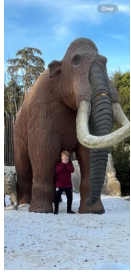




# ELMWOOD SCHOOL NEWSLETTER OCTOBER 2024 – NO. 203

www.elmwood.walsall.sch.uk

## SAFARI PARK VISITS



Thanks to the Variety Club, a number of parents and carers enjoyed a day out at West Midlands Safari Park over the weekends of 21-22nd September and 27th-28th September. Unfortunately the weather was not very kind, especially on Sunday 22nd September, which meant some parents and carers were not able to go.

For those that did, a great time was had by all. A parent of a child in Year 8 stated *'can you thank them from us please as it was a wonderful day out'* and another in Year 9 stated *'Caitlin loved the drive through and seeing all the animals close by'*.



We are very grateful to the Variety Club for giving parents and carers the opportunity to receive free tickets. Thank you also for the lovely photos that were sent in, these have been forwarded to the Variety Club who were delighted to see everyone having such a great time.

## MACMILLAN COFFEE MORNING

On Tuesday 8th October Elmwood held it's annual Macmillan coffee morning to show our support for such a worthy cause. As always the Elmwood community came together to raise £144. It was lovely to see pupils caring for others and all representing our school values so well throughout the event!

This event was used to give Year 7 parents and carers the opportunity to visit the school and see what Elmwood is all about. We would like to say a huge thank you to all parents and carers that managed to come in, it was lovely to meet you all. Another huge thank you to all parents for sending in donations, hopefully some of the cakes made it home! It was also lovely that two of our governors were able to join in the fun, namely Di Cadman, Associate Governor and Sarah Thornton, Parent Governor.

A huge well done to all of 7b for working so hard to raise money by selling cakes and trying to get everyone to have a go on the various raffles. Based on the haggling I'm sure they would give Sir Alan Sugar a run for his money! Many congratulations to Ryan Keenan in 9a and Alex Clarke in 7b who were the lucky raffle winners.

Not only did the pupils support financially by buying the cakes but they all created these baked goods during their lessons for the week prior to the event. We would like to say a huge well done to all of the pupils because without their contributions we wouldn't have been able to raise as much as we did.

Last but not least a huge thank you to all the staff involved that assisted with this event and to those that contributed. The diet started Monday! Report by Mrs Dudley, Food Technology Instructor

## TESCO AWARD

Elmwood has been successful in securing the Stronger Starts - Fruit and Veg for Schools grant of £6,000 for the academic year!

This enables school staff to purchase fruit and veg to support our food technology curriculum offer, as well as us exploring the use of fresh fruit as a snack for our pupils (in addition to our breakfast options).

It will also be an opportunity for pupils to try a variety tastes and textures without worrying about not liking them and the financial worry that this would place on their families. Report by Mr Cross, Headteacher

## 'An unexpected Adventure'.

As part of the ongoing commitment to constantly improve the Out & About offer, and as a contribution to our focus on 'connected communicators', an article has been written for the 'Horizons' journal - the academic magazine for the Professional Outdoor Educators and members of the Institute for Outdoor Learning.

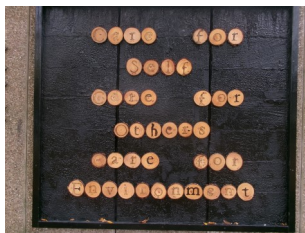
Earlier this year I spoke at the Lindley Festival of Outdoor Learning and last year, at the International SEBDA conference (along with Dr. Price), about the long term development that the O&A programme has undergone, contributing to our goal of 'world class' education. This culminated in our last Ofsted report describing the programme as 'High Quality Outdoor Education'.

The article is included on the school website for those who wish to gain an insight into the tremendous amount of research and hard work that has gone into this journey.

### Arboretum Bulb Planting

In October, each year, the pupils plant around 500 spring bulbs at the front of school. This is approximately 5,000 bulbs across the 11 years that the O&A curriculum has run at Elmwood.

As part of Walsall arboretum's centenary, we were invited to plant bulbs in the gardens there. Two groups were lucky enough to attend and whilst planting practiced the virtues of nature connection, joy and altruism. Thanks to Fiona of the arboretum volunteers for kindly inviting us and thanks to staff and pupils for representing Elmwood so well.



