



ELMWOOD SCHOOL NEWSLETTER NOVEMBER 2021 – NO. 171

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WHO'S BEHIND THE MASK

On Monday 1st November, pupils and staff had the opportunity to celebrate Halloween (with it just haven taken place at the end of the half term break) and arrived at school suitably dressed for the occasion!



There were some fabulous outfits and it certainly was a case of who's that behind the mask.



Pupils in 10c and 11c also enjoyed taking part in apple bobbing. This did involve changing the apple and water each time but was worth the effort for the fun that was had!



A fun day was had by all. Further photographs are on the photo gallery page of the school website.



MARVELLOUS ME

As you are aware, we encourage all parents and carers to sign up to using the above free app ,which is available to download on a smart phone or pc. This is an ideal way of school communicating with parents/carers and enables us to share with you what your child has been doing in school. We also use this system to send messages such as events taking place in school, school closures etc.

Feedback has always been very positive from the parents and carers who use the system; it also allows for memory books to be downloaded and printed when a pupil eventually leaves Elmwood School.

We are pleased that the majority of parents/carers have now signed up and enjoying what it has to offer. Currently there is only 1 pupil in Yr 7, 1 in Yr 8, 1 in Yr 9, and 2 in Yrs 10 and 11 who are missing out on the benefits of MarvellousMe.

If you have yet to sign up and would like your log in details, please contact Dawn in the office, who will gladly sort this out for you.

PROGRESS AND ACHIEVEMENT

Our autumn term event will be taking place on Wednesday 8th December 2021; pupils will be leaving at 12.30 pm unless you have an early appointment and request your child remains on site. Parents and carers will be allocated appointments with their child's form staff and have face to face meetings to discuss their child's progress this term, as well as look at setting any new targets for the spring term. A copy of your child's school report will also be available.

Refreshments will be provided and, having had to hold these events virtually for the past 18 months, it will be lovely to welcome parents and carers back into school.

UPCOMING DIARY DATES

The autumn term is always a busy one and for information here are some upcoming events:

Year 10 visit to Kidzania, London —Wednesday 1st December 2021
Christmas singing event—Thursday 2nd December 2021, 10 am—11 am

Christmas Fayre—Thursday 2nd December, 11 am—12 noon

Progress and Achievement Event—Wednesday 8th December 2021 (12.30 pm—4.00 pm). Pupils leave at 12.30 pm

German market visits— w/c 6.12.21-16.12.21. See website for individual class dates

Christmas lunch—Tuesday 14th December 2021

End of term—Friday 17th December 2021—pupils leave at 12.30 pm

Start of term—Wednesday 5th January 2022

READING RAFFLE

Pupils are encouraged to read as widely as possible and receive a raffle ticket when they have achieved a reading goal in school.

These tickets are then placed into a prize draw which is drawn half termly. The lucky winner for the autumn half term was Reece

Oxford in Year 9 who received a £10 Amazon gift voucher in recognition of the above.

Well done Reece and good luck to all pupils for the next prize draw due to take place at the end of term.



JOINT COFFEE MORNING EVENT

To maintain strong parent links between schools, Elmwood School and Phoenix Academy held a joint coffee morning. It was lovely to see some of Elmwood's parents talking about their child's experiences here and also giving parents from Phoenix the chance to ask any questions that they have, ready for when their child joins us in the new academic year. A big thank you to Stephanie Edwards and the team at Phoenix for hosting the coffee morning; the cakes were delicious.

Report by James Hawkins, Family Welfare Officer

CHRISTMAS APPEAL



A big thank you to the under 11 girls of Rushall Olympic who have kindly donated several boxes of bric-a-brac for our Christmas Fayre that is taking place on the 2nd December and also to Di Cadman, former teaching assistant and associate governor, for all her goodies.

