

# Elmstead Wood Primary School

## December 2023 Newsletter

### Dear Parents and Carers

As we near the end of this term, I wanted to take a moment to celebrate the hard work and dedication of our wonderful children here at Elmstead Wood Primary School. It has been a term filled with growth, progress, and countless achievements, and we are immensely proud of each and every one of them.

Throughout the term, our children have shown great enthusiasm and determination in their learning. They have worked diligently to develop their skills and expand their knowledge. We have seen great progress across all subjects, and it is truly heartwarming to see their confidence grow as they overcome new challenges.



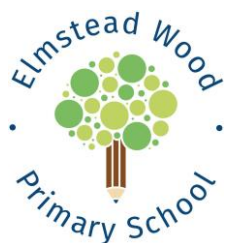
I would also like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to our staff. Their dedication and commitment are truly commendable, and I am grateful for the positive impact they are having on your children's lives.

As the festive season approaches, we would like to remind you of our annual Christmas Dinner, which will be held on Monday 18th December. Following the Christmas Dinner, Tuesday 19th December, is the last day of term before the well-deserved winter break. The school will be closed from Wednesday 20th December until Wednesday 3rd January. The children should return on Thursday, 4th January 2024, refreshed and ready for the Spring Term.

On behalf of the entire Elmstead Wood Primary School community, I wish you a joyful and peaceful holiday season. May this festive period be filled with love, laughter, and cherished moments with your loved ones.

Best wishes,

**Mrs R Haig**  
**Headteacher**



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### Dates for your Diary

18 <sup>th</sup> December	Christmas Dinner
19 <sup>th</sup> December	Last day of term
4 <sup>th</sup> January	First day of the Spring Term
8 <sup>th</sup> January	Reception and Y6 Height, Weight and Vision Screening
12 <sup>th</sup> February to 16 <sup>th</sup> February	Half Term
19 <sup>th</sup> February	Inset Day - no children in school
20 <sup>th</sup> February	Pupils return to school

### Staff Changes

I'm very sad to let you know that Mrs. Lowing will be leaving us at the end of the term to take up a position at a school closer to her home. I am sure that you will join me in wishing her well in her new job. She will be replaced by Miss Grace, who is already a staff member at the school and knows the children in Ash Class well.

### Reception



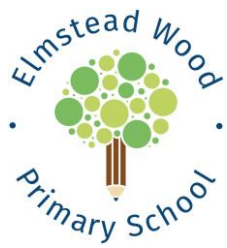
The Reception classes have had an amazing and busy first term in school and we are very pleased with how they have settled and adjusted to school life.

We have enjoyed learning about 'Real Life' Superheroes this half term and their important role in our community. We were very fortunate to have a visit from the Bromley Fire service and a huge thank you to Mr Cartwright who arranged this for us. We participated in a dress up day as a Superhero, for Children in

Need and in our Christmas jumpers!

We have also been thinking and observing seasonal changes at Forest School and when we have had some recent deep frosts.





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### Year 1

This half term year 1 went on a walk around Elmstead Woods. We used a map and compass to help us follow a route. We spotted lots of landmarks on the way including the gate, signposts, bridge and a gnome house. We talked about seasonal changes and experienced leaves falling off trees. It was a little bit chilly but we were wrapped up warm!



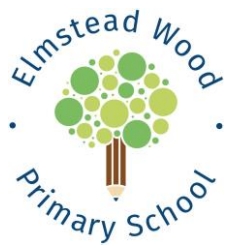
### Year 2



Year 2 visited St Edward's Church last week to learn about the importance of advent for Christians. Reverend Catherine talked to the children about how Christians prepare for Christmas and told them the story of the birth of Jesus. The children were able to see an advent wreath which they had learned about in school. They also had a lot of fun looking at the scene

depicting some of the characters from the first Christmas.





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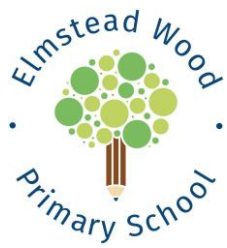
### Year 3 and Year 4

Beech, Elm and Willow classes have worked hard this half term, especially learning lines and songs for two performances! They have really enjoyed reading *Krindlekrax*, which inspired them when they were faced with the challenge of writing a diary entry and a newspaper article. The children have learnt a lot about the UK this half term, as they have covered the topic in Geography, so used the opportunity to use their new knowledge to write a non-chronological report. The children have had a great first term overall, and look forward to a well-earned rest before coming back in January to some exciting and challenging topics across our subjects.

### Year 5 and Year 6

Year 5/6 have had a fantastic and busy half term. In writing, we have been focusing on our class text, *Private Peaceful*, which related to our learning of WW1 in history. The children have all worked very hard to write a persuasive speech to convince all the young men in the area to join the war: engaging in lots of class based discussion.

In art, the children have looked at perspective when drawing and have been working to produce different cityscapes, based on Steven Wiltshire's art work. We have also learnt how to draw Manga style artwork. In P.E., we have been working on river crossing, which has allowed us to strengthen our communication skills.



