

July 23rd 2024,

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we approach the close of another vibrant school year, we, the governing body, want to share with you some highlights from the 2023-24 academic year for our school and its pupils.

It has been a year full of achievements and changes that have led to new opportunities. The year started with an Ofsted inspection in our second week, and we were thrilled to be rated 'Outstanding' in every area once again, this time under a new leadership team. This achievement is a testament to our dedicated and hardworking team at Eleanor Palmer. After this positive start, the school has continued to strengthen, always focusing on further improvements.

This year marked an exciting chapter for our leadership. Natalie and Sally, in their expanded roles as Executive Heads, have initiated a pioneering partnership with Hawley Primary School. This collaboration aligns with our longstanding commitment to community engagement and educational leadership, as demonstrated by our roles within the EEF North London Research School Alliance and various teaching initiatives across Camden and beyond.

Our ambitious goals for the year capitalised on new resources provided by our participation in the first year of the EEF North London Research School. In 2023/2024, we focused on:

- Enhancing teacher knowledge and strategies for improving student metacognition and self-regulation, especially for disadvantaged pupils.
- Boosting mathematical problem-solving skills to improve student outcomes.
- Strengthening the teaching of scientific knowledge to increase student confidence and efficacy as scientists.
- Implementing consistent assessment practices to demonstrate the effectiveness and retention of our curriculum.

As governors, we have been able to monitor and assess progress in all these areas. Many of these goals focused on improving our teaching practice, which should benefit your children for years to come.

We saw excellent results in statutory national tests. In the Year 6 SATs, 90% reached the expected standard for reading, 93% for writing and 83% for maths, with a significantly high proportion achieving greater depth - 34% in reading, 45% in writing and 41% in maths. The phonics check in Year 1 (90% passed), and the Multiplication check in Year 4 (86% scored 20/25 or higher, with half the class scoring full marks)— indicate significant progress for pupils and the high standard of teaching in our school. More detailed analysis will follow when the national data on attainment and progress becomes available in the Autumn.

However, two main points stand out:

- It's clear that many Year 6 students, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds or with neurodiverse needs, have exceeded expectations. This underscores our belief that success at EP is achieved by all students, not just the highest prior-attainers, reflecting our commitment to inclusivity and support for every learner.
- The focus on improving our teaching of writing over the past several years may be starting to bear fruit, as for the first time in many years, we have a better score in writing than in reading and maths. We will continue to monitor this area closely.

Beyond the classroom, our students have thrived in a range of activities from the arts to sports. Notably, our students' artwork was showcased at the Lethaby Gallery during the Camden Art Biennale. In sports, we've secured a record number of trophies and cups this year! We also enjoyed an inspiring visit from two members of the Harlem Globetrotters. In performing arts, our students had exceptional opportunities to showcase their talents, including performances at the prestigious Old Vic and engagements with The Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment and The Place Dance Company.

A major challenge this year has been budget-wise. For the first time, we had to approve a budget for 2024/2025 with a slight deficit. With cuts in government funding, cost of living increases, and pressure (rightly so) to increase staff salaries, it has become extremely difficult to continue to balance a budget while still providing the exceptional level of provision you have become accustomed to.

First, let me say that we would have reached this point in previous years without the generous contributions from the community through the PTA, events such as Run Kids Run, and Keep it EP. So thank you. This support is more crucial than ever; any amount, large or small, makes a difference. If you are already contributing, we would like to thank you but also encourage you to verify that you have set up gift aid, or if your employer provides match funding. All this makes a big difference in the end.

Starting in September, our new partnership with Hawley Primary School will enhance our teaching capabilities and should also help alleviate financial strain. We aim to return to a positive budget next year. This collaboration aligns with our past role as a Teaching School from 2015 to 2021, where our goal was not only to offer teaching expertise but also to generate extra funding. This funding supports the high standard of education we believe every child at EP deserves.

This year, we bid farewell to some cherished members of our team. Laura, our esteemed Music Teacher, is retiring after 32 years! We also say goodbye to Kate Katz and Lola Kenworthy, whose temporary contracts have concluded. We extend our deepest gratitude for their dedication and contributions to our school community.

We are thrilled to announce that Lacey will be taking a significant step as the new Head of School at Hawley, following her commendable service as Deputy Head and SENDCO here.

After her maternity leave, Rosie will return in her role as Deputy Headteacher and English and history lead.

We look forward to another exciting year ahead and wish you a joyful and restful summer break.

Warm regards,

Christophe Frèrebeau and the EP governing body.

2023-2024 Survey results

We received 133 answers, which is a 25% increase from last year, thank you for this increased participation.

From your feedback, it's clear that you highly value:

- the inclusive and supportive community at our school.
- the strong sense of belonging fostered through our community spirit and the excellent relationships among students, teachers, and parents alike,
- our dedicated and competent staff who not only provide high-quality teaching but also go above and beyond in supporting every student's individual needs.

The overall positive atmosphere, frequent school events, and rich extracurricular programs further enhance your children's enjoyment and engagement, making the school a beloved and integral part of your community.

Here are things several of you mentioned you would like us to improve:

- Healthier eating habits and school meals, with fewer sugary foods and better vegetarian options
- the possibilities to have after-school clubs and activities, including non-competitive sports, forest school, reading club, and languages.
- improved engagement and communication between parents and the school, including more forward planning for trips and events, is needed.
- addressing idling cars near the school to reduce pollution.
- the diversity of our staff members

It was great to have so many suggestions of improvement, I can assure you that many of these topics have already been discussed by governors, and we will revisit them in the new year to see if the context has changed. In most cases we are either already working on it and hope it will improve, or it was decided that considering the culture of the school, the context or simply our resources, that this was something we would want to pursue.

Overall the result of the survey shows that the school is doing better or similar to previous years in all areas and a 99% of you say that you are happy with your child experience at school, which is amazing.

	2024			2023			2022			
	Agree	Disagree	N/A	Agree	Disagree	N/A	Agree	Disagree	N/A	
My child enjoys school	99	1	0	99	1	0	100	0	0	
The school keeps my child safe	98	2	0	100	0	0	99	1	0	
The school informs me about my child's progress	99	1	0	95	5	0	94	6	0	
My child is making enough progress at school	97	3	0	97	3	0	91	8	1	
The teaching is good at this school	98	2	0	96	3	1	99	0	1	
The school supports my child's wider personal development*	97	2	1	96	4	0	94	6	0	
The school makes sure my child is well prepared for the future	92	2	5	94	3	3	92	6	2	
The school works to be inclusive for all children*	99	1	0	95	2	3	96	0	4	
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	89	4	8	92	6	2	88	5	7	
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	92	2	6	95	2	3	96	0	4	
The school takes account of pupils' views	92	2	7	85	6	10	80	7	13	
The school is led and managed effectively	99	0	1	92	3	5	88	5	7	
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	99	1	0	90	3	8	85	1	14	
				2024			2023		2022	
Number of answers				133			105		99	

* these questions wording have changed slightly in 2024 following change to the Ofsted questionnaire