



# ELMWOOD SCHOOL NEWSLETTER MAY 2022 – NO. 177

www.elmwood.walsall.sch.uk

## REWARD TRIPS—29.4.22



Cannon Raceway—This term the gold trip took place at Cannon Raceway as the students were go-karting!! All of the students were extremely excited and conversed on transport to the venue of who was going to win... but most importantly who was going to beat Mr Bullock!

The students arrived at the venue, were safety briefed and kitted up in their overalls and helmets to get started. The groups were split into two and the first group headed down to the grid followed after by the second. Lights were out and the races were underway! There were some extremely tense battles out on the track with students battling it out lap after lap. Some of the overtakes were breath-taking and I'm sure Lewis Hamilton would have been proud!



Students represented their school impeccably using their manners with raceway staff throughout the day and congratulating one another on winning races and getting fastest lap time. The winner of the day went to Cameron Willetts with some frightening lap times closely followed by Jake Hall. A thoroughly enjoyable day finished off with a McDonald's in the sun! Report by Mr Bullock, Teacher (Trip Lead)

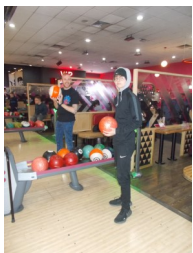
Trampolining—This term silver trip achievers jumped for joy as they went to Jump Xtreme to do trampolining! As we were the biggest reward trip this time, we were lucky enough to travel in style on a coach accompanied by 10 staff and headed to Tamworth. Most of the pupils had been before and enjoyed telling those who had not been how much fun it was and what a great time they would have there. Even some of the staff were excited about jumping!



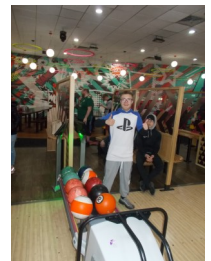
After an initial rundown on health and safety by the professionals, pupils were all set to jump! We had access to the venue for over an hour and for most of that time we had all the trampolines to ourselves. Pupils were spoilt for choice at what to go on next, not only could you just jump up and down on the wall to wall trampolines, you could also play dodgeball, do slam dunks and take part in a new activity - last one standing, where pupils and some staff had to jump and duck out of the way, which really tested their agility.



We finished off by eating a lovely buffet that Jump Xtreme provided for us—pizza, sandwiches, chips, crisps was quickly eaten up and then back onto the coach to school. A great day was had by all. Not only did everyone have fun, but they also got lots of exercise! Thank you to all the staff that made it a memorable day. Report by Mr Webb, Teacher (Trip Lead)



Bowling- For this terms bronze trip we went bowling! Not only did staff and students have a wonderful time but the pupils were amazing and were fantastic Elmwood representatives. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed the trip. After we bowled there was just enough time to hit the arcade to try and win some tickets to cash in at the prize desk! Mr Francis was so proud of how the pupils conducted themselves that we had to stop off for a Mcflurry on the way back to school. Report by Mr Francis, Teacher (Trip Lead)



Fishing reward trip (bronze alternative) - The day went very well despite the inclement weather. It



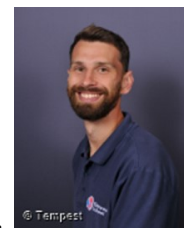
was cold for the majority of the trip but the pupils conducted themselves very well and didn't complain. All pupils caught quite a few fish; however the larger ones managed to elude us entirely with the biggest being a mirror carp of around four pounds. Lots of silver fish like roach, chub and rudd were caught along with one tench which is rare for the pond where we fished.



Report by Mr S Wood, Teacher (Trip Lead)

## UNDER THE SPOTLIGHT

This month our featured member of staff under the spotlight is Chris Young, Teaching Assistant in transition base.



**How long have you worked at Elmwood?** It's now coming up to my 4th year.

**What do you love about your job?** Really enjoy how different everyday is, the pupils are great to be around. I'm currently working within transition and the staff are really tight, we are really supportive and this has a great effect on our pupils.

