



HEADTEACHER'S REPORT TO GOVERNORS – SUMMER TERM 2024

Named people within the report:

Name	Role / Responsibility
Mark Smith	Home 2 School Transport Manager, Walsall
Leon Donaldson	Teaching Assistant
Gemma Francis	Deputy Head
Martin Hawkes	Assistant Headteacher
Daniel Whittaker	Outdoor Learning Teacher
Lisa Jones	Parent Governor/Link governor for Technologies
Michael O'Callaghan	SCITT
Pat Hunt	School Improvement Partner
Kate Bargh	Executive Headteacher, North Star Federation
Lisa Southall	Headteacher, Shepwell School
Michael Riley	Principle, Ormiston Shelfield Academy
Cathy Draper	Executive Headteacher, Short Heath Federation Seconded Leader, Walsall LA

Introduction:

As we are approaching the end of the academic year, I feel it's important to acknowledge the newly appointed staff to the Elmwood Community who, for some, are reaching their first academic year with us. I appreciate that for staff, pupils and Governors having such a large shift in staffing can cause periods of instability – I am pleased to say that due to the drive and commitment of our experienced staff we have been able to navigate them through their first year and for them to get a real feel for the work we do at Elmwood. What has become apparent is the rigour surrounding recruitment as the quality that we have been lucky to attract has complimented our current staffing team and also provided us with additional options we never considered previously i.e. additional craft activities around slime making, girls physical activities and sporting recognition, further strength within safeguarding (specifically sexual abuse and exploitation), as well as an increase in staff with D1 on their license enabling more people to drive the 12 seater mini-bus.

Following on from the request from Governors, the co-chairs and myself have met to explore the emerging conclusions from the wellbeing questionnaire. The key drivers for improvement were:

- Regular revisiting of the school's Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy so all staff are aware of this (aligned to the school's holistic offer).
- Clearer signposting to all forms of support available within and outside of the school (aligned to the school's holistic offer).
- Regular training for staff on how to recognise and subsequently support pupils' wellbeing as it can change so rapidly – this can then be linked into staff training on recognising the signs and symptoms of their own mental health and wellbeing from working within a challenging sector.

Co-chairs are very empathetic of the demands that are placed on staff who work within this environment and how this may impact on their perceptions around their own wellbeing and will continue to ensure a strategic approach is created which aligns to the school's new strategy of

“belonging”, which also aligns to Walsall Council’s work around belonging within Walsall Schools. This also complemented the resoundingly positive Sandwell Charter Accreditation¹.

The Governing body are committed to provide future support in exploring and helping the school to evolve useful strategies which in turn could help staff’s self care routines longer term.

As I am sure you can appreciate the SuT is a quick paced term with staff focussing on achieving the very best for our Yr11 pupils as well as having another eye on supporting a successful transition from Year 6 to Year 7, together with internal transitions and changes. This year we will be transitioning 20 Year 6 pupils (which is our largest ever cohort) – and we are busy ensuring that the transition is purposeful by:

- Staff and pupils start to build relationships with their new team.
- Exposure to “Awe and Wonder” through our curriculum offer including newly allocated Geography for September 2024.
- For pupils to get into the school’s rhythm i.e. check in and check outs, appreciation culture and social reading.

The challenges that we are facing on top of the logistics of hosting 3 transition dates is I am currently involved in 3 tribunals (hearings scheduled June, July and September); if successful, then the LA will be directed to place at Elmwood which will increase our group size to 8 and have a potential negative impact on the curriculum delivery and breadth. Whilst growth is a strategic focus for us as a school, it needs to be part of a capital build programme ensuring curriculum delivery is possible. In addition to this the LA have also upheld their direction letter of a Year 7 pupil who is no longer successful within a mainstream provision and a Walsall LAC – this is again another example of a group size increasing to 8. I have asked the LA to fund an additional 12-seater mini-bus to at least enable that group to still experience the Out and About curriculum and any additional Learning Outside of The Classroom opportunities. This increase in commissioned places have financial off-set the inflation costs placed on the school’s budget.

Whilst it may look that we as a school are not generating additional provision, I can assure you that we are having accepted an additional pupil in both 8c and 9a – where we feel there is capacity to stretch each group to 7 pupils (pupil needs based). Whilst transition is difficult for all parties this is going extremely well and all new pupils are adding their character and enthusiasm for attending school on a consistent basis and do feel that they belong within our school community. I know that parents / carers are also noticing significant improvements during those morning routines as attending school is no longer a trigger for dysregulated behaviour.

I will continue to scrutinise all placement requests and look at ways in which we can support the pupils and families that we serve whilst also looking at the larger project of a safe and holistic expansion – as identified within the Cabinet Report (February 2024).

I was extremely proud to be invited to Walsall’s “Making School Belonging a Reality” (April 2024) as a guest speaking with regards to how Elmwood has generated a sense of belonging and the impact this has on pupil suspensions, educational outcomes and also happiness. This was a fantastic opportunity

¹ Reference to Bev Bailey’s DSL report SuT One 2024

to work with a variety of Headteachers across Walsall (PRU, Secondary and Primary). The format was prepared by Professor Kathryn Riley who following a series of pre meetings conducted a Question Time approach inviting questions from over 170 Senior Leaders and LA Officers. The feedback on the day was extremely positive and delegates felt they could resonant with the work at Elmwood. My comments were also recognised by the Artist in Residence who was depicting the whole day ² as well as pictures of “The Conversations that Matter”³. Below are some positive comments from colleagues who attended the conference:

“I found the discussion with Professor Kathryn Riley to be very informative. It was interesting to hear the challenges faced by the Headteachers and their own examples of the difficulties they face on a day to day basis. The effort they go to ensuring children feel safe and can achieve great things if they are listened to is commendable. Lee's enthusiasm and drive were evident and that came across instantly and his passion for his school and his pupils stood out.”

