



December 2024



Normanhurst School

Newsletter

Headmistress's Message



Dear Parents,

I cannot believe how quickly the Autumn term has gone. It has been busy in the lead up to the festive period.

The second half of the term saw the arrival of our Christmas tree, the Early Years Festive Fun Day, the Nativity and a visit to the Hackney Empire for our annual Panto. What a wonderful way to start the festive season.

At this time of year we do not forget those in need in our local community and the elderly residents at the Spinney Care Home. We have shared some of our festive cheer and made cards, sung carols and made contributions towards the local food bank. In challenging times and moments of reflection, it is important to remember how fortunate we are.

This December edition of the newsletter will give you an indication of the many opportunities the pupils have enjoyed.

I would like to wish our Normanhurst families a peaceful festive season. We will see you all in the New Year. The spring term begins for pupils on Tuesday 7 January.

With my best wishes



Mrs Jacqueline Job

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Forest Walk

On our wintry forest walk, the Early Years children spotted treasures, creating fantastic journey sticks!



The Arctic and Antarctica

The Early Years children have been learning all about the Arctic and the Antarctic and the animals that live there. We considered the question 'How do the animals keep warm when it is so cold?' We spoke about fat/blubber and how this keeps the animals warm in the snow. To understand this, the children had a box of ice and put their hand in without anything on and then put their hand in wrapped in blubber (butter in a sandwich bag) and felt the difference on how it kept their hand warmer.



Festive Fun Day

We had a wonderful day celebrating the festive season in the Early Years Department. Our activities centred around the Christmas tree and we enjoyed the story "Christmas Pine" by Julia Donaldson. It was delightful to see all the imaginative costumes inspired by Christmas decorations. The day was filled with exiting activities, making pompom trees, fingerprint fairy lights and penguin decorations. The children also decorated our classroom igloo and participated in a special festive-themed PE lesson.



Christmas Lunch & Party

The children enjoyed a delicious Christmas lunch with festive music, crackers and party hats. "This is the best day ever" said Shivaya in Kindergarten as Father Christmas appeared with special presents and told us about his sleigh and reindeer that he had parked on the roof of the school!



Music

"Mindfulness with Music Practice"

Pupils in Year 1 in their music lesson listened to Saint-Saens' The Swan played on the cello.



King Charles' Birthday

In a creative and royal competition, our Year 1 and Year 3 pupils were given the exciting challenge of designing birthday cards for King Charles III! The children put their artistic skills to work, creating vibrant and imaginative designs filled with colourful drawings and heartfelt messages.

After much excitement and many wonderful entries, five children were chosen as winners for their stunning cards. These lucky cards were sent directly to Buckingham Palace, where they will hopefully brighten the King's special day.

Congratulations to all the children who participated and a special well done to the five winners. We're all proud of your creativity and hope the King enjoys your beautiful cards!



Visit to The Spinney



The Year 3 pupils from Normanhurst, visited the Spinney Care Home in Chingford to spread some Christmas cheer and share their artistic talents. The children worked with residents to create festive Christmas lanterns. The care home residents were delighted to be involved, and their faces lit up as the students worked alongside them.

The event was a wonderful reminder of the power of kindness and creativity in bringing people together, especially as we approach the festive season.

Well done to Year 3 for their fantastic behaviour and creativity on the trip!

Road Safety Workshop

The Year 5 and 6 Junior Road Safety Workshop took an exciting and interactive turn when local police officers joined the session to engage with the pupils. The officers started by answering a wide range of questions that the pupils had about road safety, providing insights into how to stay safe both as pedestrians and cyclists.

A highlight of the workshop was when the police demonstrated how to use a speed gun to measure the speed of oncoming traffic. The children then had the opportunity to try out the speed gun themselves in a controlled environment, learning first-hand how speed limits are monitored. This hands-on experience helped reinforce the importance of obeying road laws and gave the students a deeper understanding of the role of law enforcement in maintaining road safety.



Battlefields Trip

In November our senior pupils travelled to Ypres in Belgium for the annual Battlefields Trip accompanied by Coopersale Hall School. The first stop was the Canadian National Vimy Memorial in France dedicated to the memory of the Canadian Expeditionary Force members killed in WW1. It also serves as a place to commemorate Canadian soldiers killed in France with no known grave. Whilst here the children got to experience walking through a set of preserved front line trenches.

The second day was spent at the Somme visiting the High Wood Memorial. They then travelled to the Lochnagar Crater which is still in existence today. This highlighted the impact of mine warfare in the Great War.

Pupils witnessed a special commemoration ceremony at the Commonwealth graves in Ypres. Our schools took wreaths of poppies which were laid at certain memorials and graves to pay our respects to the fallen.