**What films have you watched recently?** Coach Carter - really find this film engaging, you should give it a try if you like basketball!

**Favourite Holiday?** I loved LA & Vegas - this trip was fantastic.

**Tell us something that people would be surprised to hear?** Back in 2011 and 2014 I travelled to America / Canada, leading football (soccer) camps to the children during the summer. This was an incredible experience, I was able to meet and live with a new family every week and coached in 15 states.

### POSITIVE FEEDBACK

Visitors to the school are welcome to complete our visitor comments proforma that are in the reception area.

These comments are shared with the Senior Leadership Team and placed within a folder in the reception area for all to see.

Elmwood School Visitor Comments	
Date	10/MAY/2022
Name	Brian Weldon
Agency/Company	Street Teams
Purpose of Visit	Education Sessions
Comments	AMAZING SCHOOL, AMAZING STAFF, AMAZING STUDENTS. ALWAYS A PLEASURE TO BE HERE.
Anything we do particularly well?	STAFF TEAM HAVE A BRILLIANT RELATIONSHIP WITH STUDENTS
Any Improvements we could make?	NO
Signature	<i>[Signature]</i>



Elmwood School Visitor Comments	
Date	12.05.2022
Name	Shannon O Dowd
Agency/Company	Blackwood School
Purpose of Visit	Outreach for emotional support
Comments	A fantastic environment for the children that is calm yet challenges their capabilities. Their day is thought out from start to finish to ensure that they are safe and supportive. *Golden Ticket + Emotion wheels
Anything we do particularly well?	
Any Improvements we could make?	
Signature	<i>[Signature]</i>

The number of responses we receive praising our pupils is amazing and what a credit they are to the School (as well as staff). Future newsletters will include some of these visitor comments as they are worth celebrating.

### STAFFING NEWS

Grant Hunt, teaching assistant in pathways base, also had a special birthday at the end of April, which nicely fell on a Saturday so that he could celebrate in style. Grant was presented with cards and gifts from staff on 29.4.22 ahead of this special event.

We said goodbye to James Hawkins, Family Welfare Officer on Monday 9th May. James had secured a similar position with a local primary school and we wish him every success.

Mr Holmes continues to recover from his knee operation and is hoping to return after the half term break. We look forward to welcoming Mr Homes back.

On Tuesday 17th May interviews took place for the teaching assistant vacancy. We are pleased to confirm that Nicole Rose, who has been volunteering at the school, was the successful candidate. A big thank you to Di Cadman, Governing Body Associate Member and former teaching assistant at the school for assisting Mr Cross, Headteacher, with the interviews. We look forward to welcoming Nicole onto the team.

Congratulations to Charlotte Clarke and Paul Middleton (Teachers) who are expecting their second child in September, a little brother to Maisie. We look forward to sharing the arrival news with you in due course.

It will also be an exciting time for Chris Young, teaching assistant, and his partner, who are expecting their first child in November—a busy time ahead for them too.

## GREAT WORK



Riley and Cameron in Year 10b put their construction skills to the test when they assembled the new picnic table and seats for the front quad area. The boys worked hard, despite the rain, to get the job done before then testing the table out. Very well done on doing such an amazing job and we look forward to using it over the coming months. The boys enjoyed a McDonald's lunch in recognition of their hard work. Thank you to school fund for also funding this new piece of equipment.

## YEAR 8 BIKEABILITY TRAINING



On Monday 9<sup>th</sup> and Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> May, both 8a and 8b took part in the Bikeability awareness course. This course enabled pupils of Elmwood School to learn and practice new awareness skills to keep them safe when biking in and outside of school and local community.

Logan Hawley, Joseph Jenkins were able to achieve their Level 2 Bikeability awareness pass; also Dilan Smith was able to achieve his Level 1 Bikeability pass. It was a great day watching pupils in 8b take part in the course. When observing the pupils involved on the day, there were various virtues being shown such as awareness, patience, concentration, courage and respect for the Bikeability teachers.

On Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> May, 8a continued with the same positive spirit which enabled the group to all complete and achieve their Level 2 Bikeability pass. 8a showed enjoyment and happiness whilst learning how to be more aware on their bikes in the local community. Advanced biking skills were shown which led to the group riding to Park Lime Pits to test out what they had learnt.

8a were able to show virtues of responsibility, awareness, patience, respect, self-discipline and concentration. They were able to ride safely, stay safe and overall complete the course keeping safe in the local community.

Well done Year 8 it was a rewarding experience for you all. Also a big thank you to Mr Whittaker for organising this for the pupils and to Kerry & Rubina for their help and support with consent forms and also encouraging those pupils who took part. Feedback from the Bikeability Team was very positive stating that pupils had been receptive.

Report by Leon Donaldson, Teaching Assistant



## CSE PRESENTATIONS



We had a lovely opportunity to welcome Brian Weldon from Street Teams into our setting to deliver an assembly around criminal and sexual exploitation. This was delivered age appropriately as key stage 3 and 4 have staggered assembly times. Following on from this, w/c 9<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> May, Street Teams delivered workshops to the whole school. Pupils were able to gain knowledge and all engaged fantastically throughout; the reports from Street Teams were extremely positive and comments were made about how welcoming, well-behaved, motivated and interested our pupils were. The Street Teams staff followed this up with emails of warmth

and praise stating it was a pleasure to work at such a positive setting, including this one from Julie Mills on 11.5.22 which stated:

*Jodie and I wish to let you know what a delightful day we had! The students were well behaved, polite and engaged well throughout the discussions. The atmosphere in school was calm and well ordered and we were made welcome by Staff who were also most helpful.*

*One of the pupils wrote us a note which read "Welcome to our class Jodie and Julie. You make our world safer for young people like us, thanks for coming in to teach us about safeguarding" (Julian Year 7).*

*Thank you again for a most enjoyable day.*

We will welcome them back in the future (January 23) to work with key stage 4 looking at exposure.

Report by Mrs B Bailey, Family Welfare Officer

## SCHOOL COUNCIL MEETING

The school council ambassadors met on 6.4.22 when actions from their previous meeting around group discussion, study leave and the transition quad were followed up. Covered on the agenda for the latest meeting was reading material and the new books that were available in the library. Also joining the meeting was Sarah Thornton, Parent Governor, who explained her role and questioned the members on their views around staff and pupil well being. The upcoming plan a day Friday was also discussed as well as issues around the wearing of school uniform. Mrs Bailey, Family Welfare Officer, took the opportunity to thank the school ambassadors for their time and for conducting themselves in a professional manner. A copy of the minutes are available on the school ambassadors page of the school website.

### Out & About- It looks like a building site!' (contact with employers)



Elmwood Pupils have enjoyed 'dipping their toe' into the world of work this half term. Each Out & About class has visited the Lovell site at Lockside, Walsall to see the £35 million development there. They have learnt that there will be 200 houses on site within 2 years, along with an apartment block.

After a short safety video, where we were made aware of staff testing and other concerns in the industry such as modern slavery, we were then kitted out in hi-viz, eye protection, helmets and gloves, before exploring the site. We walked up scaffolding to view progress on the first storey of the apartments, which will have 3 more storeys added. This gave us an impressive vista across the whole site, where some families will be moving in next week, despite half the site still to be constructed.

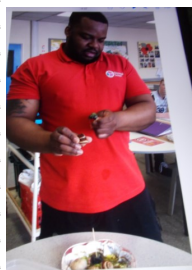


Pupils were invited to lay a brick each, which appeared easier than the reality was. It was interesting to discover that the bricklayers are the highest earners onsite with a potential £600 per day if they lay 1000 bricks in a day. However, they earn nothing if it rains, as they are not allowed to work in the rain.

We also learnt that there are over 25 trades onsite, but 120 other job roles supporting the project e.g website design, sales, PR, etc. In the next few years there will be a huge skills gap in the industry and so apprenticeships and salaries will become more attractive in construction.