A 'Valuable' Display.

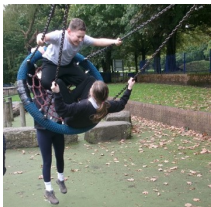
Last year, pupils, in O&A, pyrographed letters into wooden disks. Mr Middleton and myself varnished these and Mr Middleton has now displayed these showing visitors our school values of care for self, others and environment. Each letter also has the initials of the pupil who created it so they can proudly see their own work.

### Conquered Dragons

During this half term of O&A, pupils took part in canoeing sessions. Many pupils overcame their dragons and achieved a 'Conquering Dragons certificate' and the addition of their name onto the 'roll of honour' in the main corridor. The pupils included Josie Leigh Evans, Harry Lee Cox, Ryan Keenan and Rebeca Spendlove for courage in canoeing, Ryan for sailing too, Evie Leonard for overcoming transport concerns and Maisie Jevons for bravery at sailing. Report by Mr Whittaker, Head of Outdoor Learning

## THE GIANT WOODEN WHEEL

### A magical day at the arboretum



On the 27th September, a group of lucky pupils had the opportunity to attend a unique performance at the arboretum park in Walsall—a blend of circus artistry, dance, and nature. This special trip was part of our school's ongoing efforts to offer enriching experiences outside the classroom.

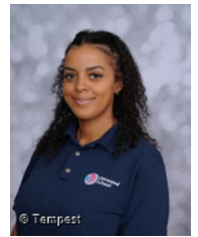
The highlight of the event was a breathtaking performance centred around a giant wooden wheel. Dancers and performers amazed the audience by climbing, balancing, and spinning on this massive structure with grace and skill whilst circling the park. Their movements were inspired by traditional circus acts but elevated with a modern, artistic twist, set against the beautiful natural backdrop of the arboretum. This was followed by a dance performance with elements of acrobatics, captivating everyone with their strength and storytelling. It was a day filled with wonder, as pupils not only enjoyed the spectacle of the performance but also connected with the natural world around them when visiting the outdoor adventure park.

A truly magical day for all. Well done to the selection of pupils that attended and to all the local communities that joined together to put on a magnificent performance. Report by Ms Diponio, PE Teacher



## UNDER THE SPOTLIGHT

This month our featured member of staff under the spotlight is teaching assistant, Sonya Woollery.



**How long have you worked at Elmwood?** *I have worked at Elmwood for 2 years.*

**What do you love about your job?** *I love that it is a fast-paced environment and seeing the young people every day. Every child is different so it's nice to get to know them. The job can be challenging but it's rewarding to see the hours spent helping young people can make such an impactful difference. The work put in from everyone allows pupils to overcome obstacles and personal struggles.*

**What films have you watched recently?** *Recently, I have watched Freedom Writers, it's one of my favourites.*

**Favourite Holiday?** *I love travelling, my favourite holiday would have to be The Dominican Republic.*

**Tell us something that people would be surprised to hear?** *People might be surprised to hear that I have a 1st class degree in Criminology and Criminal Justice, and I have worked in a prison.*

## PUPIL UNDER THE SPOTLIGHT

Our pupil under the spotlight this month is Preston Ward in Year 8 so a big thank you to him for his responses, you might recognise a theme in his responses:

**What do you like most about coming to Elmwood School?** *Playing football.*

**Have you any thoughts about what you might like to do after leaving Elmwood?** *Footballer.*

**In your spare time, what do you most like to do?** *Football.*

**Have you done anything that we might be surprised to learn about?** *I used to play tennis.*

**If you could go anywhere or do anything, what would you choose?** *Go to Villa Park.*

## STAFFING NEWS

Alan Price successfully completed his recent fundraising bike ride and raised £125 for Severn Hospice. Many congratulations and well done Alan on this amazing achievement.

Unfortunately Lynne the cook is currently off work but hopefully will be back after the half term break. Lynne has been missed by staff and pupils alike and we can't wait for normal service to resume, Lynne's meals are second to none and she always goes the extra mile to make sure pupils have a lovely lunch.

