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WELCOME

We hope that this handbook will serve as a reference to help you find your way around the School, its ethos, organisation and policies.

Many different paths lead families to Elmfield, with different hopes and expectations. From the moment of arrival the new family will sense a different ethos and that a far-reaching picture of educational aims and child development lies at its heart. This is seen in many

areas: the curriculum, the approach to each child, teachers' training, organisation, approach to learning, play and the materials used.

Steiner education needs and depends upon the support and understanding of each child's family: we work in partnership between home and school. The ideals underlying Elmfield were established by Rudolf Steiner at the beginning of the last century. They arise out of his philosophy of understanding and educating the child as a whole person, not solely



Class 7 landscape

developing the intellect. Education does not begin and end at the school gates. If the child can find at home a reflection of the experiences gained at school, she or he will derive far more from the education here.

Policies and practices are reviewed continuously, and you will find the latest versions of our key policies at <https://elmfield.com/policies>.

This handbook is a growing document, so please feel free to visit it regularly, and to speak to us about any gaps or suggestions. It will be updated regularly and it is crucial that parents do not assume that a printed version is the latest version. The latest version will always be on the school website.

We hope you will feel enthused to become involved in the many areas of school life where parents make an invaluable contribution and that you will soon feel a part of the School community.

Elmfield's Mission Statement

"Our highest endeavour must be to develop free human beings who are able of themselves to impart purpose and direction to their lives. The need for imagination, a sense of truth and a feeling of responsibility - these three forces are the very nerve of education."

Our task at Elmfield is to help the children to realise their own potential. Together we endeavour to provide education rooted in Rudolf Steiner's view of the human being, thus preparing the children for their individual paths in life.

Background to Waldorf Education

Elmfield is one of over 1,000 Steiner Waldorf Schools worldwide. In the British Isles, there are around 29.

Each school takes inspiration from the philosophy and educational ideals of Rudolf Steiner, the Austrian educationalist, author and lecturer active in the first decades of the 20th century.

Waldorf education had its beginnings in the social chaos of Europe in the years following the First World War. Inspired by his lectures on education, Emil Molt, a German cigarette manufacturer, asked Steiner to form a new school for the children of the employees of his factory in Stuttgart.

In Autumn 1919 the school, sponsored by the Waldorf-Astoria cigarette factory, opened its doors. Within a few years others followed, mostly in Germany and Switzerland, but also in Holland, Britain, Scandinavia and the United States.

During the 1930s the Nazis closed all the schools in Germany, but they re-opened in 1945, and many new ones followed. The number of schools outside Germany grew more slowly until the early 1970s, when a new phase began. In Holland, Britain and North America in particular, the number of Waldorf schools trebled in the ten years between 1973 and 1983, and in Germany it doubled. The growth continues today, and it is now the largest independent educational movement in the world offering the full range of education for children from 3 to 18 years.

Integral to Waldorf education is its view of each child as a unique individual developing through evolving phases of childhood towards an adulthood in which the individual can find full freedom of expression. Every step in the child's education may be seen as geared to this end.



Class 7 Fire

History of Elmfield

Elmfield School opened in 1934 in a house called Elmfield in Selly Oak, Birmingham, the home of Henry Lloyd Wilson and his wife Theodora, whose son Michael, in conjunction with Fried Geuter, invited Eileen Hutchins to found the venture. It was initially intended to provide an education for the children of people working at Sunfield Children's Homes in Clent, but was open to other children as well.

When war broke out in 1939 the school was evacuated and two classes were offered temporary accommodation at Sir Hugh and Lady Chance's home in Bromsgrove, while the rest were housed at Sunfield in Clent. After a term all were reunited at Sunfield, with school taking place in former workshops there. Two years later, however, the school was closed except for a small Kindergarten group that was carried through the war years by Eileen Hutchins.

At the end of the war, Eileen Hutchins' father bought Park Hill, the present main building of the school. After clearing up the dilapidated house and garden, following occupation by US Army troops who had been billeted there, the opening took place on 16th October 1946. In 1952 Eileen Hutchins' father gave Park Hill, its outbuildings and its land, to the school. Thornhill, the house next door, was bought - along with its resident peacocks - in 1962, with a condition of sale being that the school should look after the peacocks!

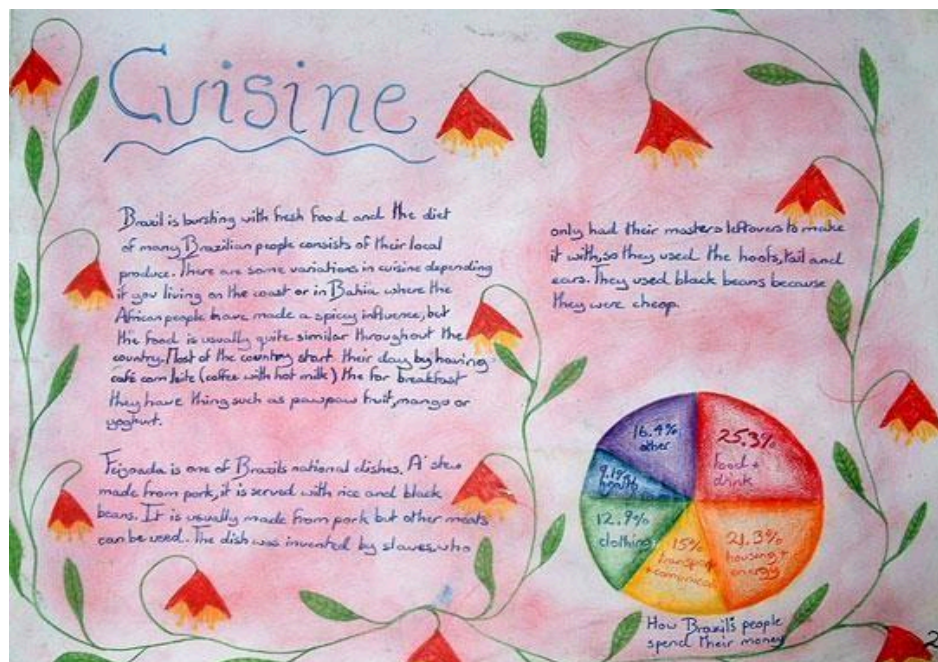
Further buildings were added and alterations made: the gym hall, uniting the two houses, a handwork and classroom block (Blue Cedar), and the Tobias Wing, with its purpose-built Eurythmy room, laboratory, pottery and classrooms. The latest addition to the school was the extension to the Tobias wing, in the 1990s. This new building, Gawain, has provided the school with four large, well-equipped classrooms and a smaller room used for information technology and smaller subject groups.