Mark Smith

“... Lee's approach was just so refreshing, rather than prejudging young people the approach at Elmwood and the principles of love bombing provide an amazingly positive and wonderful approach to making young people feel valued and nurtured. This enables the young people with educational trauma to feel important and cared for despite some of the difficulties they may face or display. The positive messages on both the postcards and videos were just incredible and demonstrated how the inclusive approaches at Elmwood are supporting these young people to belong and achieve. I would like to pass on a huge well-done for all Elmwood staff do for their pupils. We have adapted some of these wonderful principles ourselves.”

Lisa Southall

“I was delighted that the “Conversations that Matter” was set up as part of the “Belonging Conference”. It was a rare opportunity for head teachers to lead a conversation about their day to day experiences. It demonstrated that, across the range of education settings, the challenges faced by school leaders were much the same. I also thought it teased out the amazing levels of commitment and passion school leaders give in supporting young people in Walsall. I was grateful for Lee in provide a perspective of life in his setting and I would really enjoy the opportunity for this model of leadership reflection to be developed further in the future. Thank you to all involved.”

Michael Riley

“Your input was, as I knew it would be, honest, insightful and thought provoking. I think your input really provoked discussion amongst delegates about what's possible, the importance of belonging in making a child feel safe, cared about, heard and understood in school, in order for them to be ready to learn. A phrase that really resonated with me from one young man was that he felt able to be 'his authentic self'. “

Cathy Draper

² Walsall_Belonging_min.pdf

³ Walsall Learning Alliance Newsletter No.4 (May)

“I wanted to say how much I valued your role on the 'Belonging Expert Panel'. You were clearly chosen because of the wonderful work you are doing at Elmwood. It was really inspirational to hear the ways the team at Elmwood ensure the pupils have strong sense of belonging. The concept of the most vulnerable pupils in Walsall being in such a supportive environment where everyone goes the extra mile is something that should be shared widely, I am so glad you were given this opportunity. We have much to learn from your journey and expertise.”

Kate Bargh

Despite the focus on the above we have maintained our drive to further build upon the quality of education through staff investment:

- Leon Donaldson is finishing his first year of his MSc Psychology of Mental Health and Wellbeing and we are confident that this will support the schools drive within the “Belonging Strategy”.
- Gemma Francis is progressing with excitement through her NPQ journey, learning lots along the way regarding leadership styles and how to manage change on whole school projects as she prepares for Headship in the future.
- Martin Hawkes continues with his re-accreditation as an Emotion Coach UK facilitator as well as training within Macro-Fungi associated with the Field Studies Council, which has enhanced our enrichment curriculum as well as maintaining a pupil within our school without the need for increased risk / physical interventions.

Quality of Education at Elmwood School

The next internal data set will commence w/b 17th June 2024 which will be an opportunity to see how pupils have built upon their success from the Spring Term 2024 assessment. It will also be the first assessment since implementing the RADY uplift for pupils following their Spring Term 2024 progress – this continues to be a balanced and holistic approach to adjusting flight paths towards ARE (or beyond).

We continue to work hard with pupils, parents / carers and professionals to secure appropriate Post-16 provisions for our 2024 Year 11 leavers. Here are the projections for this cohort for September 2023:

Destination	Percentage of pupils / Number of pupils
College / Training Provider	90% / 10
NEET (but engaging)	10% / 1
NEET (but not engaging)	
Employed	
Other	

This cohort has been significantly different to previous cohorts due to their emotional needs and trying to meet these as well as securing academic / vocational stretch building upon the strengths and experiences at Elmwood. I can say that there have been some stand out Colleges / Providers who have demonstrated inclusive thinking when supporting our pupils through this difficult time – they are genuinely excited to receive them.⁴

Broaden horizons and curriculum opportunities this term has included:

⁴ The Ladder School; BMET-Sutton Campus; Juniper Training – Apprenticeships & Supported Internships; South Staffordshire College – Rodbaston & Cannock Campus; BOA.

- 13/14 (92%) of Year 10 pupils attended Dudley for a barge experience to support them with their creative writing (Gateway Writing units & IGCSE preparation).
- Year 8 pupils had the opportunity to complete their Level 1 or Level 2 Bikeability qualification, with 13 (62%) achieving success.
- Five reluctant riders also had an intense 1-1 session with the instructor resulting in them being classified as riders.
- A Year 10 pupil is ½ way through their Teens and Toddlers experience. This is an initiative through Walsall’s Teenage Pregnancy Team and has been well received – they are also having to work as part of a team within a local nursery with other pupils across the borough.
- 8b pupils raised over £500.00 for a local homeless charity when they camped on the school field overnight and then actively participated in a full school day ⁵
- Pupils are continuing to develop their preparation for adulthood, communication and leadership skills through Funday Friday experiences. ⁶
- We have 1 pupil who is accessing Walsall’s Reflection’s service to support them with their intrusive thoughts utilising a CBT model – this is proving extremely valuable in also managing the stress demand in Year 11.
- Dan Whittaker has also recently attended a 2 day course with British Fencing, and we have also approved additional funding to secure appropriate National Governing Body rights and equipment to add this to our ever varied Out & About curriculum.

Quality of teaching in Elmwood School: (sub section within the Quality of Education)

Feedback from the Science Shallow Dive (SpT Two 2024) was extremely enlightening due to the small scale of the department. The data in collecting pupils’ views was robust with pupils being extremely open about the strengths and difficulties within the subject:

Strengths	Difficulties
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Variety of topics (Biology, Physics and Chemistry) • Breadth of the subject. • Experiences outside of the lab i.e. Space Day; Froglife and Feral Science. • Qualification pathway is embedded and secures positive progress. • Connections to employment / careers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It’s a hard subject, due to the literacy and numeracy demands placed on pupils. • Topic breadth also causes challenges. • Developing scientific language.

