



THE ELMS

EST 1614



'It's just the best school on the planet'

Elms parent



The Elms Ethos

A Very Warm Welcome from the Headmaster

Dear Parent,

Childhood should be a time of challenge, inspiration, creativity, opportunity and fun. From the youngest three-year-olds in the Montessori Early Years, right through to those in Year 8, The Elms' ethos encourages pupils to make the very best of life, and to greet every new experience with enthusiasm and 100% effort. Whether in the classroom, in the theatre or the art room, on the sports pitches or the farm, in the equestrian arena, the great outdoors, or the boarding house, our aim is for all our children to become the very best version of themselves.

Elms pupils are renowned for their 'can-do' attitude, their eagerness to have a go, and their willingness to embrace failure. An Elms pupil knows that, in order to push beyond their boundaries, they will encounter hurdles along the way, and that they will learn and grow from their mistakes, far more than they ever could if they stayed within their comfort zone. They understand that every world-class athlete, every maestro, and every genius reached their pinnacle through trial and error, and by approaching each challenge with determination, perseverance, and an open mind.

The Elms is a rural idyll, set in 40 acres of beautiful Herefordshire countryside. At the heart of our boarding and day community is a real sense of family, of looking out for each other, and of kindness and consideration. Children of all ages play together, socialise together and eat together at meals served at the table by staff. The camaraderie between children of different ages is further strengthened by our House system, in which every child develops a formidable loyalty with their fellow Athenians, Spartans or Trojans.

I hope this brief prospectus will give you a sense of who we are. I would be delighted to welcome you to the school to give you a deeper insight into the true spirit of The Elms and to show you all that we have to offer.

Hattie and I hope to have the pleasure of meeting you soon.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Ed Lyddon', followed by a long, sweeping horizontal line that extends to the right.

Ed Lyddon
Headmaster, The Elms School



Early Years and Pre-Prep

Getting Off to a Flying Start

Our Early Years department accepts children from the age of 3 and is a fully accredited Montessori setting. Known for fostering independence, individually paced education, and self-directed activity, the Montessori Method also encourages empathy, a passion for social justice, and a zest for learning.

Our hands-on approach to education creates a stimulating environment in which to learn and grow. Your child will explore within separate activity areas to develop their practical life skills, their senses, their literacy and numeracy, art, drama, languages, cultural appreciation, and mindfulness. Confidence and independence develop quickly in such creative surroundings.

In addition, pupils enjoy sport, swimming and yoga and we make full use of the rural setting to extend their knowledge and skills. Children are often at the farm, helping or measuring in the vegetable garden, counting eggs or tadpoles, or hatching and caring for chicks. The highlight of the week for many is Forest School, which takes place in our Woodland Challenge area.

As your child moves up through Pre-Prep the teaching builds on the Montessori foundations, nurturing each child's character and individual learning style, motivating them to try new tasks and experiences with confidence, and developing their interests and emerging skills.

Pre-Prep are also taught by an increasing number of specialist teachers from the Prep School. Music, French, Drama, Forest School and Sport teachers take the children for weekly lessons, and they continue to make full use of the superb school facilities.

'The Montessori method was a great start to my daughter's education. She has now gone on to achieve an academic scholarship to Shrewsbury School and we feel sure that her enthusiastic and independent approach to learning stems from this start to her educational journey'

Parent of Year 8 leaver



Academic Focus

A Greenhouse, Not a Hothouse

We believe that education is so much more than simply passing exams. It is about the pursuit of knowledge, fuelling curiosity, and developing open and questioning minds – teaching children to think for themselves.

As a non-selective school, we are committed to ensuring each child fulfils their academic potential, whatever their ability. Our small class sizes allow us to continuously monitor progress, and to ensure that your child attains and exceeds their goals, and continues to reach for new targets.

Those who show particular aptitude for a subject are quickly identified as potential scholars and are encouraged to follow our scholarship pathways. There is extensive in-class support on hand to nurture and stretch all ability levels. Individual tuition is also available for pupils who require supplementary support in specific areas.

Our broad curriculum enables every child to achieve their personal best and to gain entry to the senior school of their choice. As a stand-alone prep school, we are not biased towards any one senior school, which allows us to work in partnership with parents to find the best fit for each individual. Pupils gain entry to a wide range of top senior schools, and over half of our Year 8 cohort secure scholarships.

Senior school leaders often comment that they can tell an Elms pupil by their positive and open-minded approach, their self-reliance, their enthusiasm for everything, and their cheery disposition.



‘Pupils’ attitudes towards their learning are extraordinarily positive and supportive; they have an outstanding work ethic and take ownership of their own learning.’

ISI, NOVEMBER 2021



Performing & Creative Arts

Building Confidence and Skills for Life

We place great importance on the creative arts and on giving every child the opportunity to be involved and 'have a go'. Pupils have weekly timetabled lessons for Drama, Music, Art and DT, as well as many other opportunities to get involved through our extensive programme of clubs.