Eileen Hutchins (1902 – 1987) the founder and leading teacher of Elmfield School. An Oxford graduate, she taught from its beginnings in 1934 until the 1970s, from kindergarten to the lower and upper school, and trained and inspired new teachers.

What's Special About Elmfield

- Elmfield teaches the international Steiner Waldorf curriculum, which in the Upper School (Class 9 upwards) runs in parallel to the GCSE programme.
- There are no SATS or national testing until GCSEs, which are taken over two years with the Waldorf curriculum run in parallel. Assessment is continuous and qualitative with regular screening by the Learning Support Department, which takes into consideration all aspects of the child's development.
- Languages are taught from age six: German and Spanish.
- The curriculum is designed to develop the physical, social and emotional growth of the young person as well as their intellect.
- Formal learning and writing and reading are only started after the age of six. Childhood is not a race: by protecting childhood we help to equip our pupils with abilities for life, as evidenced by our pupils' successes.
- Teachers teach with imagination using music, stories, movement, crafts and art as tools for learning. We also place a high value on nurturing the individual child's creativity.
- Pupils stay in the same class group throughout. From Classes 1 to 5, and then 6 to 8, the pupil may be with the same class teacher, with subject teachers playing an increasing role. In the Upper School pupils are assigned two class guardians to oversee their academic and pastoral well-being and progress.
- Seasonal festivals play an important part in the life of the school. End of term festivals give pupils an opportunity to share their work with parents and family –these normally take place on the last full day of each term.
- Elmfield's GCSE results are among the best in the region. Local colleges give very positive feedback about the calibre of Elmfield's pupils and their attitude to learning.



PRACTICAL INFORMATION

The School Day

Early Years (for ages of classes please see section below)

Parent and Child Group: we run a range of groups during the week. Contact the school for latest times.

Nursery Class and Kindergartens: 8.40am - 12.40pm
Monday to Friday (Nb: Transition Class continues until 3.15pm on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday afternoons.)

Class 1-5: 8.55am - 3.15pm.

Class 6: 8.55am-3.15pm with one additional lesson per week until 4pm.

Classes 7-8: 8.55am-3.15pm with two additional lessons per week until 4pm.

9 and above: 8.55am-3.15pm with additional lessons up to four afternoons per week until 4pm. This may vary from year to year.

The School buildings open at 8.40am. Please note that the school does not supervise children before school opens, unless this is arranged by the class teacher, and the school cannot take responsibility for them. Children in nursery, kindergarten and classes 1 - 3 should not be left unsupervised before school. Children in classes 4 upwards can be left but parents do so entirely at their own risk. Registration begins at 8.55am, by which time all children should be in their classrooms, ready to start work at 9.00am.

At present, Nursery, Kindergarten are collected from their classrooms. The Class 1 teacher/assistant brings the children to the doorway at the end of the Yellow Passage for collection. All other children can be collected from the front of the building. Where parents are unexpectedly more than 15 minutes late, children will be sent to Wraparound Care to wait.

Morning Break ('Little Break') is from 11.00am -11.25am

Lunch Break ('Big Break') is 12.45pm - 1.40pm



School Absence and Collection

Parents or guardians must account for the absence of any pupil for the whole or part of the school day. Please inform the school office, if possible in advance, but no later than 9.30am, of any absence (if telephoning please press option 1 on the school answerphone message). The school office will follow up any pupil not shown as present on the register by this time as a matter of urgency. This is to protect the child's safety and welfare and is part of our statutory morning registration procedure. Pupils who are late and miss the register are required to sign in at the school office.

If you are delayed by more than 15 minutes in collecting your child, she or he will be sent to Wraparound Care for safe supervision. At the end of school it is not always possible to pass messages to a child, so please reassure them that if you are delayed they can approach the duty teacher and they will be cared for.

As part of our ongoing commitment to pupil and staff safety **we ask that you follow our entry procedure at the school gates:** When you arrive at school, if the gates are closed, you will need to state your name, the reason for requesting entry to the school, and if you are collecting a child, the name and class of the child. Please do not allow anyone to come in through the gates with you, without them first having spoken to the office in this way. This process applies to both pedestrians and those arriving by car.

We are aware that this may be a slight inconvenience at busier collection times such as 12.30. However, we hope that you will appreciate that the goal is simply to ensure the ongoing safety of all the children and staff in the school.

Punctuality is very important to our learning environment. Most class teachers mark the beginning of the school day with a friendly handshake and greeting for each child as he or she enters the class.



Wraparound Care

Breakfast Club

Full session (7:15-8:45) £8 per child (second child discount £5)

Half session (8:00 - 8:45) £5 per child (second child discount £3)

After School Club

Full session (3.15pm- 5.15pm) £12 per child (second child discount £8)

Half session (3:15pm - 4:30) £8 per child (second child discount £5)

These sessions must be booked in advance, on a termly basis, and will be invoiced as soon as the booking is confirmed, but no later than two weeks after the start of each term

Ad hoc bookings; we recognise you may need to make occasional use of our service. If there is space we will try to accommodate, but cannot guarantee a space. This will be charged at £13 until 5.15.

Late pick up payments: if your child is booked in until 5.15 but is not picked up by then you will be charged the additional payment of £5

Car Parking

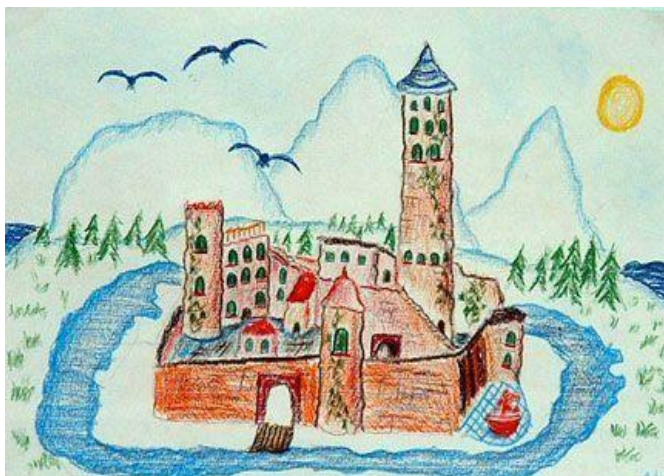
There is no parent parking on the school site, unless you require disabled access. It is essential that we maintain emergency vehicle access and that we have virtually no traffic on site so that small children are as safe as possible. During pick up and drop off times the school gates remain closed for the safety of pupils on site. We encourage walking or cycling to school for the physical safety and health of all, and for the benefits to learning such a start brings. There is a covered bike area by the School Shop and by the Upper School entrance

There is limited parking on the streets outside the school and nearby. If you need to accompany your child into school, there is also further parking by Mary Stevens' Park. Please avoid parking in front of local residents' driveways, on the pavement or on yellow lines, blocking visibility, or parking near the lollipop crossing person.

