



# ELMWOOD SCHOOL NEWSLETTER JANUARY 2024 – NO. 195

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## CHRISTMAS LUNCH



On Thursday 21st December, the whole school came together for its annual Christmas lunch. Lynne the cook did the school proud producing a delicious traditional turkey dinner and vegetarian option. Pupils were a credit to the school and everyone looked



very festive in their Christmas tops. A big thank you to Hilary Shaw, Food Technology Teacher, who helped with organising pupils to their relevant tables and also to the staff who helped to iron the giant tablecloths! The activity packs produced by Shelli George, Teaching Assistant, also went down a treat with pupils.



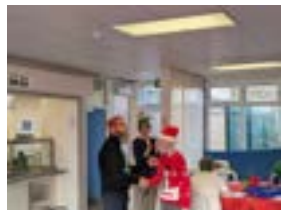
A separate dining area was available for pupils who preferred a quieter atmosphere overseen by Mr Cross, Headteacher, which was a popular



choice this year.



At the end of the meal Lynne the cook was presented with a flower arrangement and a box of biscuits by Junior Stansbie in Year 8 as a thank you gesture for all her hard work. In addition, Junior read out a speech that he had prepared thanking staff for their help and support.



Finally the autumn term reading raffle draw took place with two lucky pupils winning a £10 Amazon voucher. The winners were Sam Ashbery and Aidan Garbett both pupils in Year 9b. In total there were 85 tickets in the draw, so a lot of reading had taken place this term. Very well done to Sam and Aidan and commiserations to all other pupils and better luck next time.



Pupils had a nice surprise later when Mr Cross delivered a selection box to every pupil. These were all kindly wrapped by Stan Canham (husband of Dawn in the office) and purchased using our private school funds.

## CHRISTMAS GOODIES

A big thank you to Waj from NA Cars, who transport the majority of our pupils, for the goodies he kindly sent in for both pupils and staff. These were very much appreciated by everyone. In addition, Waj also assisted at the end of term with the delivery of Christmas trees from class bases that were delivered to nominated pupils' houses.

The SENDIAS team based at Manor Farm also supported a number of pupils with the donation of a number Christmas gifts which were also gratefully received by the relevant families.

## UNDER THE SPOTLIGHT

This month our featured member of staff under the spotlight is Grant Hunt, Teaching Assistant



**How long have you worked at Elmwood?** *I have worked for Elmwood for 11 years.*

**What do you love about your job?** *I, enjoy that every day is rarely the same. I enjoy working with the young people who make the job what it is.*

**What films have you watched recently?** *Favourite film is Green Mile, most probably seen 20 times plus.*

**Favourite Holiday?** *Best holiday was in Jamaica (Negril Beach). Seeing in New Year with 10,000 people in a pair of shorts and t-shirt and watching a massive firework display coming out from the middle of the sea. It was amazing!!*

**Tell us something that people would be surprised to hear?** *I have sparred with a world kickboxing champion (and lived to tell the tale). More importantly I was number 1 in the world on Candy Crush in June 2022. No idea where I am in the rankings now but currently on level 14,565*

## ATTENDANCE SUPER STARS

These are the 14 pupils who have achieved 100% attendance for the autumn term:

Joshua Evans  
Josie-Leigh Evans  
Mkenzie Gonderton  
Francis Gosling  
Malachi Grainger  
Harry Gunter  
George Hancox  
Brandon Holland  
Dylan Paddock  
Harry Pickford  
Charlie Smyth  
Rebecca Spendlove  
Julian Wilkins-McCallum  
Preston Ward

The following staff also achieved 100% attendance this term and received a certificate:

Gemma Francis, Dan Whittaker, James Francis, Matt Webb, Laura Askins, Tracey Pow, Hilary Shaw, Dawn Canham, Marcia Allen, Debbie Causer, Grant Hunt, Shelli George, Leon Donaldson, Adam Mitchell, Tracy Jackson, Sonya Woollery, Sunita Lalli, Athena Nicholaou and Beverley Bailey.

Very well done to all concerned and keep up the great work.

## DATES FOR THE DIARY

A reminder that school will be closed to pupils on Friday 9th February as it is a staff training day. Pupils will therefore break up on Thursday 8th February at normal time for the half term break, returning on Monday 19th February.

## KIDZANIA OPPORTUNITY

Unfortunately, the fantastic opportunity that our year 9 pupils experience by visiting Kidzania in London, will not be taking place this year due to the sudden closure of the venue. We are obviously disappointed with this news, as from previous experience, we know how much pupils have enjoyed having a taster of possible future career options. We hope to be able to offer some other alternative for our year 9 pupils to attend.

## KNIFE ANGEL VISITS

Selected pupils recently embarked on an educational visit to the Knife Angel statue as part of their studies in Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) lessons. This experience aimed to not only broaden their perspectives but also encourage discussions on the impact of violence and the importance of community in addressing issues with knife crime.

The striking sculpture is made from more than 100,000 bladed weapons that have been blunted and welded together and was created to raise awareness of knife crime and violence. The statue, also known as the National Monument Against Violence and Aggression was created by sculptor Alfie Bradley at the British Ironworks Centre in Oswestry, Shropshire and the blades used to create it, were all seized by Police forces across the country.



