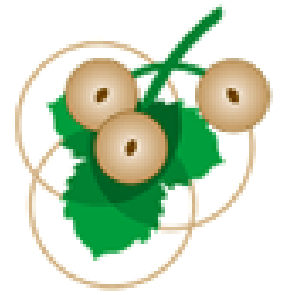


LOOSE ENDS



FRIDAY 10TH JULY 2020

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

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Thursday 16th July Last day of the 2019/2020 school year
Thursday 3rd September First day of the 2020/2021 school year

The school will re-open to all pupils (barring a further regional outbreak) on Thursday 3rd September 2020.

ELMFIELD NEWS & INFORMATION

LETTER FROM THE SCHOOL LEAD

Dear parents and carers,

I wanted to wish all well for the summer and also let you know how things are going from this newcomer's perspective.

Elmfield has thankfully managed to embrace many of the pupils at the term's end and I want to take this opportunity to thank all staff for their efforts with the Estates and cleaning team putting in a particularly Herculean shift. It is so disappointing for the pupils, particularly those in transition, to have the school year end this way, and the consolation of some interaction must have been so welcome.

We want to think of those shielding and indeed staff who are furloughed and must feel out of things. Our schools are true communities and the togetherness is missed during this bleak period. Thoughts too for families with increased anxiety around health and employment. It has been tough for independent schools who depend wholly on fees and for families who are asked to pay even when we know online learning is such a poor substitute for the real thing despite the earnest efforts of educators. The school simply must try to support any struggling families and be true to our community ethos.

In periods of anxiety communication can suffer. I feel this is personified in the digital age where email and social media tends to lend itself to rushed and sometimes reactive communication or a loss of nuance and reading around inference and intent. I loathe Zoom, dislike electronic communication and can be ill at ease on the telephone. I do not think I have social-pragmatic difficulties; I just like interacting with people in the flesh. I want to encourage positive communication and make sure all are treated well. We need to be really sensitive at the moment when communicating as we cannot know what others are going through.

I have missed the luxury of going out for meals with my wife, Sandra, during lockdown. When out I have been known to moan about the food to which Sandra retorts, "Well tell them then." I don't like to as the people in the restaurant have generally been really nice! Sandra points out: 'If you don't tell them then they will not know they are over-cooking the vegetables and it will remain so for you and others.' I then brace myself while Sandra very politely tells our server what I have said. I am braver in schools; I want to know what needs doing better as sometimes only if pupils and parents tell us can flaws be identified and improved on. I want us to deliver our services with good grace but do want to know what we can further improve on. I welcome concerns and will address them promptly.

Staff at Elmfield are all wholly committed to the continual journey of school improvement. The plan is that I am here as School Lead and will be handing over to Stuart Gallagher for the new academic year but we will work together to

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set the school up for the new Education Lead being advertised for. Staff have been very supportive and I have been busy trying to meet all and also prioritise areas for support. SEN provision has been one area where the school needs resources, training and better processes. This is a picture seen in many schools and Steiner Waldorf Schools are having to up their game. Ensuring consistently high teaching and learning within all class groups must also be prioritised, with support for staff and pupils distributed to reinforce areas of need.

I liaise closely with the Steiner Waldorf Schools Fellowship and work directly with three other Steiner Schools, St Paul's, York and Cambridge, so can collaborate and share best practice. We want to be an outward facing school and pick up processes, models and training opportunities from the mainstream that we can adapt and fit in with our ethos and pedagogy. Elmfield is and must remain as it says on the package a Steiner Waldorf School and I have been heartened by the presence of a strong College of Teachers serenely led by Gertraud Soukup.

You can sense spirit at Elmfield but there is a need to lift our community through this testing period and fan the flames that make schools like ours shine so brightly. Please have a restful summer and we will all return invigorated and raring to go in September. The school will be open for all (barring the disaster of a regional second wave of Covid) and I look forward to finally meeting all pupils and parents.