Security

The security of pupils at Elmfield is paramount and the site is protected by electric gates

Parents and volunteers are welcome at Elmfield during the day and should buzz to gain entrance and then report to Reception, sign in and wear a visitor's badge. At all times, other than drop-off or collection, you must report to Reception and sign in.



Parents and carers of children up to Class 1 may deliver their children to the classroom between 8.40am and 9am. Early Years parents and carers can collect their children from the classroom between 12.30pm and 1.00pm, and between 3.15pm and 3.30pm, depending on the day and their age.

Carers and parents of pupils in classes 2 and above must wait at the front of the buildings at these times.

The front lawn is an excellent space for building the community, but it is also an invaluable teaching space. Therefore, during the hours of 8.50am and 4.00pm we need to ensure this space is available for class teaching and other school activities as required. We don't wish to stop parents from being able to have a quick chat but this shouldn't be longer than five or ten minutes. If parents wish to stay longer they are of course welcome to make use of the social space attached to the School Shop.

School Closure Policy: Winter Weather or Power or Heating Breakdown

It is our policy to endeavour to keep School open irrespective of weather conditions. Parents will decide whether travelling to school is safe or suitable for their circumstances. If your child is not coming in, we ask that you notify us in the normal way, so that we know that your child is safe and do not duplicate telephone calls. Please note that announcements concerning Dudley's schools on the radio or internet do not normally apply to Elmfield. The school will use its website to inform parents of any changes. In the event of heating or power breakdown or teaching becoming impossible, unsafe or impractical for some reason, a decision may be made that School will close for the day. No pupil in Class 10 or under will be sent home without parental permission.

Very rarely a decision to close School may be made before the start of the School day. In this case, an email will be sent to inform parents that school is closed and the school website will be updated with the closure information. If you arrive at School to find it is closed, please make sure you notify the teacher or other person in charge that you are taking your child home again. Pupils walking to School alone must still register at School. This is to make sure all pupils are properly accounted for and safe.

If you decide your child needs to leave early because of weather or other conditions, please phone the School to let us know.



Class 10 painting

Elmfield Classes and their Equivalents in the State Sector

The chart below shows the order of the classes at Elmfield, the ages of the children in each class and how these correspond with schools in the state sector. For the purposes of placing children in their correct classes, Elmfield takes its year as starting on September 1st, in line with the local state sector. Children enter class 1 in the September after their 6th birthday, subject to individual review by the Early Years staff. In general we do not put children up a year as emotional immaturity tends to inhibit the children in later years.

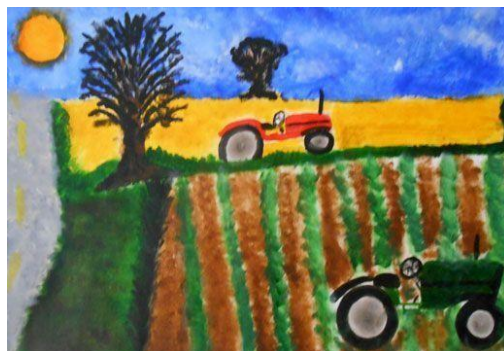
Elmfield	Age	State Sector
Parent & Child Group	0-3 yrs.	Playgroups/Day Care
Nursery	3-4 yrs.	Pre-school
Kindergarten	4-5 yrs.	Reception
Transition	5-6 yrs.	Year 1
Class 1	6-7 yrs.	Year 2 / Top infants
Class 2	7-8 yrs.	Year 3
Class 3	8-9 yrs.	Year 4
Class 4	9-10 yrs.	Year 5
Class 5	10-11 yrs.	Year 6
Class 6	11-12 yrs.	Year 7 Secondary
Class 7	12-13 yrs.	Year 8
Class 8	13-14 yrs.	Year 9
Class 9	14-15 yrs.	Year 10
Class 10	15-16 yrs.	Year 11
Class 11	16-17 yrs.	Year 12



WORKING TOGETHER: HOME AND SCHOOL

A happy and successful education is dependent upon a healthy relationship between home and school. At Elmfield we place a high value on our warm school community in which parents and teachers work together.

To support this we have some formal arrangements in place, and ask for parents to support our ethos and rules. This section describes some of the key structures and school rules and policies.



Class 5 painting

Home-School Understanding

Enrolling a child in any school means that parents and teachers enter into a partnership in order to foster the best atmosphere for education to take place. At Elmfield we recognise the great value of this partnership but realise that, without a formal structure, this relationship can sometimes be unclear. For this reason we have introduced the home-school understanding in order to bring some clarity of expectations to our joint endeavour. It is expected that every new family joining the school will sign this document.

Clothing

While there is no school uniform we require pupils to attend school in clothing suitable for all weathers and able to participate fully and safely in activities outside and indoors. Pupils go outside at break times in most weather conditions. In their own interests and that of their education pupils need to wear warm outdoor clothes suitable for the time of year. Indoor and outdoor shoes are required, and both must be suitable for running in.

The guiding principle behind our clothing policy is that pupils come to school simply, appropriately and adequately dressed for their school day. Should a pupil not comply with these rules they will be asked to remedy the situation. If they fail to do so or cannot do so at school, they will be sent home or will work in isolation until they can be sent home.

We ask parents to support us by adhering to our rules and encouraging older pupils to do so. The full clothing policy is available on the website. It gives our full guidelines including our rules on hair dye and piercings. There is also a separate section referring specifically to Class 11.

Festival Dress

At the end of each term we have a school festival and generally pupils are asked to wear 'festival dress', which consists of smart and brightly coloured clothing. Classes 1 – 8 would be expected to dress in this way irrespective of whether they are contributing to the festival. For the Whitsun Festival, in the Spring Term, white shirts or dresses are requested. Everyone must, of course, make a special effort to look smart and presentable for such occasions.

