



ELMWOOD SCHOOL NEWSLETTER JANUARY 2025 – NO. 206

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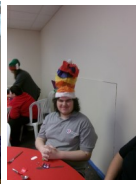
CHRISTMAS LUNCH



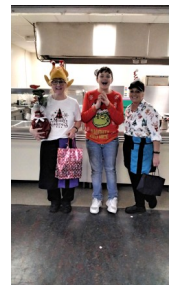
The whole school got together on Tuesday 17th December 2024 when we held our annual Christmas lunch. Thanks to Lynne our school cook, ably assisted by Tracy, a delicious traditional turkey meal was on offer, as well as a home made vegetarian lasagne. The main sports hall was buzzing with staff and pupils, as well as a smaller room being provided for those who prefer a quieter environment, with many pupils and staff wearing festive tops for the occasion which looked great.



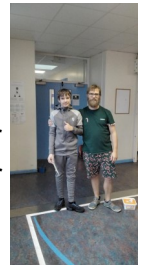
A big thank you to Mrs Dudley, Skills Development Coordinator, who helped with coordinating the big event and also to the staff who helped behind the scenes with organising tables, chairs, ironing tablecloths, Christmas crackers/table decorations etc.



Pupils were a credit to the school and everyone had a lovely time. At the end of the meal, Tegan in Year 7, presented the ladies in the kitchen with a thank you gift as a sign of our appreciation. Some of our Year 11 pupils found some ingenious ways of recycling the paper hats, as you can see from the photos of Sennen and Logan in Year 11.



At the end of the meal the grand draw of the autumn term reading raffle took place. Very well done to Tegan Weller in Year 7 and Charlie Wood in Year 11 who were the two lucky winners with both winning a £10 Amazon gift voucher. Commiserations to the other entries—there were 120 tickets in the draw so lots of reading had taken place. Good luck for next time and keep up the good work and remember you have got to be in it to win it!



Pupils also had a nice surprise waiting for them on returning to their classrooms when they received a selection box (purchased by school fund) which were all beautifully wrapped thanks to Stan, Dawn in the office's husband, who had wrapped the 83 boxes.

Pupils received a further selection box thanks to Leesha Holland-Mansell, supply PE teacher, who had obtained these on our behalf via another charity so a big thank you to Leesha for her support.

Photos are available on our school website, photo gallery page.

CHRISTMAS GIFTS

A big thank you to the HAF team at Walsall Council who helped to make Christmas extra special for a number of pupils with the delivery of a bag of goodies on Thursday 19th December. This was also made possible thanks to Waj from NA Cars who organised for one of his drivers to drop these gifts off at pupils' homes. We hope that everyone enjoyed the contents.



ATTENDANCE SUPER STARS



Congratulations to the following pupils who achieved 100% attendance for the autumn term. Very well done on managing to stay healthy and enjoy your reward of a £5 Tesco gift voucher and certificate which was presented by Mr Cross, Headteacher, on Friday 17th January 2025.



- Keegan Baker
- Daniel Christie
- Alex Clarke
- Harley Giles
- Mckenzie Gonderton
- Nate Green
- George Hancox
- Hollie Lockley
- Cody Love Knight
- Dylan Paddock
- Zachary Page
- Harry Pickford
- Leo Powell
- Oscar Worley

The following staff are also to be congratulated for achieving 100% attendance and who received a certificate in recognition of this achievement.



Marcia Allen, Laura Askins, Bev Bailey, Kerry Bowen, Julie Burnell, Dawn Canham, Leon Donaldson, Gemma Francis, James Francis, Grant Hunt, Sunita Lalli, Lynn Maritza, Adam Mitchell, Athena Nicholaou, Tracey Pow, Stacey Urmson, Matt Webb, Dan Whittaker, Si Wood and Sonya Woollery

Many congratulations to all and keep up the great work.



LATEST NEWS FROM OUT AND ABOUT

Service to Others



During a canoe session with Elmwood pupils, we came across some volunteers maintaining the canal towpath. After some conversation we discovered that they were from the local Rotary group. After many emails I was able to arrange for our pupils to help out with looking after this area of canal that we use for biking, canoeing, etc. Each of the O&A groups helped with chopping back vegetation, gravelling the paths, litter collection, etc. Pupils practiced altruism, tolerance, focus and gratitude.

Spatula

This year has seen a new carving and whittling project. Pupils have collected green logs from coppicing at the woods using the bush saw (with the Ranger's permission). They then split this with a knife and mallet (battening) to create a small 'plank'. Pupils then made two small sawn cuts to create the wider end and then battened down to those cuts to make the thinner handle. After this they have then been able to whittle the spatula to smooth the handle and pointed end. Once at this stage pupils have then used soldering irons to pyrograph their initials onto the end. Many of the pupils plan to use their spatulas in food technology lessons. Pupils have practiced the virtues of determination, creativity, respect and patience.



Report by Mr Whittaker, Head of Outdoor Learning

STAFFING NEWS

Regan Hughes officially started on 6th January 2025 in his role as a teaching assistant at the school following his recent appointment. Regan also celebrated a very special birthday on 28th January 2025 when he was presented with an array of goodies from staff as well as a giant balloon. Many congratulations Regan.

UNDER THE SPOTLIGHT

This month our featured member of staff under the spotlight is Miss Askins, Art Teacher.