I will be working over the summer and am contactable on simon.birch@elmfield.com

Warm wishes,

Simon Birch, School Lead

A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR OF COLLEGE

Dear Elmfield Community,

I hope this finds you well. As this most strange of school years is coming to an end, I would like to share a note to say, 'Thank You'. In particular,

- Thank you to parents and carers for taking on the home learning of the children
- Thank you to the teachers who changed their style of working and learnt how to teach online
- Thank you to colleagues who prepared the school environment for a gradual and safe return of children
- Thank you to staff who changed their working hours to allow for the necessary cleaning to be done during the day
- Thank you to Council members who spent many a zoom hour reviewing and adjusting school leadership and finance
- Thank you to our colleagues who kept the admin wheels whirring, and
- Thank you to those colleagues who agreed to be furloughed
- Thank you to the individuals who kept us smiling and laughing when we felt 'down', and
- Thank you to the artists and musicians for their inspirations (we do hope to have our peripatetic teachers back soon, too)
- Thank you to the PTFA for their input, and
- Thank you to the volunteers who will run a summer camp.

Somehow, together, we have found our way to face the challenges and we can look ahead with hope.

With warm greetings and best wishes,

Gertraud Soukup, Chair of College



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Together again. As part of our phased re-opening, our school buildings opened to pupils in priority groups on Monday 22nd June. On Monday 29th June we welcomed back pupils from Classes 5, 9 and 10, and on Wednesday 1st July we opened a third Early Years bubble specifically for our Transition group. Children and teachers have enjoyed being back together, and they have enthusiastically been taking part in a mix of our traditional Waldorf curriculum and nurturing activities, alongside lessons that continue to be set in our virtual classrooms.

The latest news about our phased re-opening plans (which are based on government guidelines), our COVID-19 General Risk Assessment, and details of how the school is currently operating can be found at www.elmfield.com, and in communications sent via ParentMail.

Keeping you updated. Any changes and important information will continue to be communicated through ParentMail, our Facebook page, www.elmfield.com and all other appropriate means.

ECHOES FROM THE CLASSROOMS

Early Years. In the Early Years we have called our 'bubbles' Nests, and we are pleased to say that in the three we have managed to open up, the children have been having great fun. It is a strange new world but they continue to come up with exciting games in the gardens and are finding inventive ways to make dens and use the resources that are available. It is a wonderful opportunity to look closely again at child development, and marvel at the resilience of our youngest children. Whatever the situation, it seems human beings were born to play! A big thank you to all staff who have made the impossible happen! *Rebecca Jenkins-Handy, Early Years Lead.*

Bubble Class 1,2 & 3. Children and leaders in bubble class 1, 2 and 3 have been creating leaves that explain what we are grateful for; you can find some photographs on Elmfield's Facebook page. We also made silkworms out of pipe cleaners. *Anne Barker, Class 2 Teacher.*

MUSIC

Music definitely matters! Thank you all for your enthusiasm and support of Folk Fortnight, I'm going to leave all the wonderful videos and music there over the holidays in case you want to explore further. If your musical instruments have gathered dust over the past few weeks, please start playing again, as we are really going to be making up for everything we've been missing in music when we return to school in September. If you have any problems with instruments or music, I'll be around in the holidays, just email me. Have a lovely summer! *Caroline Price.*

VACANCIES

Please visit the school's website for full information and how to apply for the following vacancies:

- Science and Maths Teacher – Upper School
- Members of the School's Council of Management (multiple opportunities)
- Boarding Parents

ELMFIELD PTFA

The last few months have been extremely testing for everyone and we are grateful for all your support. Despite not being able to run the Summer Fair the PTFA has been busy continuing with its primary objective of raising money to support the school. Here is a rundown of the things we have got up to during lockdown to support the school:

- Continued to fundraise for the school by:
 - setting up the Elmfield Resilience Fund
 - using Facebook targeted ads to promote fundraising to a wider community audience
 - linking the PTFA account to online shopping for fundraising
 - connecting with Elmfield Alumni to encourage donations
- Supported teachers' in-home working by providing funding for necessary resources
- Bringing our school community together through a weekly quiz night initiated at the start of lockdown

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- Worked with the Council and College to signpost parents on where to get further information during this unprecedented time
- Championed the opportunity for all parents to raise their concerns through open forums where they can be appropriately shared and answered.