Equipment List

This will change from year to year, so please check with your child's class teacher for any variations or if there is anything that is unclear to you. The class teacher generally writes to parents prior to the start of each new academic year with a list of equipment needed. Many items may be purchased from the School shop.

Needed by all children from Class 1 upwards or as indicated:

- Food for Little and Big lunch (See Food Code)
- Indoor shoes (pumps or non-slip canvas)
- Choroi flute (Class 1 and above) - purchased normally through the School shop
- Swimming kit (Classes 3 - 4)
- Set of block crayons (Classes 2 – 6 inclusive) - appropriate crayons are available from the Bookshop
- Set of stick crayons (Classes 2 – 6 inclusive)
- Set of coloured pencils (Class 2 and above)
- Lead pencils (Class 3 and above)
- Pencil sharpener (Class 2 and above)
- Eraser (Class 2 and above)
- 30cm ruler (Class 3 and above)
- Gym kit – white top, dark shorts, leggings or jogging bottoms (Class 3 and above)
- Painting shirts (Classes 1 and 2)
- Pencil case (Class 2 and above)
- Fountain pen and cartridges (Class 4 and above) · English dictionary (Class 4 and above) **Needed by Class 5 and above:**
- Pair of Compasses (Class 5 and above)
- Foreign language dictionaries (Class 6 and above) · Geometry kit (Class 6 and above)
- Cookery ingredients or money as required (Class 7 and above)

Needed by Class 7

Calligraphy set

Craft materials as instructed by subject teachers

Gym and Games: Up to class 8 we require white T-shirts and jogging trousers or shorts of any dark colour. Sweatshirts may be worn on top in cold weather. Plimsolls are recommended for indoor use. For outdoors, trainers are most suitable. In the Upper School appropriate sports clothing of any colour may be worn.

Eurythmy: Eurythmy shoes are issued by the school, parents may be asked to pay for replacement shoes if lost by a pupil.

Food Policy

The school morning is long so it is advisable that all pupils have a good nourishing breakfast before they come to school.

Morning Break at around 11 am is time for a mid-morning snack. In the main school it is brought in by the pupils and should be as free from additives, sugar and colourings as possible. A wholesome break will help your child to concentrate and work well. Chocolates and sweets are not permitted.

In Kindergarten, a healthy 'Little Lunch' is prepared by the teachers, the assistants and the children together, and is a very special part of the morning.

At 12.45 pm the children eat a packed lunch in their classroom in the company of their class teacher or guardian. The nutritional importance of this meal cannot be stressed enough.



Class 10 drawing

The following rules of thumb should be applied to lunches:

- Sandwiches with cheese (not cheese strings)/meat/other protein source, rice/pasta,
- salad, vegetables to form the substantial part of their lunch.
- Fruit/yoghurt – no chocolate or toffee flavours however, and yoghurt should be in a pot, not a tube.
- Water or fruit juice to drink, no fizzy drinks.
- No chocolate bars or sweets, except on special occasions such as birthdays.
- 'Snack foods', such as crisps and cakes should be kept to a minimum.

It is recognised that there is a growing case for awareness in the school for those children and staff who suffer from food allergies and the need to mitigate the risk. Whilst it is not feasible to operate a school-wide ban to food products such as nuts and seeds, there may be occasions where a ban is necessary in a certain class. Parents will be informed by the class teacher or guardian if this is the case.

Homework

Homework is usually begun on a regular basis in Class 5, but the timing of the introduction and the amount depend on the class teacher's assessment of the needs of the class. In the early stages teachers usually set homework which is appropriate to the content and rhythm of the main lesson. It is important that the children can both do it and enjoy doing it.

From a Class 9 parent:

"As our children move on up the school, so the amount of homework increases. The volume builds up swiftly towards the end of the Lower School. This is the time that children are most likely to slip into difficulties and this is when we must watch over them closely. As parents we can do much to support our children and their teachers by showing interest in the homework, offering peaceful space, time and help when needed. It is good to keep in touch with the teachers on an individual basis or in Parents' Evenings, as pupils' ideas of the homework tasks set often differ from those of their teachers! If problems or misunderstandings arise, it is often helpful to approach the class teacher or guardian before the situation gets out of hand."



Class 9 painting

School Rules

We ask for support from parents, pupils and friends with our rules, and conforming to all the rules is a condition of attendance at the school. The rules also apply to all school events, assemblies, festivals and outings.



General

Every pupil is expected to behave reasonably at all times, with courtesy and consideration for other members of the school and the community and show care and respect for property and the environment. Inconsiderate behaviour on the journey to and from school, the unauthorised presence of pupils in Stourbridge town and district during school hours, and unruly behaviour at public events and in public places all bring disrepute to the pupils concerned and the school as a whole.

Attendance

Punctuality is essential. The pupils must be ready in their classrooms to start lessons promptly. Pupils must attend all their timetabled lessons, including study periods, and all school festivals, unless they have permission to do otherwise.

School Property

Pupils must not misuse or damage school property. Parents or guardians will be notified and the School reserves the right to charge families for costs of wilful or neglectful damage

School Bounds

Pupils may not leave the school grounds during school hours without permission. Class 11 pupils may leave school during the main lunch break after written consent from parents has been received. Pupils must observe the bounds set within the school grounds and premises. The school is out of bounds outside school hours, i.e. before 8.40am and after 4.15pm, except for authorised activities.

Safety Outdoors

Please exercise extreme care in the drive and see that young children are under control. They are not allowed to climb the trees on the front lawn or go too close to the wall overlooking the road, for their own safety.

We ask parents to ensure that no bicycles, scooters, roller skates, blades or skateboards are ridden on the school grounds. Once you have collected your child, you are responsible for their safety and behaviour.

Cycles may be parked in the bicycle shed near the Shop; this area is otherwise out of bounds. Middle and Upper School pupils have their own bicycle shed.

Dogs

Dogs brought onto the school site must at all times remain on a short lead with a responsible adult. They may not enter the school buildings at any time, nor should they be tied up outside the buildings unattended. Should your dog foul the site please clear up any mess immediately.

Chewing Gum

Chewing gum is not allowed at school.

