



ELMWOOD SCHOOL NEWSLETTER NOVEMBER 2024 – NO. 204

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SCHOOL PHOTOGRAPHS

Sally Jones, photographer with Tempest, did a brilliant job when she came into school on Tuesday 17th September for our annual school photographs. All pupils and staff had the opportunity to have their photographs taken and some lovely images were taken.

Thank you to the parents and carers who either placed orders directly with Tempest or via the school. As a result the school has so far received £44.77 in commission from these sales.

This money goes into our private school fund account and is used to assist pupils in a number of ways.

GOVERNOR NEWS

Following the opportunity to join the governing body as a parent governor, we are pleased to confirm the election of Mrs Emma Grainger, mom to Alex in Year 7b. Emma was warmly welcomed by the team at their autumn termly meeting on Thursday 14th November; we look forward to her future input and support.

Also at the termly meeting, the posts of Chair and Vice Chair for this academic year were discussed. We are pleased to confirm that Sallyann Tuckwell Allen and Hannah Shepherd have agreed to take on the role of joint Chair of Governors and Sarah Thornton agreed to be Vice Chair. A big thank you to all for their continued support and commitment to the school.

Di Cadman, former teaching assistant at the school and associate governor member, is currently recovering from an operation. We send Di our very best wishes and look forward to hopefully catching up with her in the spring term.

Cell, Cell, Cell



Year 11a had the opportunity to visit Newcastle and Stafford College on 22nd October 2024 for an immersive viewing of the film Cell, Cell, Cell. The film reinforced learning on cells and cell structures for GCSE Biology.

Report by Dr Price, Curriculum Lead of Science

STEM Robotics Workshop Success!

A STEM robot workshop is an educational event that teaches pupils how to build, program, and use robots to learn science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

On the 4th November, our pupils had an incredible experience participating in a STEM robotics workshop. They enthusiastically followed instructions to build their own LEGO robots and programmed them to complete a series of exciting challenges. These challenges included navigating obstacle courses, performing specific tasks like picking up and moving objects, and even competing in timed races.

It was fantastic to see all the pupils fully engaged and enjoying their session. Not only did the pupils enjoy the activity, but the staff also had a great time participating and supporting the pupils. This hands-on activity not only sparked interest in STEM but also fostered teamwork, creativity, and problem-solving skills. Well done to everyone involved!

Report by Stacey Urmson, Teaching Assistant

SPOOKY DAY



It was a great start after the half term break on Monday 4th November, when pupils and staff had the chance to

dress up in their Halloween outfits.



There were some great costumes on show so a big thank you to everyone who joined in and made the day special.



More photos are available on the school website. photo gallery page.



FUNDAY FRIDAYS

Funday Fridays are a curriculum enhancement that look to support your child's personal development – and the breadth of the school's curriculum. Pupils progress through a carousel of activities. These activities act as vehicles to develop your child's **communication, leadership and preparation for adulthood** as well as them demonstrating the school's observable behaviours aligned to our values of Care for Self, Others and the Environment.

Staff will utilise the group's success within communication, leadership and preparation for adulthood to plan for opportunities to address in their next activity.

These experiences are a core component of your child's education and are not a reward trip. They are an essential experience that supports the school's curriculum. Report by Mrs Francis, Deputy Head

This half terms activities include: Creating class assemblies, team building, travel training, plan a day and showing resilience.

Here are a selection of IMPACT measures following this half terms experience:

Nurture	Transition	Pathways
Nurture (Yr7 & Yr8)	Transition (Yr9)	Pathways (Yr 10 &11)
<p>For our Year 7s first Friday rotation activity we challenged them to make an assembly that will be delivered to the whole school on a Friday morning. All 3 groups chose themes that encourage self reflection, consideration of 'what makes us happy', and how we feel and interpret certain feelings and emotions. A very thought provoking activity and we can't wait to see the results!</p>  <p>8a worked together to create a 3 course meal that was tried and tested by Lynn and Dawn in the office! Very lucky ladies.</p>  <p>8b worked in pairs and small groups to pit their skills to making small cars with some creative and innovative end results.</p>	<p>As our transition pupils begin to enter a stage of their development that includes independence, co-regulation and responsibility, we challenged them to some travel training which really pushed several individuals out of their comfort zones.</p> <p>9a hopped on several buses enjoying a trip to Sutton Park. They showed maturity, patience and positive communication skills throughout the day as they enjoyed each other's company and the great outdoors.</p> <p>9b participants had a hugely successful and enjoyable outing making it to Birmingham City Centre. Form staff ensured their team took in culture from the cathedral and museum, then enjoyed some valuable team time with sweet treats and goodies. A huge well done to those involved.</p> <p>9c explored the great outdoors as we know they love to do – they made it all the way down to the Arboretum and played until their hearts were full. A fabulous time was had by all – well done for looking after each other guys!</p>	<p>Our year 10 groups were given a budget and some transport and asked to plan a great day out.</p> <p>10a chose to visit Telford zoo and had great fun petting the small animals. They demonstrated great communication and organisational skills planning their own day and getting all the way there and back safely!! Well done team.</p> <p>10b tested their waistbands and eating skills and went to a local all you can eat buffet! It was lovely to hear staff complimenting this group on their manners offsite whilst mixing with the public – well done for representing our school so responsibly.</p> <p>Year 11 were enjoying a trip to Chasewater which was interrupted by a call that meant transport had to leave them there and they were challenged to find their own way back to school!</p> <p>11a expertly calculated the cost of a local bus and hopped on that – walking the final straight and getting themselves back to school in time for lunch.</p> <p>11b enjoyed the outdoors approach and walked the whole way back challenging themselves to work together as a team and overcome hurdles (quite literally) to encourage one another to complete the 12.48km walk home. Pupils felt a huge sense of achievement making their own way back, and this was definitely a great test of resilience and fab preparation for adulthood .</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Great work year 11.</p>

UNDER THE SPOTLIGHT

This month our featured member of staff under the spotlight is Nicole Rose, Humanities Teacher.

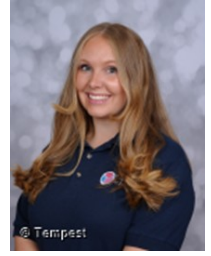
How long have you worked at Elmwood? *I have been at Elmwood since March 2022, I took a break for a year due to completing my PGCE and returned in July 2024.*

What do you love about your job? *I love that every day is different, and I can see changes in our young people every day - if I can be even the smallest help to anyone that is what makes me happy.*

What films have you watched recently? *Watching movies is one of my favourite past times - there are far too many to name! I will be starting to watch plenty of Christmas movies soon!*

Favourite Holiday? *Any holiday spending time with family and friends!*

Tell us something that people would be surprised to hear? *I love to mountain bike over Cannock Chase and have travelled to different areas of the UK, such as Cornwall and Wales!*



PUPIL UNDER THE SPOTLIGHT

Our pupil under the spotlight this month is Jamie Lee Noon in Year 9 so a big thank you to him for his responses.

What do you like most about coming to Elmwood School? *Art and going home.*

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

In your spare time, what do you most like to do? *Play games and eat.*

Have you done anything that we might be surprised to learn about? *I want to go sky diving.*

If you could go anywhere or do anything, what would you choose? *Japan because of the food. They have rainbow corndogs.*

NEWS FROM OUT AND ABOUT



Pumpkin Picking—once again we returned to Sheepwash Farm in Whittington to choose pumpkins which we then went onto carve during out and about lessons. Pupils showed great skill and artistic flair at pumpkin carving, demonstrating the virtues of creativity and determination. This year we chose classic orange pumpkins as well as white, blue and green pumpkins, however, some pumpkins were easier to carve than others.

Also, Paul, at the farm, only grew pumpkins on a small patch just for us, as he predicted a bad harvest year. We also met the pig and sampled tomatoes off the vine! Values of creativity, focus and nature connection were practiced and communication skills at the Farm from SULP lessons.



The best pumpkin carvings were 1st prize to Keegan Baker in nurture base, 1st prize to Charlie Smyth in transition base and 1st prize went to Jo Jenkins in pathways base.

Remembrance Day tributes. Harry Lee Cox and Harlow Jones in Year 9 helped to set up the carpet of poppies at the front of school, which looks amazing.



As part of the Remembrance commemorations, Mr Middleton and myself accompanied pupils to the National Memorial Arboretum during out and about lessons. As well as finding their family names on the huge memorial, they have also laid their rag rug poppies at a memorial of their choice. Pupils have enjoyed making these poppies in previous out and about lessons. The session proved to be a popular activity and linked to recycling, Victorian history and the virtues of altruism, self-reliance, patience and empathy.

