

NEW VISION TRUST NEWSLETTER

Issue 4 Spring 2022



SHAHED AHMED CEO AND EXECUTIVE HEAD AT ELMHURST

I am delighted to share our biannual New Vision Trust (NVT) newsletter for children, staff, parents, Governors and Trustees. In spite of the on-going challenges presented by the pandemic, all of our schools had much to celebrate in the autumn term.

Our schools have been overhauling their English curriculum, inspired by the work that Nelson has done to create a bespoke curriculum for its learners. Our vision to encourage a generation of pupils who are instilled with a lifelong passion to read and write is now underway, with external support from The Writing For Pleasure Centre and Just Imagine- read on to see what reading for pleasure looks like in practice at Vicarage Primary School.

I have been working with our head teachers and teams to prepare for a possible Ofsted inspection this year in line with the Ofsted re-inspection window. You are probably already aware that Elmhurst was inspected last term and was judged as outstanding overall as well as in each of the individual judgements. This is a testament to the excellent work carried out by the headteacher Sukwinder Samra and her team. I am sure that our other schools will also do well once they are inspected by Ofsted.

It has been wonderful to hear about the opportunities that our children are receiving in developing musical skills, especially at Gallions and Nelson Primary School. Nelson's orchestra was selected to perform at the prestigious Music for Youth Prom in the Royal Albert Hall. Gallions' Music Trust funds every child from year 2 upwards to learn to play a string instrument. These are exceptional opportunities to develop the whole child.

I would like to say a heartfelt thanks to Diane Green who has been a Chair of Governors at Nelson Primary School for 10 years and a trustee since 2018. We value her contribution to our children and wish her well for her move to Dorset. We would like to welcome Nicole Abbott who has recently joined as a trustee. I am also delighted that Claire Omerod has made such a strong start as headteacher of Gallions Primary School.

Improving the fabric of our schools has been an ongoing priority for the trust, aided by the significant addition of Conditions Improvement Funding (CIF) that we were able to secure from the government; the total amount received to date is £1.5 million. In addition, all schools have been able to improve their premises through the prudent management of the schools' budgets. This has resulted in Nelson's new reception office and remodelled entrance area and The Quintin Peppiatt Theatre Wing at Elmhurst - these are truly spectacular amenities which we should all be proud of. Further exciting projects include:

- Vicarage: working with school and architects for a flexible extension for Nursery. Our architects are drawing up detailed plans
- Gallions outdoor area development underway for Nursery, Reception and Year 1
- Nelson toilets refurbishment well underway (CIF fund). New CIF bid for flat roof refurbishment
- Elmhurst new fire doors installed. Electrical works booked in (CIF fund)
- New building for pupils with special needs at Elmhurst agreed in principle by LGB. We are working with architects for different options

Thank you to everyone for your commitment to making New Vision Trust an excellent Academy Trust. Together we will go further.



QUINTIN PEPPIAT CHAIR, NEW VISION TRUST

It has been another strange year, with COVID continuing to stalk our efforts, as Trust schools, to return to normal working. I write this introduction to our newsletter as there is the emergence of a new strain of Coronavirus which we fervently hope will not disrupt the future education of our children. Yet, this year, despite these headwinds there have been some impressive strides forward by our Trust schools. Elmhurst have completed their impressive theatre project and have received from OFSTED a very well deserved 'Outstanding' rating. Gallions have welcomed an excellent new headteacher. Nelson have completed their building works including the renovation of their toilets and boilers. Vicarage has a wonderful new deputy head and, like the other schools, have completed some very well received Summer school activities.

All this progress would not have been possible without the continuing hard work of the Chief Executive, headteachers and staff across the Trust. I offer my thanks on behalf of the whole Trust board to all who work so hard within our school communities. They have enabled our children to access some of the best teaching and primary school opportunities in the country.

QUINTIN PEPPIATT THEATRE WING OFFICIAL OPENING

On Tuesday 9th November, Elmhurst hosted its official opening of the new creative arts block and theatre, inviting children, parents, headteachers, governors, trustees and dignitaries including: John McIntosh—retired head teacher of The London Oratory School and Farah Ziaulla, Deputy Director, Curriculum Policy at the DfE.

We surprised our Chair of Trustees, Quintin Peppiatt, by naming the building after him. Mr Peppiatt has devoted 25 years serving the communities of Newham as councillor and previously Lead councillor for education for Newham. NVT is blessed to have such a committed, entertaining and effective Chair. Naming a creative arts and theatre after him is a small token of our appreciation for all his work and dedication to our young people. Since the opening we are proud to see our children of Elmhurst as well as the children from our New Vision Trust schools using the theatre to tap into their creative/imaginative side.