In addition, the Curriculum Lead also identified the demands on them to meet the demands of the role, this has been acknowledged by SLT and we are working in collaboration to resolve this in preparation for 2024-25 academic year. The full Shallow Dive will be shared with the Chair of the Curriculum and Policies Committee.

The Shallow Dives have focussed on Technologies Department (specifically Art and Design & Technology) w/b 29.04.24 this report is currently being co-created with the Curriculum Lead for Technologies and the Deputy Headteacher before sharing with the department, once this has been ratified it will be shared with the chair of the Curriculum and Policies Committee. Initial feedback is identifying that Design & Technology is becoming a real strength across the school, subsequently securing appropriate KS4 qualifications and outcomes. It is anticipated that this area will be a focus

⁵ <https://www.elmwood.walsall.sch.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/198-APRIL-2024.pdf>

⁶ <https://www.elmwood.walsall.sch.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/198-APRIL-2024.pdf>

during our next inspection and the role of Lisa Jones (Link Governor) will be vital in our triangulation. The process of Deep and Shallow Dives are embedded within our Quality Assurance cycle and from 2024-25 we will return back to Deep Dives again. During SuT Two w/b 10th June – w/e 21st June 2024 the Deep Dive will form the basis of a pupil trawl (including Alternative Provision) as a means of securing a narrative around the curriculum breadth and the “softer” curriculum opportunities / experiences.

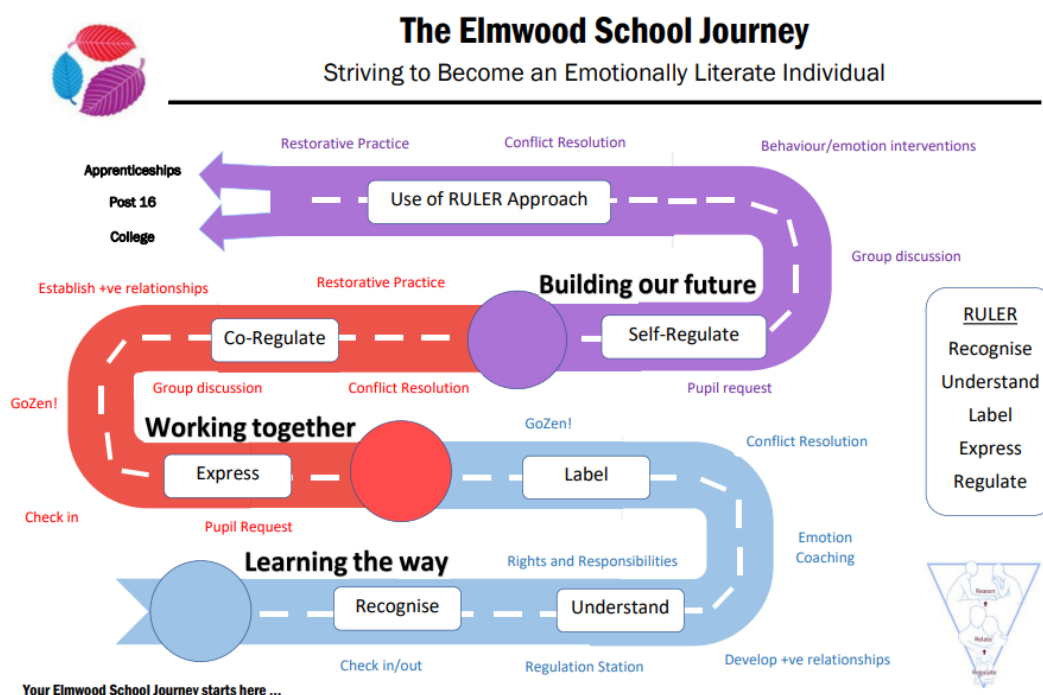
As leaders we have continued with the Teaching Assistant CPD Pathway, which will also be an essential role in nurturing / supporting our new staff (based on skills / knowledge diagnostic).

Behaviours and Attitudes at Elmwood School:

Here are the following highlights generated by Martin Hawkes.

- Pupils within Nurture base have **Good** EMO-Diversity. Behaviour across Transition and Pathways Base is **Good**.
- Physical interventions remain consistently low within the school despite the increase within Spring Term One and Two 2024.
- Friendship related issues within the school have increased. There has been a large proportion of the friendship issues occurring within new year 7s and year 8 students.
- Suspensions increased during Spring Term One 2024.
- Racist incidents have seen an increase in prevalence. One pupil makes up these incidents.

Behaviour learning journey



The Elmwood School behaviour journey strives to support our pupils to become emotionally literate individuals. As you can see within the image at different points in the pupils journey they experience a range of strategies with the intent to support them through each stage of the RULER approach. In

year 7 the end goal is to be able to recognise, understand and label how they feel. Working in transition the goal is to express and co regulate with an adult and then in pathways can they use the RULER approach to self regulate and return to learning more effectively.

As of the last data collection from Summer Term One 2024 we can see that 22% of the school population are working below, 56% at expected and 22% above expected for their age and stage. There has been currently no change with those pupils working below since Autumn Term Two 2023 data collection, with a slight change of those working at expected.

23/24 Autumn 2	% Population
Below	22%
At	53%
Above	25%

23/24 Summer 1	% Population
Below	22%
At	56%
Above	22%

To continue to support those who are working below expected age and stage. The following begun in Spring Term One and will continue until the end of the academic year (maximising the opportunities of getting it embedded).

- 8c begun an Anger Challenge Gozen approach. This is essential with the group dynamics changing with a new additional member and another transitioning to an alternative provision for Year 9 to support their learning style.