Mobile Phone Policy

Elmfield School and grounds are a mobile and free zone. It is a Safeguarding requirement that parents and visitors turn off their phones while they are on the School site. While mobile phones are now considered an integral part of modern life, there are many ways in which they can be detrimental within the school environment, including:

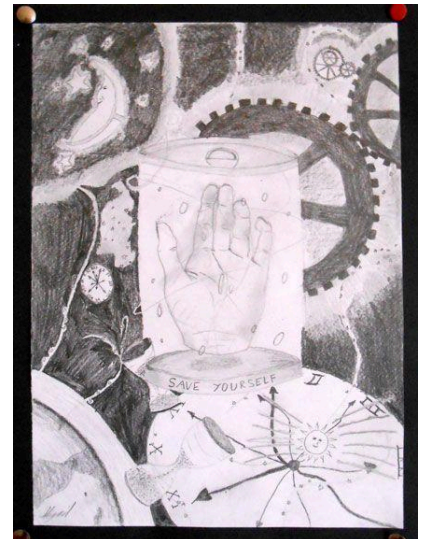
- Disturbance and distraction in lessons
- Risk of theft and loss
- Potential for bullying
- Uncontrolled photography and footage, including of children For these reasons Elmfield has a strict code relating to mobile phones.

Children in classes below Class 6 are not allowed to bring phones into school. Those in Class 6 and above should hand their phone into their Class Teacher/Guardian at registration and collect them back at the end of the day. Therefore, any phone found during school time in these classes will be confiscated for that day and held in the School Office for collection by the parent/any other nominated adult at the end of the day. Exceptions are when the Class Teacher has agreed to a written request from the parent.

The full Mobile Phone Policy is available to read on the website

Electronic Equipment

Personal radios, computers, electronic games and other electronic equipment are not allowed to be brought onto the school premises without special permission. The school will confiscate such items. Reasonable care will be taken of confiscated items; however, the school will not be responsible for loss or damage to confiscated items. The latter must be collected by the child's parent from the Office or teacher in charge at the end of the school day or any other time period set by the teacher who confiscated the item.



Child Health, Illness and Medication

Illness - Accidents – Emergencies

If a child feels poorly, or a minor accident happens at school, first-aid is available within school hours. There are trained first aiders in all parts of the school and first aid boxes and in various areas of the school. The school is in loco parentis but cannot give painkillers or other medication without parental consent. Where pupils have a specific existing medical condition requiring medication an individual protocol should be drawn up. Please ensure the office is informed, in writing, of medical conditions such as allergies or any chronic medical condition, so that this can be done.

If there is a more serious injury or the school is concerned about a child's health, an ambulance will be called and the family contacted as soon as possible.

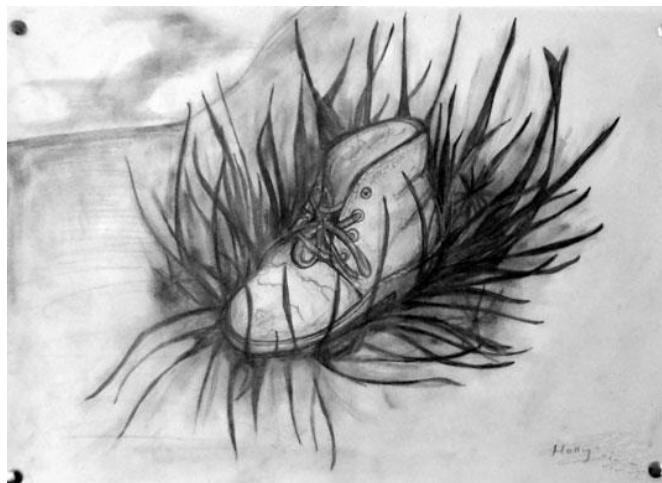
Should a child fall ill during school time, but not need hospital attention, the parents will be telephoned and asked to take the child home as soon as possible. There is a small 'sick room' next to the office where the child may lie down and wait to be collected.

Infectious illnesses

In order to minimise transmission of infections we ask that children are kept at home for 48 hours after an episode of diarrhoea or vomiting. Please also notify the school if your child develops an infectious or notifiable illness so that we can place information notices and advise individuals whose immunity needs protection. Such illnesses include rubella (German Measles), slapped cheek syndrome and most childhood illnesses. We recognise the importance of proper convalescence.

Head Lice

Please check hair regularly. Regular combing with a head lice comb on very wet hair has proved to be effective when carried out on a regular and systematic basis. In the case of a child having head lice, the class teacher must be notified in order that everyone's hair can be checked and treated.

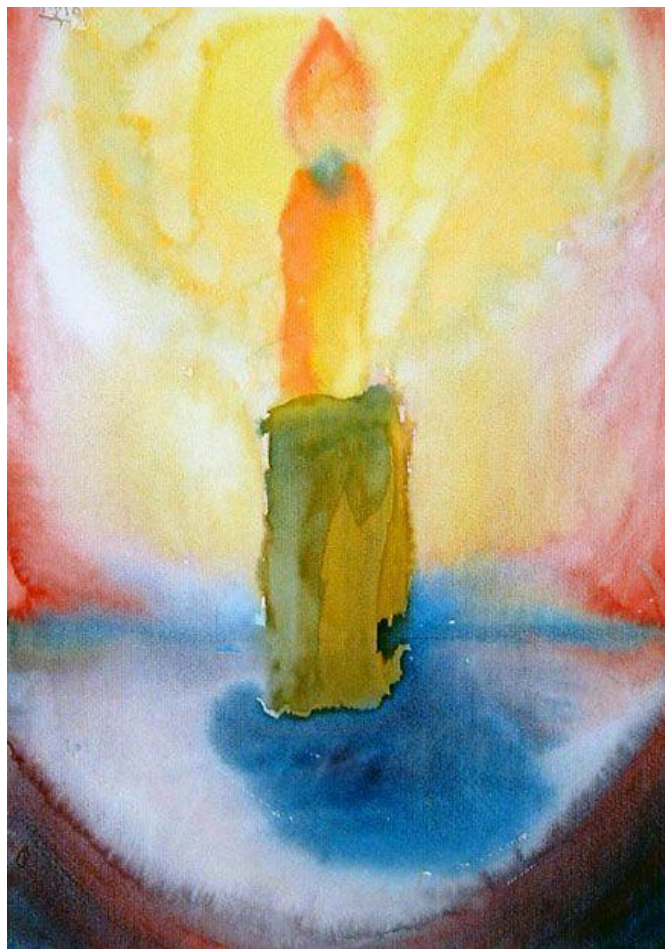


Class 8 drawing

Recommended Bedtimes

Sometimes children show signs of sleep deficiency, which has an adverse effect on their emotional and physical wellbeing, so the following guidelines for bedtimes are suggested. Sleep patterns can vary individually and depend on family circumstances. These guidelines are based on the assumption that the child rises at about 7.30am.