NELSON PRIMARY SCHOOL



NELSON ORCHESTRA INVITED TO PERFORM AT WORLD CLASS VENUE

We were so proud when our orchestra was invited to play with ten other orchestras at the Music for Youth Prom in the Royal Albert Hall. The Music for Youth prom is something that every musical school aspires to and very few get to perform at. It showcases the best music performances in the country. Our orchestra led by Mr Dye performed a piece called: “All the Hall’s a stage” alongside the other school orchestras who had been selected to attend. The concert was amazing and all the children were so excited and proud to perform. I know that all the parents who also went along had the time of their lives and were so proud of their children.



MINISTER VISIT TO NELSON

In preparation for COP26, Nelson Primary School was selected by Minister Wendy Morton from a number of others, to be the showcase of the British Council Connecting Classroom Project. The aim of the meeting was to share ideas about climate action and girls education by linking with the Education Minister from Kenya by video link. We also welcomed the Kenyan Deputy High Commissioner, Joakim K. Kamere and the Kenyan Education Attache, Mrs. Dorothy Kamwilu.

The day started with a discussion with the House Captains about the messages they would like to give to the leaders at COP26. Their advice? For all countries in the world to work together and for the government to subsidise the cost of electric cars so that more people were able to afford them. The Minister, Wendy Morton MP, said she would take those thoughts to the Prime Minister.

The guests were then invited to join an assembly where the choir welcomed them by singing “Kusi Mama” in Swahili. Our ECO club presented the work that the school does to support Climate Action, followed by speeches from the minister and the Deputy High Commissioner.

Finally, the guests were taken to the meeting room to meet the Kenyan Education Minister via zoom. Our House Captains impressed the Kenyan Minister with their questions and listened carefully when the Kenyan children asked our Minister questions. It was a great way to commemorate the 10th Anniversary of our Kenyan Partnership.



Fiona Cullen

VICARAGE PRIMARY SCHOOL



READING FOR PLEASURE AT VICARAGE

Reading for pleasure remains a high priority at Vicarage. We are very proud of the work we are doing to ensure that our pupils become confident and competent readers, they see reading as a valuable life-long skill which has many benefits including supporting mental health and well-being. Some of the new exciting initiatives we have put in place include Lunch Time Library Club.

We have a wonderful library on site which has a large selection of both fiction and non-fiction texts. It has been refurbished recently to provide a warm and inviting environment so that pupils have somewhere quiet to read during lunchtimes. The 'librarian' role is taken on by pupils themselves, developing greater ownership and responsibility for this important part of the school.



3PM MYSTERY STORYTELLER

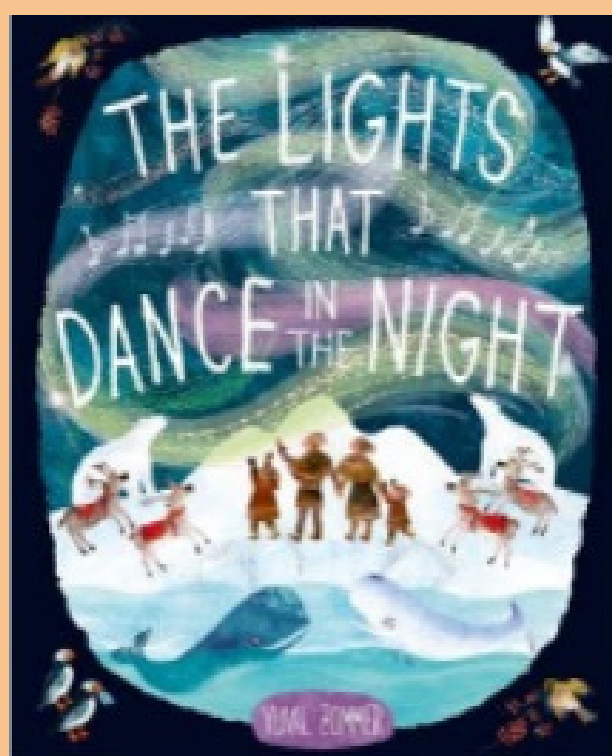
Across the school there is a daily story time session at 3pm. As part of this provision, there is also an opportunity for a class to go to the school library to have a short story read to them by a mystery storyteller. The storyteller can be a member of staff from across the school who may not be well known to the pupils.

This has proved very popular with both staff and pupils and highlights the importance given to reading by the whole school community. Storytellers who are not class based have commented on how much they have enjoyed reading to the children, who in turn have appreciated listening to a story read to them. A great way to end the school day!

BOOK OF THE WEEK

Every week during staff briefing there is a 'Book of the Week' recommendation. This includes books written by well-known as well as new and upcoming authors. Staff are given a short synopsis of the text, what age group the book is written for as well as some background information about the author and illustrator. Books are chosen to reflect the time of year as well as any events taking place both in school and in the wider world. Over time it builds on and widens staff and pupil knowledge and understanding of children's literature, introducing them to authors and books they may not have heard of or have read.