Data from Summer Term One collection showed that all pupils in 8c moved up through the RULER by one level, with 5/6 students being able to Label their emotions more effectively.
- 7a and 7b begun the regulation station 10 week programme, both classes are on week 4 of the programme.

Data from Summer Term One collection shows that 4/14 (29%) pupils are working below currently. 6/14 (42%) pupils moved through the level of RULER with the other 4/14 (29%) remaining working at expected. This equates to 71% of this cohort work at least at expected progress (resulting in a good judgement).
- 9b class in Spring Term Two complete the Teens programme on Gozen! This has now been completed.

Data from Summer Term One collection shows that 2/7 (29%) pupils are still working below expected with 5/7 (71%) working at or above. This has remained the same since Autumn Term 2023. Teen programme to continue until the end of the academic year and help with transition into KS4.
- 8a in Spring Term Two complete the Teens programme on Gozen! This has now been completed.

Data from Summer Term One collection shows that 3/7 (43%) pupils remain below expected. However, all 3 students moved through a level of RULER. Teen programme to continue to consolidate the small progress steps.
- 10b to begin Teens programme on goals setting and aspirations in Summer Term 2024 to support transition into Year 11.

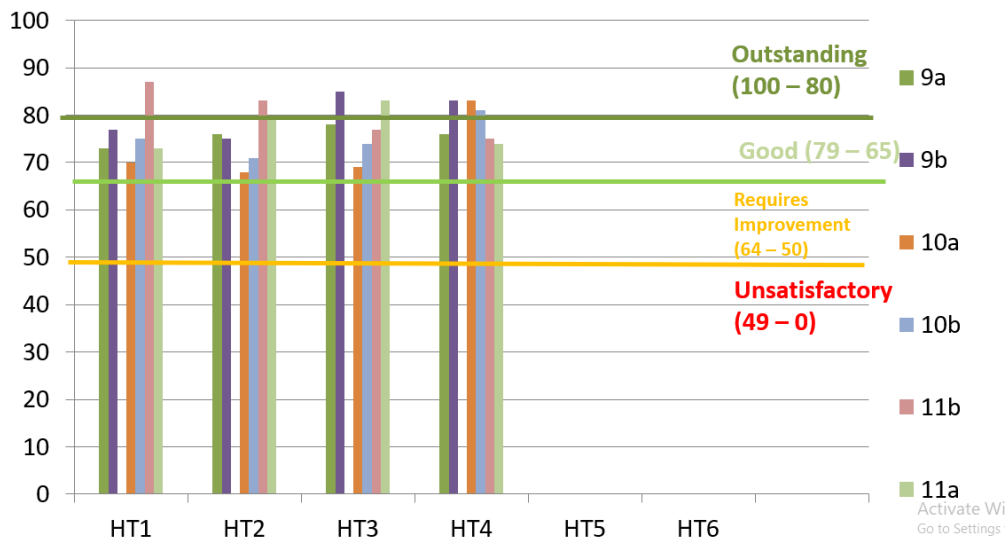
In addition to this, to support the use of the RULER approach in other areas of the school. A conflict resolution RULER approach has been use to support friendship related issues. And although a new approach feedback from staff has been positive for those who have undertaken so far.

Emotion and Behaviour monitoring graphs

Spring Term Two 2023					
Year group	Mode Emotion			Accumulative EMO-Diversity %	EMO-Diversity score
7a	Happy,	Calm	and Proud	40%	Good
7b	Happy,	Excited	and Calm	35%	Low
8c	Happy,	Excited	and calm	45%	Good
8a	Happy,	Angry	and Excited	40%	Good
8b	Happy,	Angry	and Excited	35%	Low
Totals	Happy,	Excited	and Angry	40%	Good

- We can observe from the table above that the mode emotion across the Nurture Base is happy excited and 2 groups have a mode of anger. This would suggest that for the majority of the time during the school day, pupils are happy and excited. However, we have seen an increase in Anger and Frustration being a common mode within year 8 classes. One reason to explain this could be that pupils in both 8a and 8b are often highly aroused during break and lunchtimes and this then causes frustration that has a trickle affect into lesson 4 and 5. Due to this 8a have changed their lunchtime to 12:30 and Guided reading is now at 12:15. This has reduced the frustration with others coming from play times and has meant that reading is more effective.
- Each tutor group now has a target emotion which is for staff to encourage those emotions within the moment and during check outs at the end of the day. For example, some groups were lower on grateful and proud and then this becomes the challenge of the tutor group to prompt these feelings within the week.

Cumulative % obtained for behaviour expectations 2023-2024



Pupils at Elmwood are asked to reflect and take responsibility for their own behaviours during three episodes of group discussion a day. The behaviours that are discussed are as follows:

- Safe Body, Positive Mouth, Stay in Zone, Respect Property, Follow Instructions and Finish Task.
- Each group secures a cumulative percentage score over the half term which we can see in the table above. This data shows the following;
- Behaviour for learning within the Pathways Base can be judged using a cumulative percentage as **Good** (78%). The judgement within Transition Base is also **Good** (80%). Thus, cumulatively can be judged as being **Good** (79%).

Combining this data with the EMO-Diversity data we can make a confident judgement to say that,

“At Elmwood School, pupils within Nurture base have **Good** EMO-Diversity and Behaviour across Transition and Pathways base is **Good**. Therefore, pupils at Elmwood School demonstrate **Good** behaviour. This would suggest that as pupils move through the school years they are able to 1) label how they feel 2) recognise an emotion 3) co-regulate with an adult 4) express their thoughts, feelings and opinions and 5) being able to self-regulate.”