## SCHOOL FUND ACCOUNT

A big thank you to Sara Beaman, grandmother to a year 9 pupil, who has kindly donated £100 to our school fund account. This money is used solely to benefit pupils and we are very grateful for this donation. Also, Sarah kindly gave staff some nice goodies to celebrate with at the end of the summer term, which went down very nicely.

Our account has now been externally audited by Norma Stamps, so a big thank you to Norma for undertaking this on our behalf, especially as she underwent the task with a broken wrist. Well done Norma and your support over the years has been very much appreciated.

## REMEMBRANCE DAY

Ahead of our school remembrance service on Thursday 7th November when members of the Staffordshire Regiment will be joining us, we have a number of items on sale on behalf of the British Legion.

Ellis Bird in Year 11 will be selling these items from Monday 21st October ahead of remembrance day events with a minimum of donation of £1 requested, apart from the metal pin badges which cost £3 and wooden crosses £1.50.



## ART GALLERY ENRICHMENT VISITS

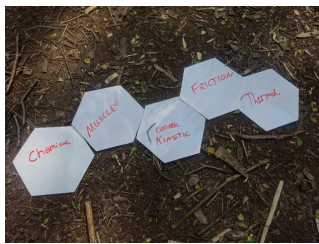


We recently embarked on an inspiring trip to the Carlos Bunga exhibit at the Walsall New Art Gallery, and it was a fantastic experience for everyone!



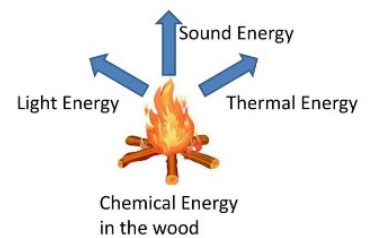
Our pupils were captivated by Bunga's vibrant installations, which encouraged creativity and sparked engaging conversations about art. Bunga was a refugee born in Spain and he has created an instalment all about the different homes he has lived in due to his uphill battle with finding a suitable home.

Pupils explored four rooms and asking some brilliant thought-provoking questions and were able to make some fantastic inferences about the works and share their opinions sensibly. Report by Ms Askins, Art Teacher



## Science in the woods – surely not!

Year 10 pupils recently spent a day in the woods of Leicestershire to enhance their science learning about energy transfers. This involved investigating how much energy could be transferred from wood into water. The wood is a store of chemical energy, when ignited the energy is released as heat



(thermal energy) light and sound energy. The learners had to work out the change in temperature of the water by measuring the before and after temperatures.



The day helped the young people to think about energy transfers in real life situations; they used friction and then the sun to start fire. Later they explored elastic energy firing a catapult.



A fun day was had by all, and it was great to see pupils engages who find lab work a little more of a challenge.

More photos are available on the school website, photo gallery page.  
Report by Dr Price, Curriculum Lead for Science

## FAMILY PROGRAMME

The new art gallery in Walsall has a number of family events taking place up to the end of December 2024.

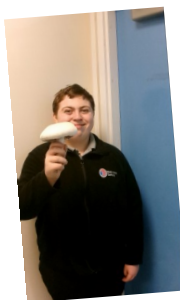
These include activities over half term, a Diwali festival of light event on the 2nd November and making a paper plate Santa on 20-22nd December.

Further information can be found on their website [www.thenewartgallery.walsall.org.uk](http://www.thenewartgallery.walsall.org.uk)

## GREAT FIND

The month of October is the ideal time for spotting wild mushrooms and fungi.

We have a number of pupils who have developed a real passion and enthusiasm for foraging in the hopes of finding not only mushrooms but other plants and herbs.



Ryan in Year 9 was excited to find this horse mushroom close to the school grounds recently, which was a real whopper.

Well done Ryan and Mr Hawkes, Assistant Head who is a keen forager, always enjoys seeing what pupils have spotted both in and out of school and is often able to give advice on their finds.

## SPOOKY DAY

We will be have a non uniform day on Monday 4th November when staff and pupils are welcome to wear ghoulish clothing in celebration of Halloween on 31st October 2024. We look forward to seeing an array of outfits on our first day back after the half term break.