Our numerous and varied drama productions are enormous fun, whilst also building all-important confidence and developing great communication skills from an early age. Pupils can also get involved in stage management, learn to operate the lighting and sound decks for performances, and opt for LAMDA tuition and qualifications.

Music is enthusiastically taught at all stages, both individually (over half of our pupils have individual tuition on an instrument) and in the classroom. We offer lessons in a wide range of instruments, from piano to electric guitar, including an option to receive coaching in musical theatre, and all pupils are encouraged to take part in the school's various bands and choirs. Your child will have the opportunity to study and perform a wide range of musical genres, and to experiment with composition too.

Art and Design at The Elms is also exciting, nurturing both creativity and technical know-how. We aim to equip our pupils with the skills to derive pleasure from the visual arts, through the creation of their own work and the appreciation of that of others. Your child will experiment with a range of media and develop practical techniques through a fun and stimulating curriculum, which encourages creative thinking.

*'Drama gave me confidence
in other aspects of school
life and showed me that once
you put your mind to it,
anything is possible.'*

Peter, Year 8





Sport

There is no 'I' in Team

The 'can do' attitude of all the boys and girls means that The Elms punches far above its weight in sporting competitions, and numerous pupils have achieved success at regional and national level over the years.

All pupils from age 7 and above have games lessons every day and, regardless of ability, every child has the chance to represent the school regularly in each major sport. Sports at The Elms include rugby, netball, hockey, football, cricket, tennis, athletics and swimming. An abundance of other sports are also on offer through our eclectic clubs programme.

Whatever their starting level, your child will be encouraged to have a go at everything and to find their sporting niche, or to immerse themselves in lots of sports, according to their particular interests.

Our sports facilities are excellent, with numerous playing fields, a floodlit Astroturf, riding arena and cross-country course within the 40-acre site. Our indoor sports facilities include a large multi-purpose sports hall, an indoor swimming pool and an air pistol range.



'It doesn't matter whether you think you are good or bad at sport because everyone supports each other, and the teachers are great - I love being in a team.'

Martha, Year 4



The School Farm & Equestrian Centre

Developing Responsibility and Awareness

As a school with its own working farm, everyone is encouraged to get involved in looking after our pedigree livestock. We have a herd of prize-winning Hereford cattle, a flock of Shropshire sheep, Gloucester Old Spot pigs, pygmy goats, free-range chickens, ducks, and, of course, plenty of ponies! Every break time pupils rush down to the farm, eager for guidance from the farm team as to how they can help today.

Many pupils compete at agricultural shows, such as the Royal Three Counties, preparing and parading the animals, or demonstrating their pig-handling skills. Competitors often return beaming proudly and clutching armfuls of rosettes. One of the highlights of the year is our very own Elms Show, at which pupils can share their handling and grooming skills with friends and family.

Everyone gets involved in the school garden, and the fruits of their labours go into the school kitchen. Each year group also has a weekly Rural Studies lesson, led by our Farm Manager, during which they learn about life cycles, foraging, rearing livestock, environmental management, sustainability and our responsibilities to the natural world, and so much more.

Riding takes place throughout the year and children are welcome to ride the school ponies or bring their own pony to school. Our fabulous riding arena allows children to learn to ride and develop their skills with our team of experienced and enthusiastic instructors year-round, and children can have individual or group lessons from Year 4. There are further opportunities for afternoon, evening and weekend hacks, and riders regularly compete in triathlons, tetrathlons, showjumping and cross-country events.

Both our children gained an enormous amount from their time on the farm, developing responsibility, compassion, and a whole new set of skills.' Elms parent



*'The Elms is a children's paradise...
it's like something out of
Enid Blyton.'*

Elms parent



Extra-Curricular

A Wealth of Opportunity

In addition to all the wonderful opportunities that the farm and equestrian facilities provide, pupils at The Elms enjoy a superb breadth of choice in terms of clubs and activities. We want every child to make the most of their time at The Elms to try all sorts of new experiences, and to broaden their horizons.

The huge selection of clubs on offer each term include: Air Pistol Shooting, Explorers, Foraging, Singing, Life Saving, Dance, Horrible Histories, Rock Music, Cycling, Tennis, Dance, Cookery, Swimming, Monsters and Heroes, Showing, Pony Management, Gardening, Instrumental, and Art, to name just a few.

There is a dedicated club time at the end of each day, and boarders also benefit from an additional programme of activities after supper.

On Saturdays, whilst Years 7 and 8 have timetabled lessons, pupils in Years 4 to 6 also have the option to come in and take part in an enrichment programme, which is designed to expand their knowledge, skills and horizons, through engaging and hands-on activities.





Boarding at The Elms

Preserving Childhood

Boarding at The Elms is both fun and relaxed, providing a nurturing environment in which all can flourish. We aim to create an atmosphere similar to that of home, where children are encouraged to work hard and play hard, be kind and supportive to each other, and to contribute to the community. Round-the-clock support from our team of boarding parents, matrons, duty staff and gap assistants ensures excellent pastoral care.