Bullying Incidents

Firstly, if we look over the data set of Spring Term One and Spring Term Two 2024 we can see that there has been a significant decrease in friendship related incidents and in bullying incidents. There is an increase in the number of perpetrators between the two data sets. There has been an increase in perpetrators in a year 7 group. Incidents of bullying involved 3 pupils targeting one victim. All 3 of the perpetrators had isolations from the community with 2 pupils having a repeat isolation for a whole day to complete the anti-bullying pack. The victim was supported and closely monitored. The victim was given the options of respite from the class but they didn't want to take this opportunity. These incidents subsided in the last 3 weeks and the group has settled more with less friendship related incidents.

	Spring Term One 2024	Spring Term Two 2024	+ / - sway
Friendship related incidents	47	10	-37
Bullying Incidents	10	6	-4
Number of Perpetrators	6	9	+3
Number of Victims	8	6	-2

If we focus on Spring Term Two 2024, we can see that there were 9 perpetrators out of 6 incidents. It is noticeable that there were 2 perpetrators within Transition Base and 7 perpetrators within Nurture Base.

How have we supported the perpetrators and victims?

- Through acting early and using an isolation for perpetrators within nurture/transition base after an incident which occurred in their class
- Isolation from community bases
- A school focus around conflict resolution as a strategy. Below I have listed the conflict resolutions that have taken place.
- Completion of a RULER reflection pack

In addition to this, pupils who have had a repeated incident of bullying, now complete the anti-bullying pack and resources. This begun in Spring Term Two and so far, has provided opportunity for reflection and learning. Pupils complete the anti-bullying pack whilst watching videos provided from the anti-bullying alliance.

Conflict resolutions

	Spring Term One 2024	Spring Term Two 2024	+ / - sway
Conflict resolutions	12	4	-8

Staff are utilising the model of conflict resolution within bases to prevent further incidents from occurring. Using this model enables pupils to take ownership of solving problems rather than continuing to dwell over issues. It also allows pupils to develop empathy through perspective taking of another. Conflict resolutions can show a decrease in repeated incidents between two students. Although there are still some repeated incidents this process allows pupils to share and solve through issues.

Next a comparison of two adjacent half terms of Spring Term Two 2023 and Spring Term Two 2024.

	Spring Term 2 2023	Spring Term 2 2024	+ / - sway
Friendship related incidents	5	10	+5
Bullying Incidents	4	6	+2
Number of Perpetrators	3	9	+6
Number of Victims	3	6	+3

We can see from the comparison of these two data sets, that bullying incidents within the school did increase between adjacent terms. As a school we continue to make good progress in how we support the victims and perpetrators of bullying. We can see that there is still a high proportion of incidents that are friendship related and not bullying incidents.

We will continue to use the conflict resolution approach to support friendship issues within the bases. As this has shown to be positive to reduce further friendship or bullying issues. In addition to this due to an increase in incidents training will be provided to all staff during the Health and Safety days (December 2024) to dive deeper in recording and reporting and strategies to support both the perpetrator and victim.

Racist Incidents

As a school we work consistently hard to challenge any form of discrimination towards another member of our school community. Racist incidents have been traditionally low within the school. In the Spring Term One 2024 (4 incidents) we saw an increase in racist incidents since Autumn Term 2023. These incidents are currently coming from one pupil in Transition Base. A 1-day suspension was initially used, then an intervention in Spring Term Two which has seen a decrease in incidents into Summer Term One, with only one being recorded – with this incident triggering a 2 day suspension.

	Spring Term One 2024	Spring Term Two 2024	Summer Term One 2024
Racist Incidents	4	2	1

Suspensions

Since the start of the Autumn Term One 2023 there has been the following:

Term	Total number of Suspensions	Number of pupils suspended	Total days lost
Autumn Term One 2023	9	9	10
Autumn Term Two 2023	5	5	6
Spring Term One 2024	4	4	12
Spring Term Two 2024	4	3	24
Summer Term One 2024 (to date)	7	7	13

Firstly, we can see from Autumn Term One an initial pattern of reduction in number of suspensions and number of pupils involved until we reach Summer Term One. The number of days lost due to suspension remains relatively consistent (with the exception of Spring Term Two) which was attributed to one pupil, resulting in them having a mid year change of placement.

Spring Term Two: We note that out of the 4 pupils that were suspended, 3 of these were from the Transition Base cohort and 1 from Nurture Base. We can note that 24 days were lost in total. One pupil accounted for 22 of these days over Spring Term. 1 pupil was suspended due to a racist

incident. This pupil had 3 sessions of previous isolations due to racism, but this was escalated to a suspension.

Summer Term One: We note that out of the 7 pupils that were suspended, 1 of these was from the Transition Base cohort (a reduction from Spring Term Two), 2 from Pathways Base (and Increase from Spring Term Two) and 4 from Nurture Base (an increase from Spring Term Two). Two of these pupils were suspended for over 3 days due to the severity of their actions and both returned with a reflection session. One of the transition pupils was suspended due to racism and due to this being a repeat incident this went to a two-day suspension.

The following interventions are still being used to support pupils within school to prevent further suspensions.

- Reflective sessions with SLT
- Isolation from community base
- Conflict resolutions with SLT
- Individual risk assessment in place to support reintegration post suspensions.
- Conflict resolutions
- 1 to 1 timetable support
- SLT search of objects before entry to the school building.
- Working with external agencies such as Prevent

Use of Force / Physical Interventions

The following data sets show a comparison over the last half terms and a comparison across the entire school year. one a year apart.