How long have you worked at Elmwood? *This will be my third year of working at Elmwood full time, but I was here for my teacher training before that.*

What do you love about your job? *I love making a difference. Seeing young people express themselves through their artwork and build their confidence is one of my favourite things to see every day.*

What films have you watched recently? *The last films I watched were the Lord of the Rings films followed by the Hobbit films, I watched them all in one big run leading up to Christmas!*

Favourite Holiday? *My favourite holiday is Christmas because I get to see my family and watch my two young nieces open their presents. It's just a magical time.*

Tell us something that people would be surprised to hear? *I'm a pretty open book, so most pupils and staff know that I love to spend time reading and playing games. I suppose that's what surprises people that haven't met me before. There isn't really anything else interesting!!*



PUPIL UNDER THE SPOTLIGHT

Our pupil under the spotlight this month is Harry Gunter in Year 8 so a big thank you to him for his responses.

What do you like most about coming to Elmwood School? *I like spending time with Grant.*

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

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

Have you done anything that we might be surprised to learn about? *I love roller coasters and know a lot about them.*

WALSALL SENDIAS

Parents and carers might be interested in a workshop that is run every month by Walsall SENDIAS where you can learn about how young people can be supported with SEND. At their upcoming session on Thursday 13th February, which is taking place at Manor Farm Community Centre from 10.00-11.30 am, the subject will be Appeals. A number of events are also taking place over February half term at Walsall Art Gallery and also at the Light Cinema. Advance booking is required for some of these events. A full list of events that are taking place are contained within SENDIAS' newsletter, which is available on the parents/carers information page of the school website.

WHAT A FIND



Ryan in Year 9 discovered a great find when out foraging with Mr Hawkes on

8th January. He found some elf cup mushrooms growing on some branches over our school field. Well done Ryan, what a cool find with the red centres.



Art experience day

We were lucky enough that Mr Hawkes secured us a visit from Wolverhampton Art Gallery. Selected pupils had a lovely time exploring what teamwork means to them. They had a brief introduction to Kabaddi, which is a contact sport that originated from India. Pupils created some individual patchwork squares that we used to create a large banner to represent the school. Pupils spent time exploring stamps, painting, drawing, inking, tracing and even sewing—a massive thanks to the Wolverhampton Art Gallery for hosting the wonderful session. Report by Ms Askins, Art Teacher



WOLVERHAMPTON ITT VISITS

We welcomed 11 ITT students from Wolverhampton University when they spent two days in school back in October and December. The students got to experience what a day entails at Elmwood, spending the two days with the same group of pupils.

The feedback we received post visit endorsed what a positive experience this had been with comments such as 'the staff are amazing, the way they support pupils with challenges has made me rethink how I deal with pupils with mental health and social needs'; 'I was really tentative about going in, because of what I expected but it's nothing like I imagine, it's so good to see experts in a specific area and the difference they can make' and 'Had some of the best conversations and experiences with kids I've ever had, its opened my eyes about teaching and made me think about going into SEN'.

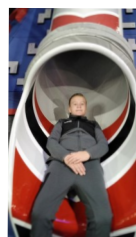
AUTUMN TERM REWARD TRIPS

Gold Trip—The National Space Centre, Birmingham

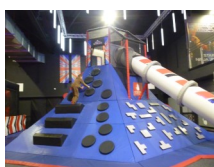
Following the Christmas break pupils who achieved gold status had the opportunity to attend a trip to the national space centre to stretch their understanding of space. In the morning pupils got a chance to explore the solar system and even hold a meteor along with exploring the insides of what the space centre is like, they then experienced what take off in a space shuttle could feel like. Following lunch, we visited the planetarium and watched a short film on our solar system. We then ventured into each planet to experience what they would be like to visit. Prior to heading back to school, pupils saw two huge used rockets that spanned over six floors. Thank you to all staff involved who helped to make the trip such a success. Report by Mr Hinsley, Trip Lead



Silver Trip—Ninja Warrior, Walsall



Pupils were fantastic right from the get go. We had to rearrange groups and staff as some children were being collected by parents. Pupils coped really well with the last minute changes and showed great resilience. We left school in staggered formation and made our way to Walsall. Initially we had a few grumbles about the walk but they soon faded and they enjoyed the chat time. Once there, the pupils listened to staff and took instruction from the on site staff and



completed the debrief before being allowed onto the course. A small number of pupils challenged themselves to the actual ninja course, but most went straight to the inflatables for fun with friends. The staff were also exemplary, monitoring and keeping pupils safe. All in all, a very good and well enjoyed trip by both staff and pupils. Report by Mr Wood, Trip Lead



Silver Trip—Ice skating, Tamworth



Once again the pupils on silver rewards trip had an 'ice time' at the Snowdome in Tamworth. Some of the pupils had their first ever experience on skates and really loved it; it was also lovely seeing their peers demonstrating the Elmwood values by supporting and encouraging them to have a go and more importantly not to give up! It's safe to say no one got cold feet! As always it was not just the pupils who had a 'skate time', staff were also in their element doing their best Torvill & Dean impressions. Thanks to all staff who supported this trip and made sure all pupils enjoyed themselves. Report by Mr Webb, Trip Lead



Bronze Trip—Onsite gaming

The bronze trip featured gaming, allowing pupils to bring their consoles and display their gaming talents. The day was positive, with a movie room offered to some pupils, which they enjoyed. We also provided MISP and arts & crafts in the afternoon for further engagement. It was wonderful to see pupils interacting and sharing their gaming insights. A big thank you to all the staff who helped ensure everything ran smoothly; your efforts are greatly appreciated. Report by Mr L Donaldson, Trip Lead