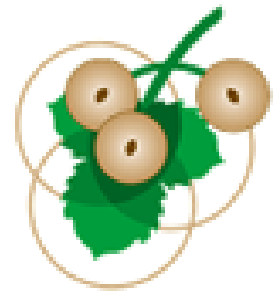


LOOSE ENDS



MONDAY 30TH MARCH 2020

For regular news from Elmfield, like and follow us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/ElmfieldRudolfSteinerSchool.

Temporary School Closure

We would like to reassure you that Elmfield School is closely following the advice issued by the government and Public Health England about the coronavirus (COVID-19). The latest information can be found at www.gov.uk.

Any changes that may affect the school, pupils, staff, anyone else connected or any events will be communicated via ParentMail, Facebook, www.elmfield.com and all other appropriate means.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

We officially close for the Easter holidays on Wednesday 1st April and re-open for the Summer Term on Thursday 23rd April. As we are not currently open and do not have an indication of when we may re-open, any important dates will be communicated via ParentMail, Facebook, www.elmfield.com and all other appropriate means.

ELMFIELD NEWS & INFORMATION

ANNOUNCEMENTS

This is the latest information regarding the school's position during our temporary closure due to the coronavirus COVID-19 outbreak. Any changes to this position will be communicated via ParentMail, Facebook, www.elmfield.com and all other appropriate means.

A letter from the Chair of Council

Dear Parents and Friends of Elmfield

The purpose of this letter is to provide an update from Council about our response to the present crisis. The last time I wrote, I expressed my gratitude and that of the school's Trustees for the commitment and actions of everyone who is involved in the day to day running of Elmfield - in spite of huge challenges and uncertainty. This commitment remains, as does our appreciation of peoples' support. In addition, I would add my thanks to parents for their cooperation and understanding of the decisions we have had to take over the last few weeks.

In a very short time many things have changed. We are now operating online and using remote technology. Like other schools across the country we are providing our education via the internet and through this medium our teachers are keeping in touch with children and parents too with a view to assuring a continuation of the best possible Steiner education.

Fortunately, the majority of our key worker families were able to independently establish care arrangements for their children. For those that could not, the school liaised with the Local Education Authority to secure alternative provision. This led to temporarily closing the school site and buildings for traditional teaching purposes from Tuesday 24th March.

Elmfield operates as a not-for-profit charity. Our aim is to provide a Waldorf Steiner education on the basis that it is affordable to our community. However, we do not have large reserves that could simply support us through a crisis like the present one. From a financial point of view, we have limited options. We are, of course, investigating our



eligibility for government help and expect to be advised on whether this is applicable within our context very shortly. As soon as we have clarity, we will make an appropriate announcement.

Speaking from my present personal experience, I am acutely mindful that everyone is facing financial uncertainty at the moment. However, it would be remiss of me not to state that fees from parents will be a fundamental part of any financial package that is agreed.

The Elmfield Council is working to provide focussed oversight of the new (temporary) operating environment. Individually, the school's voluntary Trustees (including myself) are spending many hours proactively ensuring that the new arrangements work as efficiently and effectively as is possible. As a Council of Management, we will be holding fortnightly meetings on a virtual basis to continue to provide the leadership that is necessary.

Amongst all the rapid change and stress resulting from the COVID-19 crisis, it is important to remember that this situation is temporary. Although we do not know how long it will go on for, it will end. When it does, we plan to be in a position to restart school life at Elmfield.

Your feedback, thoughts, and any ideas you might have are more important to us now than ever. Please do feel free to e-mail myself as Chair of Council or any of the trustees where your issue is related to their particular area of oversight. We welcome all comments and feedback, good or bad – because it is only through the voice of the community that we can continue to provide a great Steiner education through Elmfield school in Stourbridge.

Yours faithfully

Sue Dawson
Council Chair
30th March 2020

Talking to Children about Coronavirus COVID-19

We are having to make compromises and find innovative ways to continue whilst supporting the children through a time that is causing them distress and anxiety. Our Early Years Lead, Rebecca Jenkins-Handy, shared her wisdom on this, saying:

"Emotional support is very important as there are lots of scared people. Children are jittery because all the adults around them are. With the little ones we must try and keep them as sheltered as possible. Even though it seems not so, remember to a young child 'the world is good' and they do need to know that, so they have some chance of developing in a healthy and resilient way ... our mantra is 'it's for the grown-ups to worry about' in relation to positivity and handwashing!"

Our children will grow up remembering our reactions to the pandemic, rather than the coronavirus itself. We need show our children that we respond to stress and uncertainty with resilience rather than panic.

You can go to <https://phillywaldorf.com/talking-to-children-about-covid-19/> to find a blog post from the Waldorf School of Philadelphia. It addresses the topic of talking to children about COVID-19 and gives some advice which may be of interest, particularly if your child is hearing things that they don't understand, or if they are anxious about the virus.

Safeguarding Concerns

If you have a safeguarding or welfare concern during this period of social distancing and self-isolation, you should contact Ruth Beachim-Ratcliffe (Designated Safeguarding Lead) on 07731 856326 or Diana Ball (Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead) on 07528 046949.

LOOSE ENDS

MONDAY 30TH MARCH 2020



THE WIDER COMMUNITY

GROUPS

Elmfield Alumni Group. Are you or do you know a former Elmfield pupil? This group is a great way to keep in touch with friends from school through our Facebook group and our soon to be released website. We would love to see new school-leavers join the Alumni and to see it become a vibrant community. Our mission statement can be found on the website and explains to anyone wishing to join what we want to achieve, how to get involved and how the Alumni can benefit you. Opportunities are always in the making and we encourage you to be creative and make the Alumni what you want it to be. Feel free to join our Facebook group: Elmfield Alumni School Group.

SERVICES

Fresh Local Milk. We are selling our milk and cream direct from the farm. Cheap and great service with no queues. Please support your local dairy at Horsepool Farm and help us survive; just bring your own clean tub. We have set up very safe distancing rules. Open from 8am till 11am, and 3pm till 7pm. Horsepool Farm, Bromsgrove Road, Hunnington. Any support would mean so much. Thank you.

Handyman / Gardener available for work. Anything considered, reasonable rates, references available. Contact Hans on 01384 830758.

Odd Jobs. For all kinds of odd jobs please contact Martin. Leave a message or text on 07442 162030.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT LOOSE ENDS

The next edition: to be confirmed.

Please email any entries for future inclusion to loose-ends@elmfield.com. No attachments will be added to *Loose Ends*. We reserve the right to edit content. The editor's decision is final.

The views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of Elmfield School or its staff. Elmfield School cannot be held responsible for the quality of products or services offered in this newsletter.

LAST, BUT NOT LEAST

"May my soul bloom
in love for all existence."

Rudolf Steiner

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