Nursery and Kindergarten	7.00 - 7.30pm
Class 1, 2, 3	7.30 - 8.00pm
Class 4, 5, 6	8.00 - 9.00pm
Class 7, 8, 9	9.00 - 10.00pm
Class 10, 11	10.00 -10.30pm

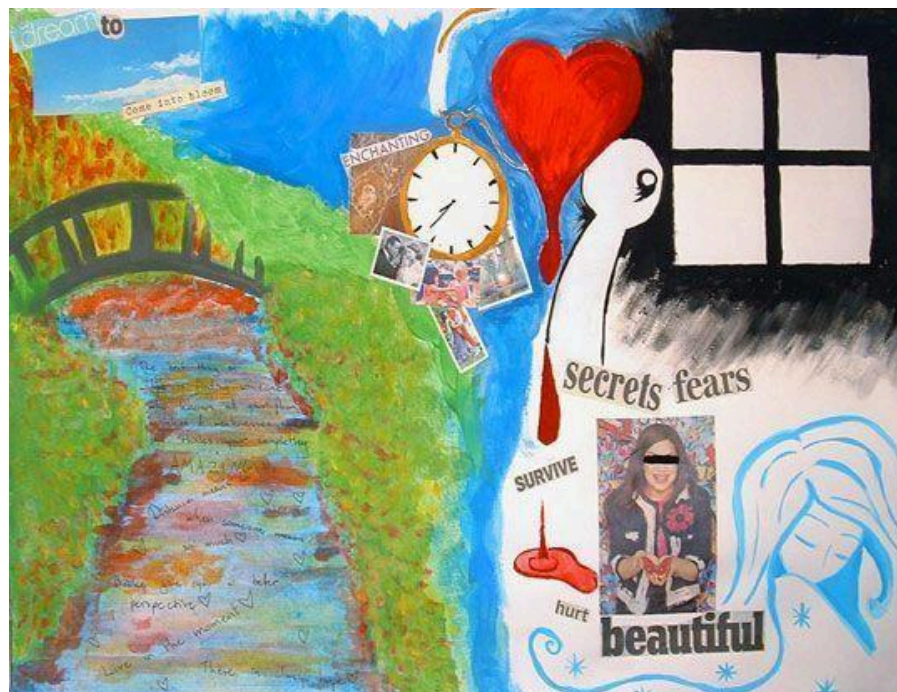


Alcohol, Drugs, Smoking/Vaping

The consumption or possession of alcohol or illegal drugs is forbidden on the school premises. The school grounds and all buildings except private residential areas are no smoking areas at all times (term times and holidays). Pupils may also not smoke within a 100m radius from the school gates.

In the students' social and domestic life we rely on the co-operation of parents in following a policy which accords with UK law. This means that there should be complete abstinence from the use of any illegal drugs, and that the law relating to the purchase and consumption of alcohol and tobacco be observed. If we have reason to believe that a student is breaking the law and/or is abusing alcohol or tobacco to such an extent that it is interfering with his/her education or health we may ask for a meeting with the student, the parents and teachers. In the unlikely event that such discussions lead us to the conclusion that the parents are not committed to supporting the School's policy on such matters, we may have to ask that the student be withdrawn from the School. Parental cooperation with the school is essential.

We wish to uphold a healthy and safe social environment: one in which all students will feel free to participate without negative peer pressure, particularly where social events are concerned. Your support and commitment to the effective supervision of social events amongst our students will go a long way towards building a support network for the student in a time when drug use in society is becoming more the norm than the exception.



Class 11 painting

Parents' Activities

The school is fortunate to be host to a rich life of parents' study and activities, most of which are the initiative of our parents. These range from series of topical talks and discussion evenings on the Steiner curriculum and Elmfield as a school, to the study of Steiner's works; from mutual parent support groups to practical crafts, theatre, choir and festival workshops. Volunteer parents' and teachers' workdays are organised from time to time where we can do urgently needed improvements to the school fabric and thereby ease the school's financial situation. At the same time we can also discover one another in new ways, opening the doors to new friendships and nurturing awareness of the school as a community. All these activities are announced in the weekly newsletter. There is also a Parents' Library where, for a small membership fee, books covering the works of Rudolf Steiner and other topics of interest may be borrowed. If interested, contact the Community Group through the School Office or the School Shop.

The School Shop

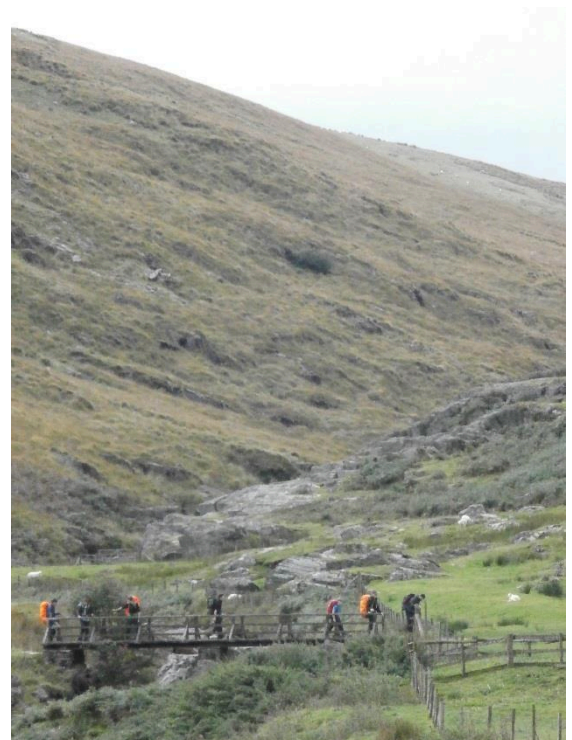
Feel welcome to browse and discover a very extensive selection of reasonably priced goods: books (full price and bargain), stationery, art and craft materials, organic body care products, candles, crystals, gemstone jewellery, rainbow glass crystals, traditional toys. There is a wide selection of fair trade gifts, and a large choice of cards. You will also be able to buy many of the age appropriate crayons and pencils needed by pupils attending Elmfield in the shop, and background reading on Waldorf education, child development and anthroposophy.

The shop is situated near the exit gate, behind the Coach House, and we are open term time from 8.30am to 4.00pm. You may contact the shop by calling the School Office – 01384 396433.