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## Mottingham Library

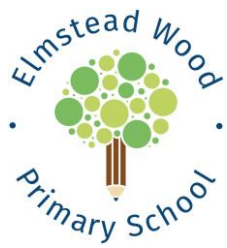


EYFS and the classes of KS1 have been busy making stockings, wreaths and baubles for a lovely display at Mottingham Library. Why not pop along over the Christmas holidays and see their hard work?



## PE and Sport

## Cricket Festival



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Year 4 children had a fantastic afternoon at a cricket festival. They learnt new skills of batting and bowling.



### Word of the Term



Remember, there is clear evidence between children's vocabulary and language development and their success through school and beyond.

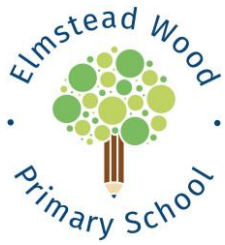
'Children who are behind in language development at **age five** are **six times less likely** to reach the expected standard in English at age eleven, and **11 times less likely** to achieve the expected level in maths.' *Department for Education, 2017*

'The correlation between vocabulary size and life chances is as firm as any correlation in educational research. Vocabulary is important because it embodies and communicates concepts.' *Ofsted 2019*

Words are important!

### Word of the Term

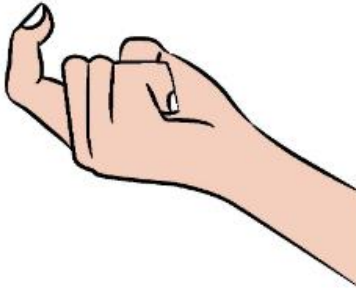
This term's word is:



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**beckoned**



## Meaning

To use your hand to ask someone to come to you.



## Challenge

Show how you can **beckon** someone to come to you. When do you need to **beckon**?



## Word Joke



I've been trying to write puns about sword fighting but I couldn't think of any words with a dual meaning.

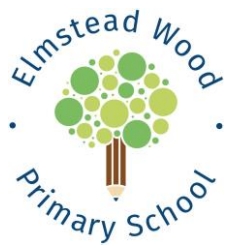
## Word Fact/Advice

This one is for adults only! Listen to yourself when you talk to your child. Who does most of the talking? Who does the listening? Who asks the questions? Children's language develops more when adults follow the child's interests, use comments instead of questions and really show they are listening. Set yourself a little target such as: giving your child more time to answer, comment more and question less, talk about things that interest your child. It's not as easy as it sounds, but really worth the effort.

## Interesting/Unusual Words - *Quiddle*

**Quiddle:** to spend time on trivial tasks as a way of avoiding the important ones.





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### Times Table Rockstars (TTRS) and Numbots



Children in year 2 upwards have been working hard on Times Table Rockstars.

We have had weekly interclass competitions, individual

winners and other prizes.

Well done to the classes and students that have won so far.

Below is some information on some of the different games.

**Garage** – This is the main mode the children should play. The questions will only come from the times tables the teacher has set for the week or they have been set based on their gig. As pupils start to answer questions, TT Rock Stars works out which facts they take longer on and will give them more of these questions to answer.

**Jamming** - children choose their questions.

**Studio** - the questions in the Studio can be anything from 2x2 up to 12x12. TT Rock Stars calculates each the mean speed from their last 10 games in the Studio and translates into a Rock Status.

**Sound check** - this is can be anything from 2x2 up to 12x12 but will be in the format of the year 4 multiplication check.

There are also multi-player modes: **Rock Arena** - The Arena allows players to compete against all other members of their Band/Class (their Band mates would need to join the same game in order to compete together).

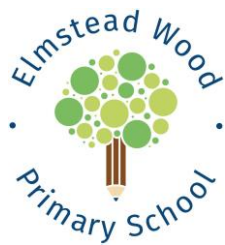
**Rock Festival** - The Rock Festival games are open to players from around the world. The questions are selected at random from 2x2 to 12x12.

**It is recommended that your child does a little bit of times table practice every night. Short bursts of practise on a daily basis are more effective than spending hours once a week.**



All children in KS1 and KS2 have access to Numbots. It is geared more for KS1 children but all children can engage with the programme. We have been awarding certificates in assembly for children who have been participating regularly.





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### ABOUT NUMBOTS

#### What is NumBots?

NumBots is an online maths learning platform that helps children learn how to add and subtract, improving their fluency and recall in basic mental maths, and equipping them with maths confidence.

#### Why is NumBots important?

Basic number skills are the essential building blocks for higher-level maths concepts. NumBots covers number recognition, number bonds, and addition and subtraction of double digit numbers; gradually helping your child to build a solid conceptual understanding of number sense.

#### How often should my child play?

We recommend a little and often approach; 3 minutes practice a day, 4 times a week is a good target.

### Charitable Donations

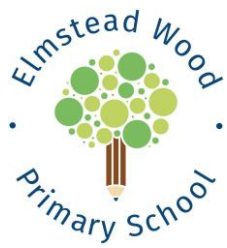
Thank you to everyone who gave money for Children in Need and Christmas Jumper Day. We raised £454.37 for BBC Children in Need and £300.78 for Christmas Jumper Day.