Christmas Book Recommendation - 'The Lights That Dance in The Night' written and illustrated by Yul Zommer.



An enchanting picture book conjuration of the majesty of the Northern Lights and Arctic landscape is a seasonal delight that little ones will want to return to time and time again. It contains poetic text and magically mesmerising and stylised illustrations.

READING SPACES

We have created exciting reading spaces across the school, in classrooms and communal areas. Staff have been very creative and worked hard to make these areas look enticing to encourage all pupils to read whenever and wherever they may be. Children have access to high quality, age appropriate reading materials to develop their thirst for knowledge and a passion for reading.



GALLIONS PRIMARY SCHOOL

We are delighted that last term we returned to a full music curriculum at Gallions, all our children from year 2 upwards have been learning and refining how to play a string instrument in small weekly lessons. As you can imagine, the standard of music skill and knowledge for all of our pupils is exceptional and we have really enjoyed the opportunity this term to come together once more and perform for audiences, something we very much missed last year.



None of this would be possible however, without the support of our Music Trust whose fund raising ensures that the Gallions music curriculum can progress from strength to strength. This term alone they have raised over £7000 for the school during the Big Winter Give, an amazing amount of money that will ensure that our Junior and Senior Orchestra continue to thrive this year. We would like to give a special thank you also to Ben Young and Jamie Hall, two members of staff, who ran the Hackney Half Marathon this Autumn to raise money for the Gallions Music Trust. They raised an amazing £700 which will be used to ensure that we can continue offering free individual lessons to some of our more talented players.



We have also begun the renovation of our Early Years playground. We are very lucky to have secured funds through careful management of our budget to completely refurbish and improve the whole of the EYFS outdoor provision. This will include: new challenging climbing apparatus that will support our pupils' physical development, new role play apparatus to encourage our love of music and drama, sensory plants and a forest area to ensure we develop our knowledge and understanding of the world and much more.

The photographs below have been taken before work has started. Look out for the improvements in the next newsletter.



ELMHURST WAS JUDGED AS OUTSTANDING BY OFSTED IN ALL AREAS!



After a long wait (15 years to the day) since its last inspection, Elmhurst was inspected under a full Section 5 inspection from 6-7th October 2021. There were five inspectors on the first day, including Mark Philips who is a senior HMI and national lead for Music who was quality assuring the process. It was an intense two days for our staff and children with over 30 lesson observations and interviews with subject leaders involved in deep dives and senior leaders as well as other meetings in areas such as safeguarding. The school welcomed the scrutiny and challenge. We negotiated deep dives in the following subjects: Maths, Art, Computing, Science & History. The early reading deep dive is mandatory and was the first one with the lead inspector Alik Constantopoulou HMI with our Reading Leader Katherine Roberts. This was successful and set the tone for the rest of the inspection. The years of investment in the teaching and learning of systematic synthetic phonics through fine tuning RWI (Read Write Inc) paid off and the inspectors commented on how our staff (including support staff) are 'experts' at teaching reading. The inspectors also picked up that children perform well across the curriculum because they can read well and this means they understand their work in all subjects.

The other subject deep dives went well due to the tremendous team spirit and collective drive to do well, expressed by our children, staff and parents. It was gratifying to see our lovely children rise to the challenge - learning behaviour was excellent throughout the inspection and after it too. It felt like the inspection helped us to 'reset' after all of the lockdowns and disruptions and refocus on what really matters. We have worked hard on refining our curriculum and to have it externally validated by Ofsted was a fantastic vote of confidence. Adopting teaching for mastery for instance has been a steady transformation in our approach since 2014/15 and has been based on research and looking at high performing countries. Ofsted officially started training its inspectors over the last two/three years on this approach which shows that Elmhurst has been at the cutting edge of education. Although we didn't just set out to please Ofsted, but rather to deliver the best educational outcomes for our children, it has been lovely to receive the Outstanding judgement in all areas by Ofsted, including for our Early Years. Congratulations to the whole school community - this is a proud moment. Please read the report if you have time: <https://files.ofsted.gov.uk/v1/file/50172996>



SPOTLIGHT ON JULIE HALLIDAY SCHOOL BUSINESS MANAGER GALLIONS PRIMARY SCHOOL



REFLECTIONS FROM JULIE HALLIDAY

There is never a dull moment when working as a School Business Manager in NVT. From the creation of the Trust to now, every day brings a different challenge:-

Setting up new bank accounts for four schools and a new payroll system for approx 500 staff members and losing sleep in the summer of 2018 – emailing each other from a beach and a cruise ship, fretting over whether the bank transfers would be successful in order that everyone would be paid in September 2018. Our Summer of 2018 was one to remember!