We would like to invite everyone to connect with us throughout the summer so you can learn more about the exciting plans for events and competitions in September and beyond to bring the school community back together. Look out for our emails and follow our Facebook page to learn more.

The PTFA is made up of a group of parents just like you. Our aim is to raise funds to enhance the unique experience our children receive as part of a Steiner education. We put on events to bring pupils, parents, teachers and the wider school community together. To help us continue to deliver this, your Elmfield PTFA needs you to get involved. We are open to all, if you would like to find out more, please email us at ptfa@elmfield.com to see how you can get involved.

We hope you have a lovely summer, and we look forward to seeing you all in September.

Elmfield – All Together

The PTFA.

THANK YOU!

On behalf of the whole Elmfield community, may we continue to extend our thanks to all the keyworkers in all sectors, both paid and voluntary, who are keeping our world turning during these difficult times.

THE WIDER COMMUNITY

ELMFIELD ALUMNI GROUP

Goodbye to Upper School leavers. All Class 11 leavers should have received a letter and flyer via Google Classroom from the alumni group about our work. We welcome all former pupils to our group on Facebook from Class 11 onwards. We can also be contacted through: info@elmfieldschoolalumni.uk

We appreciate that this has been a difficult time for young people, many of us are parents, so understand the challenges faced. We wish all pupils leaving the very best on whatever path they may choose, whether this be work, training, further education or other pursuits. We sincerely hope that your transition to the next stage is as smooth as possible under the current circumstances.

The alumni group is here for you to connect, network or link with the school.

Please note this group is only open to former pupils and members of staff – past and present – with a strong link to alumni work.

HEALTH AND WELLBEING

The Elysia Therapeutic Centre. We are pleased to announce that the Elysia Therapeutic Centre has now re-opened with a limited number of practitioners offering on-site therapeutic sessions in line with the appropriate government and professional guidelines. It is a phased re-opening with various services returning progressively over a number of months, as the situation allows.

As ever, the health, wellbeing, safety and security of all of our clients, visitors and practitioners is our priority. We have spent a lot of time preparing to re-open and putting in place preventative measures, as part of our *COVID-19 Secure Protocol*, to ensure that we reduce the risk of infection from COVID-19 to those using the Centre to the lowest possible practicable level. This will necessarily entail some changes to the way in which the Centre and our practitioners operate which are outlined in our *COVID-19 Client Policy Guide*.



Many of the Centre's practitioners will also continue to offer their services either online or via the telephone during this phased return. This includes, Counselling & Psychotherapy for individuals, couples, families and children/young adults; Anthroposophic Medical Consultations, Rheumatology & Pain Clinic, Physiotherapy, Naturopathy, Nutritional Therapy and the Connect Women's Circle. Please refer to our website for practitioner information and availability, including direct contact details <https://elysiacentre.org/practitioners-new/>

SALES AND WANTED

Part-time opportunity for a student. Are you an upper school student? Do you live in or near the Old Quarter? Interested in a part time job that fits around your studies and leaves your evenings and weekends free? We are looking for a responsible student to collect and walk with our child to school from September. Please email alette.bernasoni@gmail.com to express an interest. Appointment will be subject to meeting and reference from a teacher from the school.

SERVICES

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 will be published on: to be confirmed

Please email any entries for future inclusion to loose-ends@elmfield.com. No attachments will be added to *Loose Ends*. No photographs. 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

"I truly believe the only way
we can create global peace
is through not only educating our minds,
but our hearts and our souls"

Malala Yousafzai