



ELMWOOD SCHOOL NEWSLETTER DECEMBER 2023 – NO. 194

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Wishing everyone a very happy Christmas and New Year.

We look forward to welcoming pupils back on Monday 8th January 2024.

OUT AND ABOUT HAVE BEEN VERY BUSY!



As always, indoor caving at Wolf Mountain has proved a great hit with pupils this year, with our new Year 7s striving to get good points throughout the weeks to get themselves booked onto the caving option. You could say, 'it's gone down well'. Virtues practiced have been patience, joy and courage.

As you will recall, Elmwood previously achieved gold as part of the Woodland Trusts 'Green School Award'. This is the culmination of a variety of achievements that the school has accomplished, but in the main the planting of 450 sapling trees each year by pupils.

Pupils have learnt about sustainable planting and, after collecting their class Christmas tree from the farm (taking a tree from the earth then give back 15 new trees to the planet each), they discussed why we need trees for carbon capture and oxygen. We also discussed the wind breaking potential of this hedge for PE on the school field, as well as future foraging potential and wildlife benefits. It's been tremendous! Virtues practiced have been altruism, gentleness/awareness and nature connectedness.

Fröhliche Weihnachten!

Once again the German Christmas Market has come back to Birmingham City Centre and Elmwood pupils have had the opportunity to go and experience this cultural festival during their 'Out & About' lessons, contributing to their cultural capital.

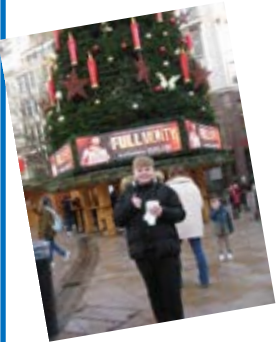
The variety of stalls has given the pupils and staff the opportunity to try traditional German festive foods such as filled pretzels, crepes and Bratwurst hot dogs. Staff and pupils also got to look at the stalls selling traditional wooden toys, Christmas candles and decorations, hats and jewellery.

All classes have been well behaved, polite to the stall holders and a credit to Elmwood. We would like to also add a special well done to those pupils who don't like being in unfamiliar environments with lots of other people, as they all coped tremendously well.

Last but not least, a big thank you to all of the teaching assistants who have accompanied the pupils, making these trips possible and run so smoothly.

Virtues practiced included, patience, courage, cooperation, awareness.

Report by Mr Whittaker, Head of Outdoor Learning



UNDER THE SPOTLIGHT

This month our featured member of staff under the spotlight is Alan Price, science teacher.



How long have you worked at Elmwood? *I started at Daw End in Sept 2006 which became Elmwood where I stayed until December 2012. I had a small break to complete my Doctorate and re-joined Elmwood in Sept 2019.*

What do you love about your job? *Sharing my interests in science with the young/and older members of the Elmwood community and learning more about science as I do so.*

What films have you watched recently? *Probably something my wife enjoys so an Agatha Christie, I don't really enjoy films.*

Favourite Holiday? *I like a little bit of adventure, so trekking in Iceland has to be a recent favourite.*

Tell us something that people would be surprised to hear? *The place I would most like to visit is Antarctica, I've read so much about Captain Scott and Ernest Shackleton, that I would like to stand in their footsteps, if only briefly.*



Winter House Cup Tournament Day at Elmwood School A Day of Sportsmanship, Inclusivity and Excitement!