Physical interventions	Autumn Term One 2023	Autumn Term Two 2023	Spring Term One 2024	Spring Term One 2024	Summer Term One 2024 (to date)
Low Risk	37	28	22	29	21
Medium Risk	5	2	1	4	1
High Risk	0	0	0	0	0
total	42	30	23	33	22

The above table shows that PI's in the school remain between 22-42 range per half term. Autumn Term saw the largest spike in PI's and since then have remained within the 22-33 range per half term. Spring Term Two saw an increase in medium risk PI's but have reduced in Summer Term One due to suspensions or reflective sessions having a positive impact on behavioural choices.

Physical interventions	Spring Term Two 2023	Spring Term Two 2024
Low Risk	37	29

Medium Risk	4	4
High Risk	0	0
total	41	33

We can see from the above data set that; physical interventions have seen a decrease between a year apart. We can see that Spring Term Two 2024 has seen a decrease in PI's in a comparison to Spring Term Two in 2023. This is positive data and shows that PI's have decreased through the academic year and that a comparison on two spring terms there is a significant difference in the amount of PI's.

School Attendance: Spring Term Two: 19.02.2024 – 22.03.2024

Pupils on Roll	Overall Attendance	Authorised Absence	Unauthorised Absence
73	88.73%	6.32%	4.95%

	Spring Term Two 2023	Spring Term Two 2024	+ / - sway Identify the sway and whether its positive or negative.
Overall Attendance	82.42%	88.73%	+6.31%
Authorised Absence	9.88%	6.32%%	-3.56%
Unauthorised Absence	7.71%	4.95%	-2.76%
Persistent Absentees (those pupils with 90% attendance or below)	29 Pupils	21 Pupils	-8 pupils

Attendance continues to show a positive trajectory when comparing across the same point and year apart. This is extremely exciting and also testament to the hard work of staff working in collaboration with parents / carers to reinforce and build upon the positive stance we instructed at the start of the academic year. If we look at the Persistent Absenteeism rate in SpT Two 2024 we can see a significant improvement where we have shifted 8 pupils (10% of the school population) to have an improved attendance above 91% for that period of time. In addition to this it also includes one of pupil who is a recognised traveller and has embarked on their journeys for the better months.

School Attendance: Summer Term One: 08.04.2024 – 10.05.2024

Pupils on Roll	Overall Attendance	Authorised Absence	Unauthorised Absence
73	87.37%	7.87%	4.76%

	Summer Term One 2023	Summer Term One 2024	+ / - sway Identify the sway and whether it's positive or negative.
Overall Attendance	77.98%	87.37%	+9.39%
Authorised Absence	14.31%	7.87%	-6.44%
Unauthorised Absence	7.71%	4.76%	-2.95%
Persistent Absentees (those pupils with 90% attendance or below)	30 Pupils	22 pupils	-8 pupils

We are continuing to build on a consistent attendance picture that is outperforming previous terms reported within the Headteacher's report, this is particularly pleasing as this will also be the last ½ term that our Year 11's will be in full time education due to their Care for Others timetable as well as study / transition leave. Our whole school attendance to date is 88.85% (without any pupil mitigations / adjustments based on pupils having mid-year movements), this is an improvement of 5.68% on the 2022-23 attendance figure (83.17%). I am confident that we will receive a closedown attendance figure of above 90%, which would be a fantastic achievement and aligned to our Strategic Achievement Plan outcomes.

The development of the role of the Attendance Officer is also having a positive impact in pupils returning from poor attendance as she sees them within their social surrounding every Wednesday break time to clarify and also encourage positive attendance patterns. She has also become more robust (within the remits of her own safer working practices) in ensuring contact with pupils following a period of 10 school days absent.

Notable Absences:

We no longer have any pupils that are school refusing, and whilst not ideal some of these have been managed through a modified timetable or a change of need (transitioning to Flexi-Schooling).

- There is a 7b pupil whose attendance is extremely poor, but evidence suggests that if we have a prolonged period of time in school they are able to establish more positive rhythms for learning. Currently undergoing an ASC assessment which may support staff in effectively

improving engagement (when in school) and parental understanding when trying to transition into the school.

- A Year 8 pupil has relocated to Sandwell LA, which has caused significant delay in maintaining their placement at Elmwood and the appropriate transport support. This has taken 4 weeks to resolve, naturally impacting on attendance and lost learning.
- Two Year 8 pupils have also been impacted by illness / injury, which unfortunately has impacted negatively on their attendance (especially within the SpT Two 2024 and SuT One 2024). Historically their attendance has been within the high 80's%.
- A pupil in Year 9 attendance has been negatively impacted on the lack of attendance of his brother, we have managed to support this by securing SEND Transport for the pupil which in turn has provided the opportunity for them to access school, even if brother is refusing or mentally not stable enough for mum to leave them unattended.
- A pupil in Year 10 has now formally been recorded as Flexi-Schooling which has been shared with the LA following an EHCP review. This has had a positive impact on their mental health and general anxiety as well as an improved attendance picture.
- Two Year 11 pupils have had historically erratic attendance profiles, which has significantly improved during the SpT Two 2024 and SuT One 2024 – in the build up to coursework and examinations.

Modified Timetables

We have the following pupil who are not accessing a 25hrs full time timetable. These have been approved by the CMfE team following a robust justification with a termly review.

- 2/73 = 2.71% severe absence / preparation for Post-16 destination.
- 2/73 = 2.71% are formally Flexi-Schooled.

Volunteers:

We have been supporting pre-ITT applications through 1 day experiences across the Spring and Summer Terms, unfortunately they haven't materialised into confirmed SCITT placements within Barr Beacon. In addition to this we have also had Gareth Owen, who is diligently working through a 1 day for 10 week placement within Art to explore potential PGCE placements for September 2024 within the domain of Art (following successful completion of his BA (Hons) Fine Art.

