You simply need to register them and collect donations.
- **ONLY children who have registered and are receiving donations** will receive a Pudsey medal and certificate.
- Medals and certificates will be **sent directly to school**, and we will hand them out to eligible children once they arrive.

Sign up, use code A546 and start collecting donations to help your child earn their Pudsey medal and certificate!

Let's see how much we can raise together for Children in Need!

BBC CHILDREN IN NEED

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Diary Dates
Academic Year 2026/ 2027

Autumn Term 2026

Monday 26th October	Half term holiday week
Thursday 5th November	Year 3 Layer Marney Trip
Tuesday 10th November	Tour for prospective new parents/ carers – September 2027 – 11:00am
Thursday 12th November	Tour for prospective new parents/ carers – September 2027– 2:00pm
Friday 13th November	Children in Need Day – Run Pudsey
Wednesday 18th November	Tour for prospective new parents/ carers – September 2027 – 2:00pm
Monday 16th – Friday 20th November	Anti-Bullying Week 2026
Thursday 29th November	Tour for prospective new parents/ carers – September 2027 – 11:00am
Friday 27th November	Non-Pupil Day
Monday 30th November	Non-Pupil Day
Monday 14th December	pm – KS2 Carol Service
Tuesday 15th December	Whole School Trip to 'The Wizard of Oz Musical'
Friday 18th December	Last day of term

Forest School Dates for this term:

Forest School – Autumn Term 1

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

Forest School – Autumn Term 2

Week 8 3rd November	Week 9 10th November	Week 10 17th November	Week 11 24th November	Week 12 1st December	Week 13 8th 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.