Fun, camaraderie, and healthy competition, Elmwood's Winter House Cup Tournament. Our Elmwood athletes took part in a thrilling cricket and tchoukball tournament on Tuesday 28th November 2023 against their rival houses, Ainslie, Ennis, Higgins and Wiggins in a thrilling fight to receive the Winter House Cup. All students displayed incredible talent and sportsmanship whilst celebrating the spirit of teamwork and friendly competition. Cricket, a beloved sport that requires skill, strategy, and focus, would be one of the highlights of the tournament. Our pupils have been practising diligently, honing their batting, bowling, and fielding techniques to showcase their talent. Whether you are a cricket enthusiast or new to the sport, you are guaranteed to be captivated by the intensity and excitement of the matches. In addition to cricket, the tournament will also feature tchoukball matches. Tchoukball, a fast-paced and dynamic game, which emphasizes teamwork, agility, and quick thinking. It is a non-contact sport that promotes inclusivity and fair play. At the end of the day all scores were added together but the results were not disclosed and were to be revealed in the assembly on Friday. As the suspense built up Friday finally arrived, all pupils patiently waited for the results to be announced... in 4th place, Wiggins, 3rd place, Murray, 2nd place, Ainslie and in 1st place with 25 points... Ennis! The Elmwood community wants to say a huge congratulations to Ennis house, a well-deserved win indeed. Alongside the Winter House Cup we also selected players of the tournament both in lower and upper school, lower school cricket player, Charlie Smyth and for tchoukball, Riley Cabrera. Upper school players of the tournament for cricket were Re'shae Pearman and for tchoukball, Tyler Jones. Well done to each and every one of our Elmwood pupils that took part in the tournament, roll on spring term for the next House Cup Competition... will your house take the title? Report by Ms Diponio, Teacher



PSHEe FUNDRAISER

During November, Years 7a and 7b took part in the PSHEe's curriculum charity challenge. Both year groups were exceptional and worked diligently within the lessons and also worked through a lot of their break time to complete this task. 7b created a guess the name of the teddy and also guess the weight of the cake in order to raise their contribution. 7a took in donations and a thank you to all who contributed towards the raffle and pick a bottle. They managed between them to raise a whopping £105.10 for their chosen charity which was The Trussell Trust.

This charity provides a food bank service for families who are struggling, especially through the cost of living crisis. Both groups found this to be a worthy cause and wanted to support them. I would also like to extend a huge thanks to the teaching assistants who supported the pupils along the way who are Sunity Lalli, Stacey Urmson and Tammy Mahey. A huge thanks to all involved.

Report by Mr Wood, Teacher & Stacey Urmson, Teaching Assistant



STAFFING NEWS

Tammy Mahey, teaching assistant, will be saying goodbye at the end of term having been successful in securing another position outside of education. We wish Tammy every success for the future. We will also be saying goodbye to Hina Patel, who has been working on supply as a teaching assistant. Hina has forged good relationships with everyone and her recent assembly was very memorable.

TEACHING ASSISTANT INTERVIEWS

Interviews were held on 21st and 28th November 2023 for teaching assistants to join the school.

We are pleased to confirm that Frankie Smith and Courtney Martin were successful and we look forward to welcoming them onto the team in the new year.

A big thank you to Lisa Jones, Parent Governor, who quickly stepped in to assist Mr Cross in the interview process which was very much appreciated.

PROGRESS AND ACHIEVEMENT

Our autumn term progress and achievement event took place on Wednesday 13th December. 71 appointments were made with 64 able to attend (90.1%). A big thank you to everyone who attended their appointments and completing the parental questionnaire.

For information our spring term event will be taking place on Wednesday 20th March 2024.

Elmwood School Champions Rewards Trip Baggeridge Park – Challenge Academy.



Our Elmwood Champions were selected to embark on one of our most unforgettable adventures to date, a journey filled with adrenaline-pumping activities and unforgettable memories.

For those who haven't been to a tree top climbing adventure park before, let me paint a picture for you. Picture yourself climbing through a series of elevated obstacles, from wobbly bridges to swinging ropes, all while being surrounded by the beauty of nature. Our champions had the fantastic opportunity to challenge themselves, overcome fears, and build confidence. All of which was put to the test through a series of challenging trails, including being blindfolded, linked to another peer and completing the course backwards! There were so many amazing high rope courses, net adventures and power descenders.



One of the highlights of this thrilling trip was the 'leap of faith'. Imagine walking out onto a narrow wooden beam, suspended 30 ft above the ground, testing both your balance and agility. Our Champions then shuffled to the edge and came face to face with the thrill of a free fall descent! A gravity defying adventure and possibly the closest experience you could get that simulates a parachute jump landing. 3...2...1 JUMP! Trust me,

the sense of accomplishment when you reach the bottom is beyond compare, an experience that left us all breathless and wanting more.