Pupils working in Year 11 with Mr Holmes as part of their Asdan course have been working on the Christmas Fayre. Well done to Miles Hall who has worked on advertising (see poster below), Callum Rhys-Dixon and Jack Hulse who have worked on the content of some of the stalls and to Theo Forrester who has been sending out emails to various companies in a bid to obtaining some prizes.

We will be compiling a list of all the donations we received in our December newsletter when we will also be able to feedback on the whole event. We look forward to welcoming parents and carers on 2nd December to our drama production/Christmas Fayre.



UNDER THE SPOTLIGHT

This month our featured member of staff under the spotlight is Debbie Causer, Teaching Assistant.



How long have you worked at Elmwood?

Well for Elmwood it's been 13 years but I have been working on this school site for 21 years. Firstly Manor Farm, secondly Rushall Community and then at Daw End before it changed to Elmwood 😊

What do you love about your job?

I love working with pupils at Elmwood no matter what challenges lie ahead. Hard work always pays off and I have seen many successes over the years.

What films have you watched recently?

Jumangi (new one)

Favourite Holiday?

I absolutely loved my 6 months travelling around Europe. Those memories last forever.

Tell us something that people would be surprised to hear?

I'm a rock chick and love motor bikes, I'm a member of a bike club and love my brothers and sisters.



FUNDAY FRIDAY ACTIVITIES—21.10.21

For our community day activity 10a had a task of using £10 in hope of turning it into more profit. As a group we brainstormed on how we could turn £10 into more profit. There were many ideas from a car wash to a sweet and confectionery sale. We agreed to buy frozen food such as burgers, pizza and fries and sell to the Elmwood staff at a very reasonable price. Due to unforeseen circumstances beyond our control Jake had to take charge and represent 10a on the day.



On the day itself Jake walked to Morrisons in Walsall with staff and the £10 to buy all the items agreed by the class. Whilst in the store Jake made the important choices of what was actually worth buying due to price. Jake was able to achieve the task of using exactly £10 to buy what 10a needed.

Once back on school grounds the hard work began with cooking the delicious food for the Elmwood staff. There was a selection of burgers, pizzas, fries. This was a team effort and the pupils of 10a work together very well to succeed and complete the mission in hand.

Overall 10a were able to raise £15 from their £10 challenge task. It was a rewarding experience for the boys of 10a well done on this achievement. Report by Leon Donaldson, Teaching Assistant

For our latest community day, 11a chose to collect and donate food items to our local foodbank. We visited the foodbank in Walsall town centre, who were extremely pleased with our generous donation. Cherish, one of the managers, gave us a tour of the premises and explained why their work is so vital. It was an insightful experience for us all, with Cherish explaining that only last week their donations had helped support a family of four – mom, dad, a two-year old and a 6-month old who were living in their car.

The group conducted themselves extremely well and myself, Jade and Adam were incredibly proud of their choice of charity.

Message from 11a students:

11a wishes to thank everybody who gave donations for the food bank. We are very grateful, it means a lot and you have made a lot of people very happy!

Report by Ms Clarke, Teacher



BLOOD BROTHERS TRIP



A number of Y9 and BTEC Performing Arts pupils visited Birmingham Hippodrome to see the musical Blood Brothers on 4.11.21. Blood Brothers is a musical written by Liverpoolian playwright Willy Russell.

The story is a contemporary nature versus nurture plot, revolving around fraternal twins Mickey and Eddie, who were separated at birth, one subsequently being raised in a wealthy family, the other in a poor family. This term Y9 pupils have been studying the text in English and drama lessons and it was a fantastic opportunity to see a different interpretation of this gritty kitchen sink drama.

Despite a late start the show was brilliant and from the positive feedback the pupils loved it and I'm sure will be a theatre experience that will stay with them for a long time. Report by Mr Webb

On Thursday 4th November the BTEC drama group, and some year 9s, took a trip to the Birmingham hippodrome to watch Blood Brothers. We went to KFC before and had fun with the staff including Mr Webb who got a discount. We then walked to the venue and took (not) our seats after waiting for Mr. Webb who was meant to sort out the seats and came back with yet another discount -the show began!