The Duke of Edinburgh Award

We run both the Bronze and Silver award schemes at Elmfield for our pupils in Classes 8 and 9. Expeditions take place in the Summer term. The Bronze groups visit local areas of beauty like the Clent Hills and Kinver Edge, while the Silvers usually travel to the Long Mynd and the Elan Valley in Wales.

We have been running the DofE award at Elmfield for many years now and can see the huge benefits it gives to our pupils in terms of increased self confidence, social and team-building skills, and hopefully an increased appreciation for, and love of, the great outdoors.



ORGANISATION

School Leadership Team

The School Leadership Team of Elmfield is made up of the Principal, School Lead, assistant heads and the Finance Manager. These colleagues are responsible for the strategic running of the school and its day-to-day operations.

The Education Meeting works at the heart of the school and is accountable for the Waldorf curriculum and ethos. One of its central tasks is to maintain the integrity of the school as a Steiner Waldorf school, while developing the curriculum and related activities in line with the needs of the children. The meeting occurs on a Thursday evenings during term time and all colleagues attend.

Staff Meetings take place for each department (Early Years, Lower School and Upper School), and they meet weekly to deal with educational matters, including pupil development, educational study, sharing of new and best practice and staff development. The general staff meeting takes place every two weeks to deal collectively with day to day organisational matters.

School Governance

The Elmfield Trust is a charitable trust, founded in 1952, which owns the land and most of the buildings of the school with the intention that these be used for Steiner Waldorf education.

The Council of Management oversees all aspects of the school management. Link Trustees are connected to different aspects of school life and will meet regularly with members of the SLT to discuss school matters.

The 'Three Pillars' - Chair of Council, School Lead and Principal meet fortnightly.

The Finance Committee - Chair of Finance, Chair of Council, School Lead, Principal and Finance Manager meet monthly

The Council of Management, as a whole, meet each half-term.

Members of the Council of Management can be also contacted via the school's office on 01384 394633 or by writing to the school.

The Community Group

The Community Group provides ongoing support to the school community in achieving its mission of providing the best possible Steiner Waldorf education for our children.

In order to do this, it:

- acts as a communication link between the school and the parents to foster an inclusive and supportive community around the school's aims and philosophy.
- initiates and manages fundraising activities
- offers parents, teachers and friends the opportunity to discuss, challenge and influence what happens in the school.
- organises informal social events that give all parents the chance to get to know each other better.
- actively supports the organisation of events that aim to provide members of the school community with opportunities to explore Steiner Waldorf education.

Waldorf UK

Waldorf UK is the association of all accredited Steiner Waldorf schools in the United Kingdom and Ireland. Each full or associate member school has representation at its Council. The Fellowship's task is to represent and promote Steiner Waldorf education at all national levels and to encourage mutual responsibility for the standard of this education throughout the country. It runs an extensive professional teachers' support and advisory service for general class teaching as well as a number of specific subject areas, which is available to all member schools. The Fellowship welcomes enquires of a more general nature about Steiner Education - requests for advice and literature, lectures or exhibitions, inquiries about teacher training facilities, etc. It has an active policy of raising the profile of Steiner education through political and media outreach and through participation in professional educational conferences and policy think-tanks.

email admin@steinerwaldorf.org.uk

website www.steinerwaldorf.org.uk



COMMUNICATION

The Reception Office

Elmfield's reception is in the main Park Hill building. It is normally open between 8.15am and 4.30pm, and an answerphone is available out of hours, or when office staff are called away. Messages and enquiries should be made through the office, which can also provide information about the School including the audited accounts, prospectus, application forms, and policies.

Messages

Meetings with teachers can be initiated through the office. Important telephone messages will be passed on to teachers, and in emergencies to pupils. Please note that the office is very busy at times, so please only do this if absolutely essential. The best time to ring in with a message is before 10.00am, in time for the 11.00am break. After office hours, messages can be left on the answering machine and will be dealt with first thing the following morning. In real emergencies a message will be taken direct to the teacher of the child concerned.

Family and Children's Details

Details of each child, family contact addresses and telephone numbers are held on our computer database. This is only as accurate as the information given to us. Please keep us informed of address changes or any other contact details including emergency contact people.

Newsletter

This is our weekly newsletter which provides parents and teachers with up-to-date information on the various events and happenings at Elmfield. People can advertise their goods or services, though these are accepted at the editor's discretion. Items to be published should be brief (max 100 words) and should have the contributor's name at the end. They may be emailed to the editor using info@elmfield.com by the deadline stated in the previous issue. No hand-written contributions will be accepted. You will receive the newsletter by email.

Website

The school's website is increasingly used for all information about the school, including prospectus, policies, this handbook and notices. Please do not hesitate to contact us with feedback and suggestions.

Telephones, letters and emails

Elmfield uses email for its primary method of communication, and the website for updating policies and the Handbook. As we place a high importance on working together with parents, you will also be provided with email details for your child's class teacher or guardian. This is for urgent or essential communication about your child's progress and wellbeing.

Parents' Evenings

Parents' evenings play a vital part in the fabric of school life. Each class has one parents' evening per term and it is essential that parents and guardians attend every meeting. Information about the curriculum, the teacher's approach to it, and topical issues concerning the class are discussed, including the general pedagogical and social well-being of the class. Future activities such as trips are raised at parents' evenings. This is a valuable forum for parents to discuss whole class issues with one another and the class teacher. Time is often set aside for individual discussions with class and subject teachers and to look at work. At certain points in the year teachers may arrange individual times with parents to discuss each child's progress.

Home Visits

Good communication between home and school is essential to the happy development of the child. In Class 1 most teachers ask to visit the homes of the children in their class. They may also do so in classes further up the school. These visits enable a teacher to see the child in their home environment and gain a fuller picture of the child. Please also feel free to invite your class teacher into your home for a visit.

Home School Books

Home School books are used by some lower school teachers and are an invaluable way of communicating between teacher and parent. Parents are asked to read the book each day and respond if appropriate. The books can be used to communicate outstanding issues related to the child as well as to pass on positive feedback from the day.