The coach passed through Passchendaele to visit the museum there dedicated to the experience of life in the communication trenches in WW1. After the museum stop, they went to Tyne Cot Commonwealth Cemetery to learn about the different allies and nations that fought in the war. Some pupils were able to identify their family surname on the memorial there.

It was an amazing trip – pupils learnt all about the war and about those who risked their lives for their countries.



Y7 Music - Scavenger Hunt

Year 7 took part in a music scavenger hunt during a recent music lesson. The aim was to follow the clues around the music room and decipher them, revealing the orchestra's different instruments, which then unlock a code of another musical word. Pupils reported that it had been a very enjoyable lesson and that they had learnt many new musical words.



F1 Williams Trip

Year 8 had the opportunity to take part in an unforgettable experience at Williams Formula 1 headquarters in Oxfordshire. During the day pupils were thoroughly engaged in a creative stem workshop, fabulous racing on F1 simulators and a chance to see a range of F1 racing cars all in glorious surroundings.

Overall a sensational STEAM trip that will hopefully inspire some of our children to go on and become engineers themselves.



Y9 Geography Field Trip



On 28 November the Year 9 Geography field trip to Chingford was an insightful experience focused on analysing the relationship between the environment and crime. Pupils conducted environmental quality surveys, assessing factors like litter, graffiti, noise levels, and greenery to evaluate the area's quality and safety. Field sketches captured key features of the urban landscape, highlighting defensible space and areas of potential risk. Observational notes recorded the general atmosphere, foot traffic, and any visible security measures such as CCTV or street lighting.

KG-Y2 The Nativity Performance

A huge well done to Early Years, Year 1 and Year 2 for putting on an outstanding Nativity with marvellous singing and confidently delivered lines. Shepherds searched high and low for the missing sheep Brenda, coming across Mary and Joseph, Innkeepers and Kings. Luckily the shining star was there to guide the way and the Angels pointed them in the right direction. After a long journey, Brenda the sheep was found looking after baby Jesus in the Manger.

Here is a link to all the pictures: <https://dephoto.biz/dashboard?eventcode=oak#/events/102751/schools/oak-tree-schools/normanhurst-nativity>



Christmas Festivities in the Juniors and Seniors



Y3-10 House Spelling Bee

Y3-6 Oak-Tree Maths Challenge

Pupils from Years 3 to 6 enthusiastically embraced the annual Oak-Tree Maths Challenge, showcasing their individual problem-solving skills. The competition, designed to test a range of mathematical abilities from logical reasoning to quick mental arithmetic, saw students tackling progressively harder problems with determination. Each pupil worked independently, drawing on their mathematical knowledge and perseverance to complete the tasks. Their enthusiasm was evident as they embraced the challenge, demonstrating resilience and creativity in solving tricky calculations.

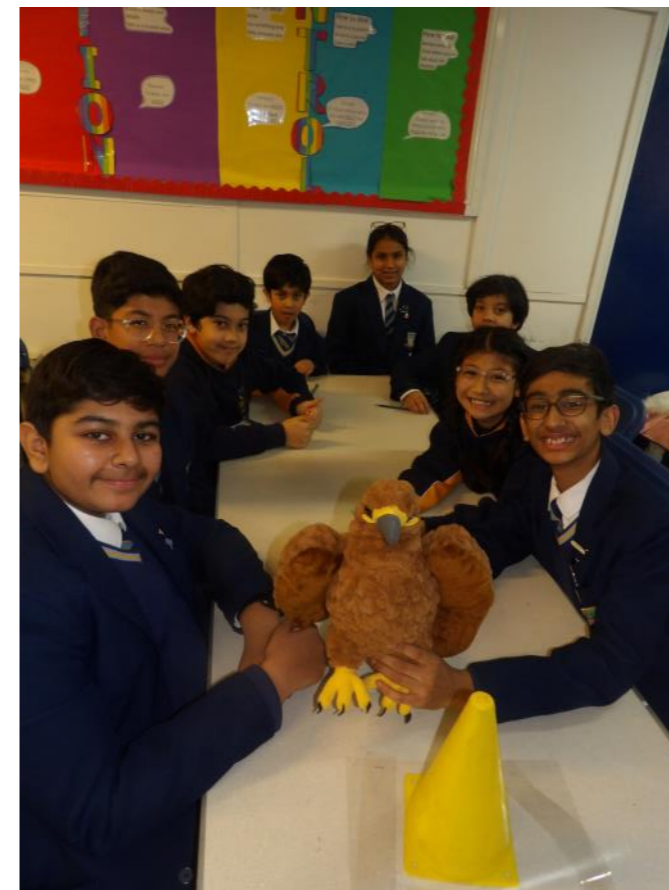
Teachers and organisers praised their efforts, particularly noting the growth in confidence and critical thinking among participants. The competition not only celebrated mathematical achievement but also fostered a love for problem-solving, leaving students eager for next year's challenge.



