

NEWS



Jenny Gibson, Nancy Gibson-Gray meet Santa and his elf at Santa's Grotto.

Picture: SIORNA ASHBY

It's Christmas! New End School and Hampstead BID get into the festive spirit

Christmas came to Hampstead last weekend as the Business Improvement District's Village Christmas Festival and New End School's Winter Fair took place.

Hundreds attended both events on Sunday afternoon in an overcast and chilly Hampstead.

At the village festival in Hampstead High Street, families and children met Father Christmas, had chance to ride the carousel on the funfair and enjoyed the stalls on offer as the smell of roasting chestnuts wafted through the air.

The Theatre of Lemmings Lost Elves also entertained visitors, even if one bemused dog did take objection to the reindeer costume they were riding.

The Camden Society's Mill Lane Garden Centre were selling Christmas Trees and groups including the Heath and Hampstead Society tried to attract new members in the "community street" in Oriol Place.

BID manager Marcos Gold said: "The Christmas Festival was a fantastic day for all who came to visit Hampstead. Children and parents alike got the opportunity to meet with Santa and his elf, listen to fantastic live music provided by one of our local secondary schools, and experience

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everything our local businesses have to offer."

Up the road in Streatley Place, New End School was packed with parents and children.

Families had contributed by decorating and baking cakes, making a cracker, donating prizes or playing in the parents' band - which performed for guests. Mums and dads also volunteered on the day to make sure the event ran smoothly.

The event was held and organised by NESAs, the New End School Association.

Eva, a parent at the school and member of NESAs said: "Our annual New End School Winter Fair is a wonderful opportunity for children, parents, careers, staff and members of the local community to come together and share a fun afternoon for little ones and big ones alike."

"We are able to celebrate it every year thanks to the hard work of New End staff and kids, and the help and support of all our volunteers. Their efforts are indispensable, and very much appreciated."

School mum Sarah said it was a

"fantastic day" and they were able to sell all of two crackers.

The event helps raise much needed cash for the school, and goes towards supporting activities at the school including drama, French lessons and coding classes. NESAs also donates money for equipment and material for projects requested by teachers and pupils. The school first opened its doors in 1906.

Eva added that the funding is "more crucial than ever."

She said: "The Winter Fair is one of the children's favourite days at New End, not least of all because they get to meet Santa and eat cake - who wouldn't like that?"

"But I'd say that their favourite part is being able to enjoy the children-led play area. Year 6 pupils design and construct their own games for the rest of the school to enjoy, while they raise money for their end-of-year trip to France. We hope that everyone enjoyed the it as much as we did - join us for our Summer one too."

Headteacher Karyn Ray said: "The whole school community benefits from the fantastic work of NESAs (New End School Association) and the funds that they raise. We are all so thankful for their continued fundraising efforts and support."



Top: New End governor Tony Millard donned a festive suit to DJ at the Winter fair. Middle: Lost Elves entertain the crowds at the Hampstead BID festival. Bottom: A nursery pupil makes a bracelet at New End.

Pictures: SIORNA ASHBY

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The crowds flocked to Hampstead on Sunday afternoon

Picture: SIORNA ASHBY



New End Primary School parents and students celebrate at the school's Winter Fair. Picture: SIORNA ASHBY