Class Representatives

Class reps are parents who have volunteered to be a conduit of information for the teacher and parents. They play an important role in helping to promote and maintain good communication and relationships between the class teacher/guardians and parents and make a valuable contribution towards the well-being of the class and the smooth running of the school. It is usual for each class to have two reps, and their tasks may include the following:

- Welcoming and introducing new parents and families into the school and helping them with any questions they may have
- Keeping the class telephone tree up to date
- Encouraging parents to become involved in class/social activities and fundraising, for the class, for example for trips, or for the school, for example during the Advent Fayre
- Keeping an oversight of class fundraising and spending
- Being a point of contact between the class teacher or guardian and parents, for example when support is needed for an outing or activity, or where there may be issues affecting the class that might benefit from a wider discussion between parents and teacher, or where parents may wish to raise issues
- Facilitating links between the Community Group and parents

School Reports

These aim to provide a deeper insight into the personal development of the child. They do not give bare grades or scores, nor is there any competitive ranking of pupils within a class or year. Reports are normally issued once a year at the end of the summer term. The report is a progress report at the same time as giving positive suggestions to the child for things to work towards in the coming year. It is written as much for the child as for the parent.

In addition, mid-year pupil progress reports are provided in summary form for the whole School.



Class 8 drawing

WHO TO ASK

Educational Matters

The primary line of communication for all concerns of an educational or pastoral nature is with your child's class teacher (in the lower school) or class guardian (in the upper school). Communication and openness between parents and teacher is vital, and is further fostered through parents' evenings.

Financial Matters

Particular concerns of a financial nature should be taken up in the first instance directly with the School Office. If you feel your concern has not been met in this way you may ask the Finance Committee to consider your concern. Parents are required to notify the Office in advance where there may be any delay in payment. Please read the Fee Policy for more information. This is available on the website.

Other Questions and Concerns

We welcome and value feedback in order to learn and improve.

The school office or class teacher/guardian can advise in many situations or can help put you in touch with the appropriate person.

Sometimes though, a direct approach may not be possible or appropriate. In this case please contact the Education Manager Elaine Sheppard, who is the School's Designated Person for complaints (DP), who will facilitate a meeting with (or without) the member of staff involved. Should the concern relate to the DP, then please contact the School Lead, Cate Young.

It is our aim to deal with any issues informally. However, if the matter cannot be resolved informally, you should raise it as a formal complaint by putting it in writing. You should also raise a formal complaint immediately if the issue is one of grave seriousness.

Full details of the correct processes and procedures can be found in our Concerns and Complaints Policy and Page on the school website (www.elmfield.com).

Please Note: Our staff have the right to work in an environment free from harassment, intimidation and victimisation. Whilst parents may feel angry or impassioned about the issues within their complaint, they are asked to raise issues constructively and work with the school to resolve issues amicably where possible.

Child Protection and Safeguarding

Elmfield School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and young people both within the school environment and outside. Our aim is to ensure that all pupils are safe in school and that measures are in place to support any child who is at risk of harm. All staff are expected to follow the procedures set out by the Dudley Safeguarding People Partnership Board.

We recognise that high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends and good lines of communication with a trusted adult help to safeguard children. The school will therefore:

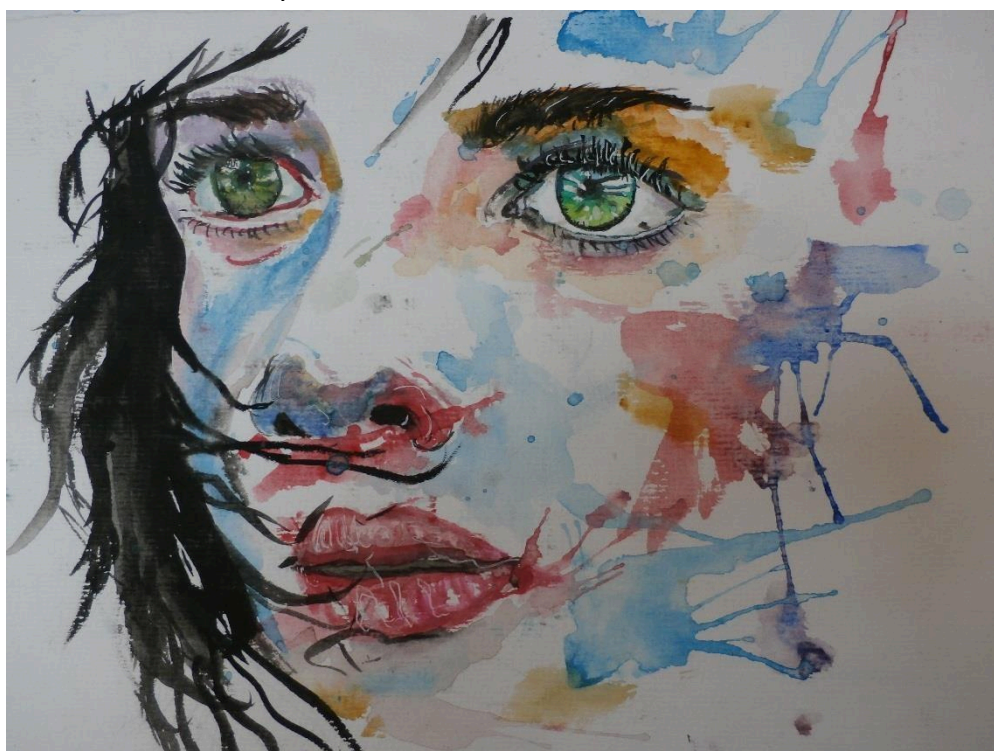
- establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk and are listened to.
- ensure children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty.
- include in the curriculum activities and opportunities which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from harm.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is Mags Davidson. Her Deputies are Elaine Sheppard Rebecca Jenkins-Handy.

Child Protection issues can be very difficult to spot. If in doubt, it is always best to inform Elaine Sheppard and allow her to make the decision about what further action is necessary.

If in doubt - ask!

Our full Child Protection Policy can be accessed via the Policies section of our website.



FINANCE

Elmfield relies on tuition fees from parents for all of its operational spending. The work of the Community Group in fund-raising is invaluable in enhancing the school's equipment and facilities. Elmfield also aims to make the tuition as affordable as possible so that pupils from as wide a range of economic backgrounds as possible have the opportunity to attend. The annual audited accounts are presented and approved at the AGM of The Elmfield School.

Fee Discounts

Elmfield School currently does not offer any fee discounts.

Payments

Payments are normally paid through direct bank transfers or Standing Orders. We now use Evolve for trips, clubs and musical instrument hire. Should a family experience difficulty in making their regular payment, please advise the school office in advance, so that arrangements can be made for a payment plan. For further details, please see the Fee Policy online.