We all enjoyed the amazing singing, strong storyline and most of all the poor woman who was stood at the side signing the whole time, as well as the subtitles we all read even when trying not to! We jumped out of our seats (especially those that were asleep) when the gun shots went off and shook the whole building. Mr Webb bought us all ice-lollies for the interval which was much appreciated. We all had fun driving back laughing about what had happened. Report by Rianna , Year 10 pupil

I had the pleasure of watching Blood Brothers at the Birmingham Hippodrome, and I can tell you, I was not disappointed. It is an engaging story following the lives of Mrs Johnstone, a broke mother of seven, her innocent child Mickey and her sold son Edward. This is a thought provoking and fun drama with a back tone of hilarious comedy. Truly a must-see event. Report by Jordan, Year 8

STAFFING NEWS

Congratulations to Paul Middleton, teaching assistant, who is now qualified to deliver team teach training. Paul accompanied Mr Cross and Mr Hawkes on Friday 22nd October to his first school training session—well done Paul.



During the half term holiday, Lynne the cook celebrated a special birthday. Lynne arrived in work on Friday 22nd October to a decorated kitchen area and was presented with an array of gifts from staff. Lynne also had another surprise in store with a secret party organised for Saturday 30th October, which was also attended by a number of staff. Lynne thoroughly enjoyed her extended birthday celebrations.



Another special birthday took place on Wednesday 3rd November when Mr Cross, Headteacher, hit the big 40. This was also celebrated by staff with banners, balloons and old photographs being shared. Mr Cross was also presented with gifts not only from current staff but former staff too. Many congratulations to Mr Cross.

Tik Tok Safeguarding Update

A guide to support parents and carers with hoaxes and challenges with regards to TikTok and a useful link to YouTube <https://parentinfo.org/article/youtube-what-parents-need-to-know> are available on the school website.

Bev Bailey and James Hawkins, Family Welfare Officers, are always available to offer any help and support with regards to keeping your child safe on line.

BATMAN

That is what Paul Croke, Site Manager, felt like when he was surprised to find a bat had made its way in to school recently. Having made it's escape, the following day it came back for a return visit when Mr Wood, teacher, came across it. Fun was then had in a DT lesson when Mr Wood showed it to some of our younger pupils and it decided to go for a flight around the room. Our visitor was eventually released outdoors to continue on its adventure.



CHRISTMAS SCHOOL LUNCH

Our annual whole school Christmas lunch is taking place on Tuesday 14th December. If your child would like a meal booking the cost for a turkey meal and pudding is £2.05 (a vegetarian option will also be available). Any pupil who is entitled to a free school meal does not have to pay.

This celebration meal is the one time that all staff and pupils come together and enjoy a lovely meal prepared by Lynne the cook. Everyone is welcome to wear a festive top for the occasion and a £1 donation is requested to help a local homeless charity.

A separate quiet room is available for any pupil who prefer this option.

REMEMBRANCE DAY TRIBUTES



Libby in Year 10 helped to create a string of poppies from a whole collection my Mum had knitted. Libby also helped put the display up outside the front of School too.

As part of the Remembrance commemorations, Mr Holmes and myself have taken the pupils to the National Memorial Arboretum during Out & About lessons. As well as finding their family names on the huge memorial, they have also laid their felt poppies at a memorial of their choice. Pupils have enjoyed making these poppies in previous Out & About lessons. The session proved to be very sensory with pupils enjoying the feel of the warm soapy water as they rubbed the wool layers to make it bind together. Report by Mr Whittaker Head of Outdoor Learning.