Before breakfast, boarders can often be found at the farm, helping with early morning routines, such as feeding the animals, collecting eggs, or bringing in the ponies from the fields.

After school, children have time to relax and play with friends, but with the added option of evening clubs and activities. We are proud to offer screen-free boarding (except for the occasional film night!), where children spend time enjoying wholesome and sociable fun, building dams in the stream, clambering in trees, or inventing games, and enjoying the grounds with friends, rather than staring at a phone or computer. Mobile phones are kept by the boarding staff and only used for calls home, before being handed straight back to staff.

Elms boarders enjoy a busy weekend. Saturdays start with morning activities for the younger boarders and lessons for Years 7 and 8, followed by Chapel and lunch. In the afternoon pupils play sport. After the formal day, children can help on the farm or play, and equestrian enthusiasts can ride too.

On Sundays, after a relaxed brunch, boarders head off for activities and outings, ranging from cycling in the Forest of Dean to picnics and games at the beach, or exploring the countryside around us.





Getting Here

Rural Yet Accessible

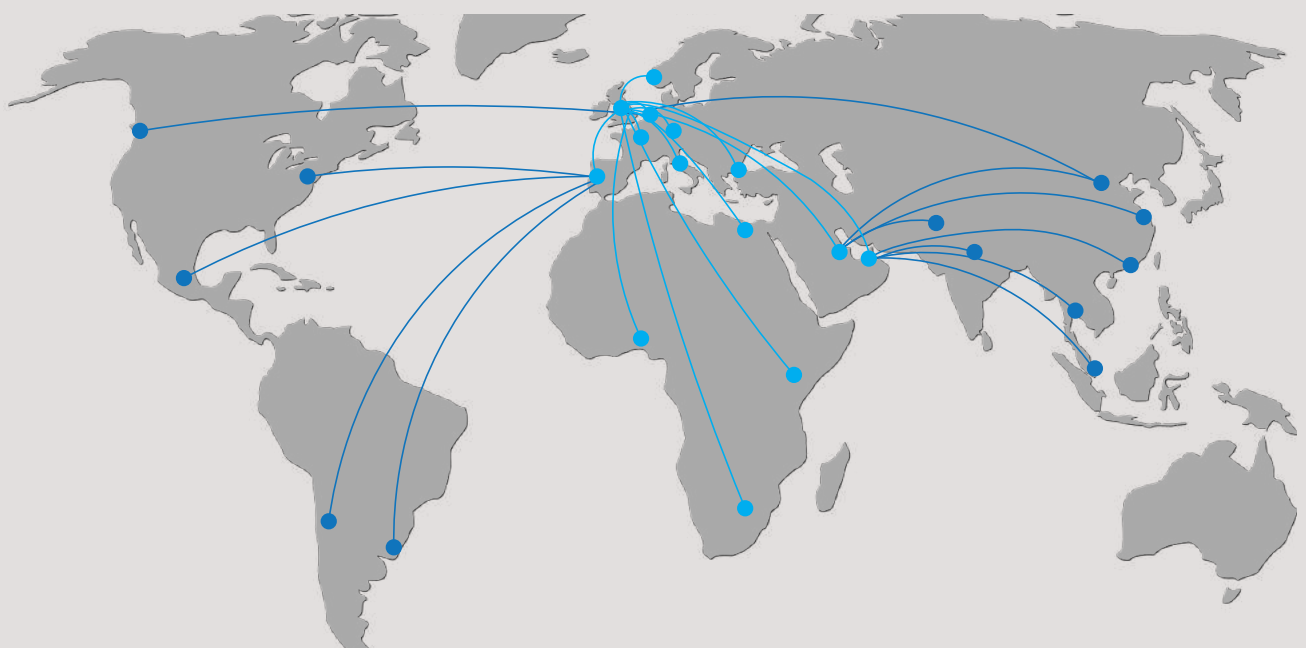
Despite being set within 40 glorious acres and surrounded by beautiful countryside, The Elms School is surprisingly accessible.

The school nestles under the western slopes of the Malvern Hills, on the outskirts of Colwall village. Great Malvern and Ledbury are equidistant, just 4 miles away. Ross-on-Wye, Hereford, Cheltenham and Gloucester are all within easy reach too, being 16, 18, 22 and 24 miles from the school, respectively. We offer a comprehensive and flexible school minibus service for our families.

There are also direct trains from London Paddington which can get you to Colwall in a little over 2 hours.

Birmingham Airport, which operates direct flights to Amsterdam, Barcelona, Frankfurt, Geneva, Madrid, Munich, Naples, Paris, Rome, UAE, and many more destinations (with excellent connecting flights to China, Japan, Thailand and the rest of the world from Amsterdam, Frankfurt and UAE) is just an hour away. There are direct trains from Birmingham to Colwall station, which take just over an hour, and bring you to within just a half mile of the school.

Several other airports such as Bristol, Cardiff, Manchester and London Heathrow are all within 1.5 - 3 hours of the school.





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