LAC:

Here is a breakdown of the number of LAC pupils within the school (May 2024):

Year	Number of Pupils
11	1 (Walsall LA)
10	2 (Walsall LA & Derbyshire LA)
9	3 (Solihull LA, Walsall LA)
8 (including 1 age retained pupil)	4 (Derby City LA, Walsall LA, Leeds LA)
7	2 (Walsall LA)

The school has 12/73 = 16% of the school population are identified as LAC.

The effective use of the Pupil Premium has been shared within the Curriculum and Policies Committee and has been shared on the school website⁷ for this financial year. The school's spend will be on ICT following the significant investment from Connecting the Classrooms in February 2024.

⁷ <https://www.elmwood.walsall.sch.uk/teaching-and-learning/pupil-premium>

The following data is aligned to Teacher Assessment during March 2024.

Key:

	Working above expected progress.
	Working at expected progress.
	Working below expected progress.

Pupil	Reading	Writing	Maths	Science
9a (Solihull)				Awaiting baseline assessment.
9a (Walsall)				
9b1 (Walsall)				
9b2 (Walsall)				
8a (Derby)				
8b (Walsall)				
8b (Leeds)				
8a (Walsall) age retained				
7a (Walsall)				
	88% working at or above expected progress from baseline entry. 88% of that cohort working above expected progress.	100% working at or above expected progress from baseline entry. 88% of that cohort working above expected progress.	100% working at or above expected progress from baseline entry. 22% of that cohort working above expected progress.	88% working at or above expected progress from baseline entry. 85% of that cohort working above expected progress.

Strengths	Areas for Development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading, writing, maths and science progress from baseline is above expected (school's judgement of outstanding). No patterns of pupils underperforming across all aspects of the core curriculum. 7 out of 9 pupils achieved at least expected progress (school's judgement of good) across all core subjects. Writing and reading focuses are still having a positive impact. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The 1 pupil working below within Science is aligned to their curriculum time being reduced by 50% due to access to essential therapeutic intervention.

Pupil	English	Maths	Science
Year 11a (Walsall)			
Year 10a (Walsall)			
Year 10b (Derbyshire)			
Judgements:	100% working at or above expected progress. 100% of that cohort working above expected progress.	100% working at or above expected progress. 66% of that cohort working above expected progress.	100% working at or above expected progress. 100% of that cohort working above expected progress.

Strengths	Areas for Development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> English and Science progress from EKS3 to EKS4 is above expected (school's judgement of outstanding). 3 out of 3 pupils are working above expected progress across all core subjects. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintaining momentum and prevent coasting for Year 10 pupils within their final term.

Quality of Leadership and Management of Elmwood School:

The Leadership Team this term has had a quality assurance visit from Manor Trust (Felicity O'Callaghan) regarding the level of support we provide our ECT's. This was an extremely positive visit where they supported leaders' decision making processes against the Core Content Framework and Teaching Standards. They were particularly impressed with the level and rigour of support being offered to one ECT who had been recorded as "below standard" at the end of the SpT 2024.

This term we were also inspired by Laughology Ltd⁸, through Flip-it thinking as our launch of generating a culture of laughter as well as structured approach to secure how to help our colleagues when they are also having a negative thought or feeling – as we know that if the adults around pupils are regulated they are best placed to support them. Teachers have started on their "Actions" (15.05.24) and Teaching Assistants will commence there's on 22.05.24. This will shape another strand of our work within the OAP around Connected Culture. An exciting time ahead for Elmwood and our extremely talented staff.

Curriculum Developments:

Spring Term 2024 Developments and IMPACT:

- History lessons delivered during SpT Two 2024. This will enable positive engagement for introduction of formal approach to a humanities curriculum from September 2024. IMPACT: These have occurred within KS3 and there haven't been any patterns of dysregulated behaviour / refusal to engage with the task (when compared to Votes for School last half term). What has become apparent is the need to continue with Votes for Schools into the next academic year as well as not reducing the Geography curriculum as it's launched in September 2024.
- Refresh and review strategies within a departmental approach to The Writing Revolution (TWR). IMPACT: This was a great opportunity to refresh and launch with new staff the work that was led on during the AuT2023. Each class has been provided with a briefing document to enable TA's to be responsive and modify any extended writing task utilising the TWR strategies. There will be a TWR signpost in each class to make this explicit with additional resources added to this as we progress with this approach.
- Share the outcome of the Deep Dive in Maths and the Shallow Dive in Technologies (Design & Technology, Food Technology and Art). IMPACT: The reports were shared with respective departments which were extremely positive, the deep and shallow dives also aligned to the Curriculum Leads own views of their department (which shows that leadership capacity and development). Due to long term staff absence though we were unable to include Food Technology within the shallow dive – but have worked hard to ensure the curriculum breadth has continued as well as the Year 11 BTEC pupils secure the appropriate qualification.