Yellow Mellow Mile: A Fun Run for Mental Health Awareness

**Wear
it loud.
Wear
it proud.**

The event took place on Tuesday 8th October, our Elmwood community came together for the annual **Yellow Mellow Mile**, an event that combined fitness, fun, and a meaningful cause, with participants taking turns to run, jog, or walk a mile around the school grounds. Whether they were sprinting for fun or strolling with friends, everyone embraced the spirit of the day, focusing not only on physical activity but also on fostering open conversations about mental well-being, sending a powerful message: **mental health matters.**



Throughout the event, there was a substantial sense of unity, as participants cheered each other on, celebrated personal achievements, and reflected on the importance of mental health awareness. The atmosphere was positive, with many pupils and staff taking the opportunity to bond and share experiences about managing stress, supporting friends, and seeking help when needed.



We hope that the **Yellow Mellow Mile** continues to be a reminder to our entire school community that it's important to take care of ourselves, look out for one another, and never hesitate to reach out if we're struggling. By coming together in a sea of yellow, we show that it's okay to talk about our feelings, to support each other, and to prioritise our mental well-being just as much as our physical health. Let's keep the conversation going—because **together, we can make a difference.**

Until next year's Yellow Mellow Mile! Report by Miss Diponio, PE Teacher

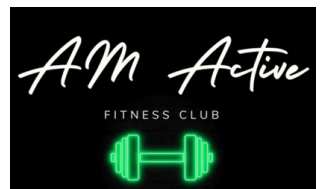
AM Active Athletes Breakfast: A Celebration of Commitment and Achievement



This term, I had the privilege of hosting a special event to celebrate the dedication and hard work of our **AM Active Athletes**—pupils who have earned **10 stars** on their loyalty cards for consistently participating in our morning fitness sessions.

To recognise their commitment we treated them to an exclusive **AM Active Athletes Breakfast**, an event designed to fuel their success and celebrate their achievements. Held on 25th October, the breakfast was an all-you-can-eat buffet featuring a delicious array of nutritious and energy-boosting options. Among the fan favourites were **poached & scrambled eggs**—perfectly cooked and rich in protein—and **protein pancakes**, a healthy twist on a classic breakfast treat. The spread also included a variety of fresh fruits, juices and granola to ensure our athletes had plenty of options to fuel up for the day ahead.

The breakfast event wasn't just about the food—it was an opportunity for pupils to reflect on their achievements, connect with fellow athletes, and enjoy a well-deserved reward for their consistency and effort throughout the term. For many, earning 10 stars was a goal they worked hard to achieve, attending early morning sessions week after week. It was truly inspiring to see so many pupils rise early to commit to their physical and mental well-being.



A huge thank you to all the pupils who earned stars through their commitment and enthusiasm. You've shown true dedication to staying active and maintaining a healthy lifestyle. I would also like to extend my gratitude to Miss. Dudley, Rubina, Frankie and Sunita who helped with food preparation and to Grant for the most important job of all, clean up duty. Thank you for making this celebration a memorable and enjoyable experience for everyone involved.

The **AM Active Athletes Breakfast** is a reminder of the importance of setting goals, staying motivated, and celebrating the small victories along the way. We can't wait to see even more pupils join the programme next term and continue to challenge themselves to achieve greatness—one star at a time! Report by Miss Diponio, PE Teacher

REMEMBRANCE DAY SERVICE—7.11.24



All staff and pupils celebrated remembrance day with veterans from the South Staffordshire Regiment that kindly came in to lead the service for us all. They gave a touching speech about remembering the animals that were involved in the war and surprisingly one story was about a bear that carried equipment for the soldiers!



The veterans were very impressed with the pupils' behaviour and the respect shown to remember the people that made sacrifices for their future. Some even stood with the veterans to hold the flag for them.



It was a special day for all, and the pupils showed great care for others. 7a were a perfect example of caring for others as they served the veterans bread and butter pudding, made their drinks, and tried to make them welcome.

Other classes helped in making different baked goods for the veterans with some pupils donating all their bakes to show their respect. A huge well done to all the pupils for living into the Elmwood way and acknowledging this special day. We will remember!