REMEMBRANCE SERVICE—11.11.21

On Thursday 11th November Elmwood welcomed back the veterans from the Staffordshire Regiment for our annual Armistice Day parade. It was an honour to see them all again following a year of absence showing resilience at its best. Elmwood pupils were impeccably behaved during the short ceremony in honour of all of the soldiers who gave their today so that we could have our tomorrow. The ceremony was held around the barn area of the school where Paul Middleton had beautifully painted a backdrop of a poppy field; he was also our official photographer for the morning. Andy Singer, who is the lead veteran, commented on how amazing all our pupils are and it is truly their honour to attend, and to be a part of Elmwood's ceremony.

Year 7s decorated biscuits and cakes with poppies. Year 8s made a very heart warming vegetable chowder to serve to the veterans when they came in from the cold outside. Charlie-ann Barfield, Kayden Cox and Courtney Allport made and decorated a beautiful remembrance day cake. BTEC food pupils made pumpkin soup and freshly made bread rolls which the regiment commented on how delicious it all was, with some of our guests taking home the recipes. Year 10 made a variety of cakes boxed up for the veterans to take home with them for family and friends. Year 11 pupils played hosts serving tea and coffee for the morning chatting with the veterans about where they had served and what the soldiers had experienced. Miles Hall in Year 11 managed to raise an additional £2.85 for the British Legion from donations he made for drinks.

In DT lessons, Mr Francis produced a batch of wooden coasters with the Staffordshire Regiment mascot who is called "Colonel Watchman" the Staffordshire bull terrier dog. In art, Mr Collins got his pupils to produce handmade poppies which were handed to the veterans by pupils after the ceremony. Andy had requested if we could produce these poppies as many of them have got quite a collection from the previous years of attending Elmwood School. Mr Webb's singing group treated the Regiment to a sing a long rendition of "We'll meet again" so the event really did involve a lot of our pupils and staff.

A huge thank you to you all for making this such a successful day.

Report by Hilary Shaw, Food Technology Teacher

"Hello Vera"

At the start of the autumn term we launched a competition across the school promoting the love of plants and we are celebrating the quality of one plant in particular...the Aloe Vera!

The healing qualities of this plant are plentiful and in my opinion every kitchen should have one, so with this in mind each tutor group were given a plant to grow and cherish. The competition has also grown and now Lynn and Dawn in the office have joined in.

Everyone was given an introduction to the aloe vera and a brief amount of care instructions, the rest was up to each group to find out more so that their plant could flourish and have: the longest leaf; the widest leaf and the tallest plant. Each entrant in the competition were asked to name their plant, measure it and submit their vital statistics. Each half term the results are shared and the best progress made in each category wins a small prize.

Meet just a few of the entrants...



As can see just like us they come in all shapes and sizes and just like us they all have so much to give.... a plant may not be the tallest but it could have the widest leaf, it may not have the widest leaf but it could be the tallest! At the end of the year there will also be an overall winner for the plant that has made the most overall improvement and the prize will be a trip.... to be disclosed at a later date!

It's surprising the lengths some tutors have gone to already to bag a prize.....and I can announce that for the first half term the prize for the tallest plant went to 10b and Jeffrey at a whopping 26cms and for the leaf that was both the widest, at 5mms, and longest, at 23cms, it went to 7a and their plant called Nine & Three Quarters.

Remember you've got to be in it to win it so keep loving your "Vera" and good luck in the competition.
Report by Ms Pow, Teacher

SEND OPEN DAY EVENT

Parents and carers of pupils in Year 11 are able to book tickets to attend the above event organised by Walsall College taking place on Wednesday 2nd February 2022 from 3.30—6.30 pm. As well as having a tour around the college there will also be an opportunity to talk to the Inclusive Support Team. This is an ideal opportunity for pupils and parents/carers to go and look at the courses that are on offer at the College ahead of these commencing in September 2022.

The link to book tickets is on our school website, news and links page.

You must have a ticket in order to gain entry.

PROJECT ME

Parents and carers have the opportunity to take part in a brand new free mental health initiative that is now available within the Walsall Borough, called Project Me™. Further details on what the programme entails is available on the parents/carers courses and information page of the school website. Bev Bailey, Family Welfare Officer, will also be happy to help and advise.