Report by Mr D Whittaker, Head of Outdoor Learning

## NEWS FROM FOOD TECHNOLOGY



Pupils have been busy designing and creating their own delicious chicken wraps or vegan equivalent.

Meanwhile the BTEC food group have been discovering interesting French cuisine such as frogs legs and escargot (snails). Surprisingly nearly all had a taste test of the somewhat unusual food and yes they do taste like chicken. Leon, our TA for the lesson, accepted the challenge of eating the escargot - after what looked like a gurning competition he gave the thumbs up but I am not sure whether he was just being polite.

Well done everyone for stepping outside of their comfort zone and giving it a go.

Report by Ms Shaw, Food Technology Teacher

## SCHOOL SUPPORT

Mr Whittaker has been working with Palfrey School's staff in his role as Specialist Leader in Education for Outdoor Learning and as helped to train their Safeguard Lead and Head of School in how to use their school grounds more effectively. This involved developing an 11 week program of activities for the summer term that the staff can deliver safely onsite and in their surrounding area. This included orienteering and creating two base maps of the school grounds, English, Maths and Science based activities but most importantly the school wanted activities that engage their pupils with the outdoors at a sensory level. This was a need developed by Palfrey as their pupils opportunities to play outdoors, out of school can be limited. This has involved practical training in Earth Education (Steve Van Matre) activities and also Joseph Cornell activities.

Mr Whittaker has been invited to return to Palfrey in the autumn to extend the program and training into the winter.

### EARLY HELP

The Early Help school ready team are excited to share the third edition of the Early Help newsletter. Within their newsletter, you will find information of groups and events in each locality as well as fun enriching activities to do at home. A copy of the newsletter is available on the parents/carers courses and information page of our school website.

You can also find lots of virtual activities on their Early Help Website: [https://go.walsall.gov.uk/children\\_and\\_young\\_people/early\\_help/early\\_help\\_for\\_parents/things\\_to\\_do\\_with\\_your\\_children](https://go.walsall.gov.uk/children_and_young_people/early_help/early_help_for_parents/things_to_do_with_your_children)

### WALSALL HOLIDAY ACTIVITY AND FOOD PROGRAMME 2022

A free and exciting holiday programme for children and young people aged 5 to 16 who are eligible for free school meals is on offer and is running over the summer and Christmas 2022.

On offer are multi sports activities, football, swimming as well as drama, arts and crafts, cooking, graphic design, gaming and much more.

If you are interested in signing up for the programme, visit [www.walsall.gov.uk/children\\_and\\_young\\_people/haf\\_signup](http://www.walsall.gov.uk/children_and_young_people/haf_signup) or call the holiday activities helpline on 01922 653899.

A copy of the Walsall Council flyer is available on our school website, parents and carers courses and information page.

A coffee morning is taking place on 8th June from 10.00 to 11.30 am at Manor Farm Community Association (next to Elmwood School) when the scheme is being discussed.

### RESILIENCE COURSES

School Health have organised a variety of courses for parents and carers that are taking place during the summer term. A copy of the flyers for these courses are on the school's website, parents and carers information page.

### EXAM TIME FOR YEAR 11 PUPILS

The month of May marks the start of GCSE examinations, external moderation of coursework and the final plans to secure appropriate Post-16 provision for September 2022. Staff and pupils are working hard to make this extremely stressful time to be as "normal" as possible and to support us all in achieving our very best come results day in August 2022. In addition to this Year 11 pupils will also be commencing their "Care for Others" individual timetable w/b 6<sup>th</sup> June 2022 alongside important revision. This timetable enables them to use their skills and experiences from their Elmwood journey to support the future generations of Elmwood pupils with their learning, emotional regulation, and an empathetic ear. It also enables them to showcase how much they have developed and matured during their time at Elmwood with staff they may not have worked with for a few years - some pupils are returning to their previous Primary Schools as well.

I am confident that the pupils will be an asset to the school community and the pupils will be appreciative of the extra support as we further stretch and challenge them in our final push at the end of the academic year.

Report by Mr L Cross, Headteacher