Report by Mrs Dudley, Skills Development Coordinator

STAFFING NEWS

We were pleased to welcome Lynne the cook back on 4th November so normal service has resumed in the kitchen. Pupils and staff are now enjoying the delicious meals that Lynne prepares and cooks daily.

Interviews were held on Monday 18th November for the teaching assistant vacancy we have in school. Six candidates were shortlisted and Regan Hughes, who has been working at the school on supply, was the successful candidate. Many congratulations to Regan and we look forward to him joining the team full time. Also a big thank you to Sarah Thornton, Parent Governor for assisting Mr Cross, Headteacher in the interview process.

We will sadly be saying goodbye to Ms Diponio, PE teacher, who will be leaving on Friday 29th November having been successful for another post at a local secondary school. Ms Diponio has been a valued member of staff and will be greatly missed. We wish her well in her new post.

FREE TREES

Thanks to the Woodlands Trust, our application to receive 420 wild harvest saplings resulted in these being delivered on Monday 4th November.

Over the coming weeks, pupils will be helping to plant these during out and about lessons so improving our local community area.

FREE FRUIT AND VEG SCHEME



As mentioned in our October newsletter, Mr Cross, Headteacher, was successful in securing a £6000 award from Tesco as part of their Stronger Starts initiative.

Pupils were treated to an array of goodies on Monday 18th November after Mr Cross went spending over the weekend. Pupils especially enjoyed the raspberries, grapes and bananas with requests for kiwis coming from pupils in pathways base. Pupils will be able to enjoy this weekly treat for the remainder of this academic year and a very big thank you to Mr Cross for organising.

Plant Competition 2023/24



It's that time of year again when I give the prize for the best kept plant and also announce the launch of a new competition.



Last year each tutor group were given a 'Lace Aloe Vera' plant and asked to nurture it over the next year. It has not been an easy task this year as it seems the conditions have not been favourable for this variety of succulent. That said, there were four entrants to the final judging which was carried out by Lynn and Dawn in the office. I am pleased to announce that there were two winners this year, as the ladies in the office found it too difficult to choose between them. The winners were 10a and Cole Owen, so well done and many congratulations goes to them. I hope they enjoyed the cakes.

This year's competition has now been launched during my assembly last week when each tutor group were given a spider plant. This plant symbolises strength and is particularly good at purifying the air. Good luck everyone and I look forward to watching your little plants grow!



Report by Miss Pow, Teacher

DOODLE DAY COMPETITION

Pupils have been competing in Doodle Day again this year! Pupils are trying to help raise money by doodling for Epilepsy Action. They are creating a range of doodles and posters for us to auction off around school. Any money raised will be given to Epilepsy Action to help fund support for people living with epilepsy. The winners will be announced in school on Friday 29th November, so keep an eye out for the winners in the next newsletter. Happy Doodling! Report by Ms Askins, Art Teacher

FUN IN THE SNOW



With the arrival of snow on Tuesday 19th November out and about lessons turned into a sledging activity in place of the planned visit to Aldridge Airport to harvest poles and whittling walking sticks. Wellies and full waterproofs were provided so that pupils could enjoy this experience. A great time was had by all on both Tuesday and Wednesday.

CHRISTMAS APPEAL

We are organising a small fundraising event which will take place on Wednesday 4th December. If you are able to donate any goods that can be used for raffle/tombola prizes, these would be very gratefully received. Any type of bottle or chocolate items would also be welcome.

We will also be selling items made by pupils during craft lessons with Shelli George, Teaching Assistant, on Friday enrichment activities. Any spare baubles or tinsel would be useful too.

DIARY DATES

A reminder that our next progress and achievement event is taking place on Wednesday 4th December 2024. Staff will be contacting individual parents and carers to organise a convenient appointment time when you will be able to review your child's progress as well as discuss your child's autumn term report. We look forward to hopefully seeing you then.

We will be holding our whole school Christmas lunch on Tuesday 17th December when staff and pupils are encouraged to wear a festive top. Lynne, our cook, cooks a lovely traditional turkey dinner and it is always a great event.

Pupils will break up for the Christmas break on Tuesday 17th December due to health and safety training days taking place from Wednesday 18th to Friday 20th December.

Pupils return in the new year on Monday 6th January 2025.