⁸ <https://www.laughology.co.uk/>

- Review progress (so far) from the English Deep Dive. IMPACT: The Curriculum Lead has worked with Deputy Headteacher to build upon the staffing strengths within the department, specifically the appointment of an ECT English / Drama specialist for September 2024, in addition to this I have been able to work in collaboration with Barr Beacon SCITT to secure Michael O’Callaghan for his Term 3 placement, which will support the relationship between ECT and Curriculum Lead, as well as establish purposeful relationships ahead of official start date meaning we will be fully staffed within the English department for the start of the academic year. I have a discussion with an ECT 2 within English regarding the potential of returning to 5 days from September 2024, which again would add further leadership capacity within the department (as an aspiring Curriculum Lead).
- Instigate a Shallow Dive within Science (SuT One 2024). IMPACT: This has occurred and whilst initially quite challenging (due to only having 2 specialists) it was supportive for the Curriculum Lead who was able to joint observe with fellow Curriculum Leads across the school. The Curriculum Lead is currently writing the report with support from the Deputy Headteacher during their coaching sessions. This will be shared with the team and Curriculum and Policies Chair in due course.
- Share practice from the SEMH Conference and include within the Operational Achievement Plan. IMPACT: The feedback session provided a clear voice from staff regarding potential inclusions within the Operational Achievement Plan (as well as things that were not appropriate for our setting / direction). The key statements that will be further developed is a staffs understanding of different presentations of need through the diagnosis of ADHD, a look at securing a diversity element within our Connected Curriculum and Connected Culture and ways in which a collective responsibility regarding sharing good practice can be recorded and reported back to colleagues.
- Launch the Teaching Assistant visits from across the 7 schools and 32 participant’s w/b 19.02.24. IMPACT: Positive response from the CEO of the Matrix Trust as well as an increase in applications from some of these schools for permanent positions that were advertised at the time. This experience was utilised more in a way to support our mainstream colleagues in driving home the inclusion policy within Walsall as well as saying thank you to colleagues in other schools for hosting us in the past. It does place an enormous amount of pressure on SLT in organising such an event and will be something that we would explore again in a couple of years so as not to over burden the school community.
- Formalise the Teaching Assistant Professional Development Pathway. IMPACT: New staff have completed their baseline assessments regarding their own practice and we have also started to explore release opportunities for those identified as scoring a 3 or below with those scoring a 5 as a means of showcasing good practice within the school. The observing member of staff will complete a short reflective piece on “what has stuck with them” which will be verbally shared to the host TA, who will also reflect on how this has impacted on them also (consideration to whether it was perceived as an additional stress demand). This document will be utilised within the TA’s performance appraisal evidence gathering. Some staff departures have meant we have lost a skill set and daily cover implications is also a mitigation to not place undue stress or un-safe ratios within other aspects of the school. This will continue to be a longer term commitment from the Leadership Team.
- SCITT (Secondary and Primary) SEND experience at Elmwood March and April 2024. IMPACT: The Primary SCITT delegates were extremely positive about their experience (198-April-

2024)⁹. The Secondary SCITT delegates permeated positivity following their experience with 100% of trainees strongly agreeing that the day was relevant and insightful.

- “Elmwood was an especial strength as they taught a lot about different SEND strategies and how to scaffold to a very basic level”
“Insight of different schools and the way they work. Really enjoyed Elmwood and seeing the behaviour strategies and the different way that the school operates”
“They were all incredibly welcoming and a credit to their schools. Elmwood was a truly wonderful experience, and thank you for the team there for making me feel a part of their team despite only being there for one day”
“Elmwood School stood out for the family feel of the school, the positive, encouraging and nurturing environment, which had an impact both on students, staff and visitors. Both staff and pupils were very welcoming and the pupils were extremely lovely (9b pupils specifically were amazing, welcoming and polite). I was genuinely saddened when our time was cut short as I wanted to have more time to see how staff implemented valuable strategies to support SEND students. Through observing, I gained invaluable insights into resilience, confidence-building, and the art of fostering wonderful relationships with students by giving them specific praise and a safe space to express themselves. It truly ranks as one of the most positive and enriching experiences I’ve had thus far, and I am immensely grateful for the opportunity to have visited!”
- Induction of new Teaching Assistants. IMPACT: This has all been completed, with two new TA’s joining us w/b 20th May 2024. Their induction will be completed over a period of 2 weeks, due to increased Yr11 gain time to facilitate this effectively within the school contractual hours.

Summer Term 2024 Developments:

- Support opportunities for middle leadership exposure in preparation for AuT 2024, where we will have newly appointed UPS teachers (and subsequently whole school responsibilities).
- SLT to continue to be outward facing and securing different views / approaches to SEMH provisions aligned to the schools SAP Priorities.
- Launch the first timetabled Religious Education pilot (40 mins x 6). This will inform the implementation of this curriculum domain for 2024-25.
- Training and outcome mapping of the new PSHEe Curriculum through JigsawPSHEe Ltd¹⁰, which has been extremely well received within other SEMH provisions.
- Finalise curriculum Mapping for 2024-25, taking into consideration the potential enforced growth of the school.

School to School Support:

- Lee Cross and Martin Hawkes have continued to develop our working relationship with The Ladder School providing 2 x 1 hour Team Teach workshops regarding specific situations / pupils. This has also enabled direct contact with the staff that will be accepting one of our Year11’s within their Post-16 provision.

⁹ <https://www.elmwood.walsall.sch.uk/news-and-links/newsletters>

¹⁰ <https://jigsawpshee.online/>

- Lee Cross and Martin Hawkes have supported a variety of local primary schools through an open Team Teach course (as well as providing enhanced training for our own staff). In addition to this we are also supporting a newly form Specialist Resource Provision (Infants) regarding personal safety aligned to Team Teach principles.
- Lee Cross has completed a School Improvement Visit (with Pat Hunt) of SEMH provisions in South Staffordshire. This has been supportive and has also provided a realistic view of our position as a school moving forward in preparation for Ofsted.
- Dan Whittaker has completed an effective and inspirational SLE deployment on Learning Outside of The Classroom at a local Special School, which will enable further application of this within their own setting during the SuT Two.
- Gemma Francis has completed a supportive “work trial” experience in addition to her NPQH training at a newly establish KS2-4 SEMH provision in Warwickshire which enabled her to confidently talk about our curriculum intent and implementation (at KS4) with the feedback being extremely positive from the reciprocating colleague:

“I just wanted to say how fantastic Gemma was / is. She has so much knowledge and experience and was able to offer guidance and collaboration in so many areas, as well as looking into what we do here with an open mind, excitement and curiosity. She was an absolute joy to have on the team for the day.”¹¹

MR LEE CROSS
HEADTEACHER

¹¹ Quote from Deputy Headteacher 30.04.24