The launch of the Trust was held at Gallions – another challenge. Can we get an enormous eggless cake to share with the staff of four schools that wouldn't fall apart whilst being transported back to Gallions and wouldn't melt in the heat?

Adapting to a new finance system, for some of us older SBMs, the old dogs had to learn numerous new tricks! Luckily, the Trust SBM, Salma, has become a Master of the Finance System and is now the "Font of all Knowledge", that we can all go to!

New ways of managing and reporting so many of our standard procedures, e.g. reporting Health and Safety, reporting our finance data, attendance data, SLAs, Premises management, so much to learn, so little time!

Fortunately, supported by hardworking, professional colleagues in our admin teams at our schools, we have survived, just! All of the Finance, Administration, Attendance and Support staff in the Trust have had to adapt to meet the fast-paced changes that have been asked of them, and there have been many!

Supporting the success of the Trust has been a joint team approach by all Admin Staff, led by SBMS, even from the beach...

THE ILIAD PROJECT

For too long, Classics has been a subject taught mostly to students in private schools, and not to students in state schools. The Iliad Project is a lively, creative and immersive introduction to ancient knowledge, focusing on Homer's Iliad and the story of the Trojan War. Our children have a right to this powerful knowledge, and we want them to have a joyful time acquiring it.

Between September and December 2021, all four of our schools have been taking part in the Iliad Project, led by Jonny Walker, an East London-based specialist teacher.

Let me not then die ingloriously and without a struggle, but let me first do some great thing that shall be told among men hereafter.



The Iliad Project begins with an introduction to Greek Mythology, learning about how the Ancient Greeks' believed the world and its gods began. As the weeks progressed, the children were guided through the complex stories of the Birth of Achilles, the Marriage of Helen and the Apple of Discord. Through these rich strands of storytelling, the children see how small decisions caused the Trojan War, in all of its glory and carnage.

The project gives every single child the opportunity to explore, know and perform the Iliad, using a range of techniques and methods including text analysis, script readthroughs, improvisation and even a bit of unexpected interpretive dance!

With the Iliad Project, we want to deepen children's cultural understanding, foster a rich appreciation for classical storytelling whilst also giving the children a chance to express themselves.

The project leader, Jonny Walker, was impressed with students in our schools.

"In these challenging modern times, the classical world is becoming more relevant, not less relevant. The Iliad offers up themes like pride, destiny, self-belief, power, ego and beauty - studying poems like The Iliad can be a way of holding up a mirror to our own lives.

I have been absolutely bowled over by how well the children in Elmhurst, Gallions, Nelson and Vicarage have engaged with the project. The excitement has been palpable, and the teachers and I have often commented on how remarkable the children's memory has been. So many children have been able to absorb this deep story, and find connections with their own lives.

It has been a great privilege to share the Iliad Project with the passionate Year 5 teachers and their students across the whole trust. Meeting and working alongside such creative teachers - so clearly devoted to their children - has been an additional highlight.

All of my classmates said this is the best day of the week because we all laugh and play around but we still learn a lot.

Raniya, Year 5 at Gallions





PEN PORTRAITS OF TWO OF OUR TRUSTEES



CHAIR OF TRUSTEES: REVD QUINTIN PEPPIATT

Revd Quintin Peppiatt has been the parish priest for St.Mary Magdalene, East Ham since 1995. He is currently chair of the New Vision Trust and Vicarage Primary School. He has been a local councillor since 1997 and was Cabinet member for children and young people.



JANE LUCAS - TRUSTEE

Jane Lucas has been a trustee of the New Vision Board since its formation in 2018, a role she immensely enjoys. Jane's career as a teacher has enabled her to take a strategic approach to her role as Trustee and she is always insightful with her thoughts and feedback.

She has a long standing relationship with Gallions Primary, where she worked from 2004 until 2016 as a Teacher and Deputy Head Teacher. Jane's love for Gallions has continued and she now supports its progress through her role as Chair of Governors. As a Governor Jane is very supportive, she has a good understanding of Newham and its community and is passionate about supporting Gallions pupils becoming lifelong learners. Jane's creative talents have supported Gallions drive for excellence in the creative arts and she is a huge supporter of our commitment to teaching all pupils a string instrument.



MARJORIE BROWNE - TRUSTEE

Marjorie Browne had been a School Governor, a Local Authority Governor and is currently Chair of Governors at Elmhurst Primary school. She is proud to be a long-standing member of the governing body.

Marjorie has always been passionate about helping young people and children. Marjorie is the Gifted and Talented link governor and regularly attends the Shakespeare in school events.

Marjorie has been a trustee of New Vision Trust since it was formed in 2018 and has embraced her role in helping children reach their potential.