The House Spelling Bee Competition 2024 was a fantastic display of talent, teamwork, and determination. Pupils from Years 3 to 10 proudly represented their houses across a series of challenging and entertaining rounds. The event brought together participants and spectators (who also participated in some rounds), creating a great atmosphere as our spellers took the stage to compete for the Spelling Bee trophy.

The competition featured three rounds. In the classic Spelling Round, pupils faced off head-to-head, confidently, spelling their way through words of increasing difficulty. The excitement continued in the Articulate Round, a challenge where students described words without using key phrases, bringing a lot of laughter and challenge to the room. Finally, the Countdown Round tested their quick thinking as pupils tried to form the longest and most complex words from a random selection of letters. This round also included participant points, which was a deciding factor for the title a couple of years ago!

The event concluded with suspense as the scores were counted. The winners will be revealed during the Junior and Senior assemblies after the Christmas break. A huge congratulations to all participants for their hard work and house spirit. Also a big thank you to everyone who supported and cheered them on.



After School Club

Our Pupils in After School Club have been really busy taking part in a variety of creative activities aimed at developing new skills and, of course, having fun. One of the activities has been baking chocolate chip cookies! Led by Ms Sherrie, pupils have learned the fine art of measuring ingredients, mixing, and, of course, enjoying the sweet rewards of their hard work.

Other pupils have been using their artistic talents to create stunning collages with Ms Berin. Using scissors, glue, and a variety of materials, they have been busy cutting and arranging colourful magazine pages, fabric scraps, and other objects to create vibrant works of art. Their creativity has no end!

In addition to baking and collaging, pupils have also been busy getting into the holiday spirit by making their own Christmas decorations with Ms Georgie. The air has been filled with the buzz of creativity as students work together, sharing ideas and techniques. They have also been developing a more refined skill of sewing which has offered a unique experience to those who joined! The pupils have really impressed us with their skills and imaginations in all of these activities. We look forward to seeing what else they can do in the future.



Gift a Birthday Book

Our 'Gift a Book on Your Birthday' is going strong!

Phoebe from Year 3 has donated this brilliant book to our library on her birthday!

Many thanks and a jolly 'Happy Birthday' from everyone! We hope you had a lovely birthday!

If anyone else would like to participate, please gift a new book to our school library on your birthday!



Sports News

Success for the U13 table tennis team who competed in the London North Regional Table Tennis Competition on 21 November. The U13 team finished second in their group, missing out on a first place finish with the narrowest of margins!

Huge congratulations to Sinan and Aidan (80) and Ewan and Jonathan (8BK)



Carol Service

St Peter and St Paul Parish Church was brimming with Christmas cheer as the whole school, family and friends gathered for our annual Carol Service.

Our Juniors delivered a delightful performance of the Nativity story—with a fun twist that had everyone entertained! Meanwhile, our Juniors, Seniors and staff filled the hall with festive songs and heartfelt readings, creating a truly joyous atmosphere.

A huge thank you to our amazing staff for their hard work and dedication in making this event so special.

A wonderful way to finish the Autumn term at Normanhurst School.



Spinney Visit

In the spirit of the festive season, pupils from Normanhurst visited The Spinney Care Home this week, bringing smiles and joy to the residents with special Christmas performances. The children, ranging in age from Year 2 - 9, gathered in the care home's cosy lounge to perform a selection of traditional Christmas carols and festive musical numbers.

As a thoughtful gesture, the pupils also handed out personalised Christmas cards, each one carefully designed to bring a personal touch to the celebration. The cards, decorated with festive images and warm messages, were a perfect way to spread even more Christmas spirit to the elderly residents.

As the event came to an end, the children were met with warm thank-yous from the residents, leaving The Spinney Care Home filled with festive joy and fond memories of an afternoon filled with music, laughter, and holiday spirit. The pupils left knowing they had made a real difference, brightening the lives of the elderly residents with their musical gifts and thoughtful gestures.



The Normanhurst School Parents Association are a friendly group of parents and staff who seek to fundraise for the school. In the past, we have raised money for playground equipment, a class set of iPads and the sound system, with our most recent purchase being extra beanbag chairs for the school library.

As a committee, we are always looking for parents to join and support our events. We love our school community and are seeking fresh ideas to broaden our skillset and widen our expertise.

We can be contacted on normanhurstschoolpa@gmail.com. You don't have to come to every event or join the committee - you might be able to volunteer by helping at an open morning with serving drinks or by providing something we need for an event. Perhaps you can donate a prize for a raffle or suggest a great company for the junior disco (held in February). If you have suggestions, we want to hear them!



Tap and give us a follow on our social media accounts