### PTA

The Elmstead Wood Primary School PTA would like to thank you all for all your support this term, which has been a very busy time.

We held a MacMillan coffee afternoon in the hall. There was an amazing turn out and we managed to raise £357.26! Thank you for all your lovely donations. Without them we wouldn't have been able to raise so much.

In November we held our Glow Disco. Once again there was a great turn out and the children all looked amazing in their disco clothes. Thank you to all the parents that volunteered in helping making the event run smoothly.



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### Elmstead Wood PTA Christmas Fayre



We want to say a huge thank you to everyone that attended and helped at our Christmas Fair last Saturday. It was so lovely to see so many of you attend and join in. We hope you all enjoyed it as much as we did. We managed to raise just over £1500. This money will be going to help fund new equipment for our school. We will be buying some new football goals out of it and much more.

We are always looking for new PTA members to join our friendly team. Please come along to a meeting or let the office know if you would like to be a part of Elmstead Wood Primary School PTA.

PTA would like to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a very Happy New Year.

We are all looking forward to running some more lovely events within the new year.

From all of us at the PTA  
Joanna Wright head of PTA

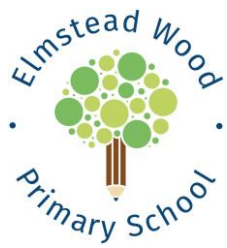
## Opal



### Outdoor Play and Learning – Where children thrive!

We have now completed another term of OPAL play. More and more children are loving being outside, no matter what the weather, as there is always so much to do. Whether it is playing with tyres and planks, digging, enjoying imaginative play in the bus, OPAL is offering a creative and exciting alternative to the regular activities on the playground.

In addition to the areas already being used, on our return in January we will be looking at enhancing the digging area and mud kitchen for the children. Through this kind of play, not



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only are children more active at lunchtime, they are also having the opportunity to further develop life skills such as cooperation, teamwork and problem solving. They are becoming motivated and enthusiastic builders, engineers, explorers and designers.

### **Thank you for you for your continuous support:-**

Sending your child into school with appropriate warm/waterproof clothing and wellies/or change of shoes so that they can access the field in all weather conditions.

Donating to school equipment etc. for the creative play

Supporting the OPAL ethos by asking your child about their play and accepting that they may get dirty... Some parents have been sending in spare clothes with their child for lunchtimes – please feel free to do this.

### **How to help....**

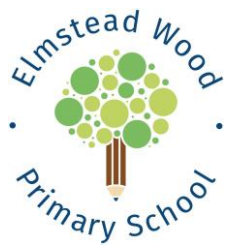
To continue with the important benefits of a stimulating outdoor learning environment and for the development of our children, we would love even more parental and community support. We are therefore asking if there are any parents out there who may have a trade (such as fencers, builders, gardeners etc.) or are able to retrieve items that would be useful in the playground?

With Christmas just around the corner, and a clear out inevitably in a lot of households, please consider if the item/s can be used on the playground, items may consist of:

Plastic Piping  
Water buckets  
Suitcases  
saucepans/trays/plastic utensils  
Blankets/Cushions  
Tarpaulin

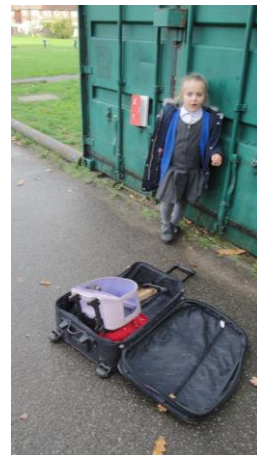
Please inform the school if you have any large items that you would like to donate, so that we can make the necessary arrangements for collection. Otherwise, please drop items off into the large OPAL container at the entrance of the school.

From all of us at OPAL, thank you for all your support. We wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!



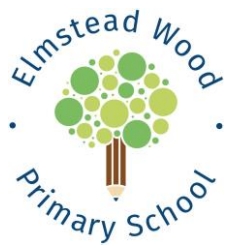
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Workshops





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**FREE Festive Day of Dance!**

**Saturday 16th December**  
**10.30am - 3pm**  
Elmstead Wood Primary School,  
Castlecombe Road, Nottingham, SE9 4AT

**NEW Magpie merchandise GIFT for all attendees!**

**Everybody welcome - no dance experience necessary!**  
**[Click here](#) to book your space**

**magpie**

**MOTtingham**  
We Local, We Proud  
Coming Together

### School Office Notices

- Please ensure that all changes in collection arrangements for your child are phoned into the school office before 2:45pm.
- All paid school services must be paid for in advance (breakfast club, after school club). The school has credit control procedures in place for any arrears.
- If you need to book breakfast club or after school club on an ad hoc basis, please email the relevant club in advance. Payment on ParentPay must be made before your child attends and does not automatically notify the club that your child will be attending.
- Please could all late arrivals be signed in on the EntrySign in the entrance hall.
- If children are not collected by 3:30pm and the school has not received notification from a parent or guardian, they will be taken to the after school club. This is a chargeable service.