Well done to all our Elmwood Champions this term. Let's see who's next to take the cup!
Report by Ms Diponio, Teacher

GOVERNOR UPDATE

We are pleased to confirm that Tracy MacDonald and Sallyann Tuckwell-Allen will be continuing as joint Chair of Governors for this academic year. Sandra Mills has taken on the role of Vice Chair.

A big thank you to them all for their continued support and also to Sarah Thornton, who did a great job as Vice Chair for the previous academic year.

WALSALL SENDIAS

The Walsall SENDIAS Team based at Manor Farm Community Centre in Rushall have a number of upcoming events and articles of interest for parent and carers listed in their December newsletter.

A copy is available on our school website, parents and carers page.

CHRISTMAS FAYRE

Thank you to everyone who supported our mini Christmas Fayre on Wednesday 13th December which helped to raise £532.84 for our school funds.

The lucky prize winners for the main raffle and children's raffle were as follows:

- £100 One4All Gift Voucher— Debbie Causer (staff)
- £70 Asda supermarket gift voucher—Harry Lee Cox (pupil)
- Christmas Hamper—Julie Burnell (staff)
- Christmas Hamper—Mr Wood (staff)
- Christmas Hamper—Dave Askins (c/o staff)
- £25 Alan Warwick Butchers meat voucher for ½ a fresh turkey crown—Lewis Reynolds (c/o staff)
- 1 litre bottle of Bells Whiskey—Sara Beamand (carer)
- Bottle of Monsigny Champagne—Denise Howdle (c/o staff)
- Sipsmith Gin Collection—Sallyann Tuckwell-Allen (governor)
- £10 Farmfoods Voucher—Daniel MacNulty (staff)
- Bottle of Dry Martini—Dawn Canham (staff)
- Bottle of Pinot Grigio Wine—Paul Middleton (staff)
- Slipper & Smellies set—Junior Stansbie (pupil)
- Superdry Vintage Body Duo—Dave R—Will Hire (c/o staff)
- Tub of Celebrations—Izzy Hough (pupil)

- Kickmaster Back Pack Training set—Harlow Jones (pupil)
- Sony MDR ZX 130A headphones—Mr Wood (staff)
- 52 piece Kreative Kids Art set—Junior Stansbie (pupil)
- Chocolate Hamper—Dylan Paddock (pupil)
- Marvel Spiderman filled pencil case—Ronnie Mae (c/o staff)
- Kickmaster close control trainer—Ivy (c/o staff)
- Unicorn shower gel gift set—Malachi Grainger (pupil)
- Rubix Cube—Harry Gunter (pupil)
- Smurf Floor Jigsaw Puzzle—Joshua Till (pupil)

We are very grateful to the following Companies /People who provided raffle prizes:

- [Cert Solutions—£100 One4All gift card](#)
- [SEN Central—£70 Asda gift voucher](#)
- [Farmfoods—£10 gift voucher](#)
- [Alan Warwick Butchers—£25 meat voucher](#)

Lisa Jones, mom to Caitlin in Year 8, placed the highest bid for the chocolate hamper. Unfortunately, due to the highest bidder for the 6 pantomime tickets at Resorts World, Birmingham, withdrawing her bid, we have yet to find a buyer for this fantastic bargain. A big thank you to Mrs Francis for sourcing these tickets.

A big thank you to all staff, parents and carers who forwarded theme week items and also to Sara Beamand, nan to Alfie in Year 8, who once again produced some lovely hampers and tombola gifts. Also to Shelli George, teaching assistant, and the pupils who created some lovely craft items to sell during their Friday enrichment activities.

Finally a massive thank you to Josh, brother in law to Ms Askins, art teacher, who sold an amazing amount of raffle tickets at Will Hire, which really boosted our fundraising total. Also to Laura's mom who made an amazing fruit Christmas cake for the guess the weight of the cake competition. The cake weighed in at 3.21 kg with Bev Bailey, Family Support Worker, the closest with an estimate of 3.5 kgs.



The event was a great success and again thank you to everyone for their support.