This towering artwork stands as a symbol against violence and knife crime, serving as a stark reminder of the devastating consequences associated with such actions. Encountering the Knife Angel encourages pupils to empathise with the victims of knife crime, their families, and surrounding communities. By witnessing the scale of the problem through the visual representation of surrendered knives, pupils are prompted to reflect on the human cost of violence and the importance of fostering a compassionate society. During the visit, one Yr 10 pupil said, "I can't believe how many knives have been used in the statue" "I hope people understand the meaning of this statue because I've noticed not many people have even acknowledged the statue" another Yr 11 pupil quoted "I wonder how many lives were lost, how many people have died with each knife". A very emotional, moving, and poignant experience for all pupils and staff. Report by Miss Diponio, Teacher

## AUTUMN TERM REWARD TRIPS—12.1.24



### Gold trip

This term's GOLD reward trip was an exclusive FIRST! Elmwood travelled to Telford to experience 'Telford's Biggest and Best Indoor adventure park!' -Flip Out! In total there were a staggering 14 amazing attractions, including e-karting, laser quest, interactive football, battle cannon, bumper cars and my personal favourite - an actual roller rink to try roller booting, something I hadn't done for over 30 years! We were there for over two hours and there was not enough time to experience it all.

*"It was amazing because there were so many activities" Daniel 8c, "I loved the bumper cars, it was great spinning around" Harry 8b, "Lots of great things to do!" Phoebe 7b, "A great venue for doing roller skating" Riley 8b "No-one wanted to return back to school, we were all having such a great time".*

Behaviour and team building was impeccable from all pupils and they were an asset to the school. Thank you to Kerry, Tracey J and Hardeep for making it a fantastic team and a memorable, celebratory day. Report by Mr Webb, Trip Lead

### Silver trip

Despite the freezing temperatures, the children, who were fortunate enough to go to Ninja Warrior, thoroughly enjoyed the experience. Most tackled the quite physically demanding course and then went to the inflatable area, where they had heaps of fun boinging the day away. Report by Mr Wood, Trip Lead



Elmwood's other silver reward trip was to JumpXtreme in Tamworth. Twenty four pupils earned the opportunity to attend the trip with over an hour of exclusive hire of the venue. Pupils had many games of dodgeball and practiced their skill on the trampolines jumping into the air bags doing backflips and front flips. After the pupils had finished jumping they were invited to a buffet lunch in the cafe where they were given pizzas, chips, sandwiches and lots of other tasty snacks!

All pupils demonstrated all the school's core values by caring for themselves, others and the environment. It has given the pupils the drive to be 1% better each week and aim for gold this term! Thank you to all the staff involved in the trip that made the day go so smoothly and the pupils for their perfect behaviour. Report by Mr Hinsley, Trip Lead

### Bronze trip



Pupils had a great time at Crown Wharf at the Tenpin centre. The group of 20 pupils were split with one group enjoying bowling, whilst the others took on the challenge of laser tag upstairs. Those in the laser tag operated as two teams, greens and reds and, after a safety briefing and kit up, battle commenced. The top sniper was Jack Poxon in Year 10b.

Bowling was fun too, with Jay Marklew in Year 11b, coming out with most strikes. Report by Mr Whittaker, Trip Lead



All of the above would not happen without Mrs Francis, Deputy Head and Lynn Maritza, School Business, Finance and Operations Manager, who organise everything.

## STAFFING NEWS

Well done to Alan Price, science teacher, who has started the year by running 26.2 miles to raise funds for Prostate Cancer. Very well done Alan on this achievement and good luck with the next challenge of cycling from London to Brighton in June.

Mr Wood, teacher, had a special birthday on Monday 15th January which was celebrated by staff when he was presented with gifts and cards.



Also celebrating a special birthday on 26th January was Lynn Maritza in the office. Lynn also received lots of goodies as well as a few unexpected surprises that had been put up around school.



We were pleased to welcome Frankie Smith, teaching assistant, to the team on Monday 29th January when she joined the nurture base group. We hope Frankie soon settles into her new post.

## OUT AND ABOUT NEWS

### Another string to our bow!

After attending a weekend workshop with British Archery GB, I was given the opportunity for Elmwood to become an Accredited Archery Provider (AAP). After fulfilling a few requirements this meant that we are now able to proudly boast our Archery GB plaque in our school foyer and receive approximately £900 worth of 'soft' archery equipment.

Pupils will be able to utilize this outside of the confines of the adventure barn, as the safety issues will be far less. This represents a very exciting opportunity for our pupils.

### Spring clearing



Pupils have enjoyed visiting Phoenix Academy to help tidy and clear their forest school area of weeds, nettles and brambles. Pupils enjoyed seeing previous staff and Phoenix staff have remarked how mature our pupils have been.

It has been a positive partnership, which will be followed up with me delivering training to their staff in how to utilise their grounds for outdoor learning.

It was cold work in January, but a good way of keeping warm and very satisfying to see the end improvement. Pupils have practiced their virtues of altruism and awareness, amongst others.

### Special visit

As part of my involvement in the All Party Parliamentary Group for Outdoor Learning, I was able to invite Wendy Morton MP to Elmwood. This was to discuss the nationally significant and unique programme of Outdoor Learning we deliver at Elmwood, with its research backed justification, the Theory of Change, as well as discuss the Parliamentary campaign to ensure every pupil in the UK receives a guaranteed and substantial outdoor learning experience as part of the legal entitlement within their education.



The visit occurred on the afternoon of the 19<sup>th</sup> January, when Wendy was given the opportunity to witness the breadth and depth of the Out & About curriculum as well as tour the outdoor store, campfire and adventure barn. Whilst at the barn, Wendy had the opportunity to try her hand at riflery and archery and later joined a group that Mr Middleton was leading in axe throwing. As you can see from the feedback, a great time was had. A targeted visit, indeed.  
Report by Mr Whittaker, Head of Outdoor Learning

