



ELMWOOD SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2016— NO. 112

www.elmwood.walsall.sch.uk

DRAYTON MANOR REWARD TRIP



On Wednesday 8th June fifteen students were rewarded for achieving 100% attendance either during the Summer Term 2015, Autumn Term 2015 or Spring Term 2016, to a day out at Drayton Manor Park. The day was a great success with everyone having a fantastic time (and the sun shone too). A very big thank you to Ms Mayo who organised the tickets. Well done to all students who were eligible for the trip, keep up the good work.



MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD—MR HUBBARD

As a small Local Authority school we are Walsall's only secondary school that educates statemented vulnerable pupils who have struggled elsewhere. We are part of two teaching schools consortia and work with some mainstream schools and academies to assist with their behaviour management. But we are basically quite isolated.

It seems obvious that local authorities are being put under increasing pressure from central government to deliver more for less and that they are going to cease to exist in their current form in the near future.

As a result of this (not to mention budget cuts in a time of increasing pupil numbers and costs) Elmwood has decided to look at alternatives outside of direct local authority control. Having looked at the options; we approached the Academy Transformation Trust, a small academy group that do seem to have the child at the centre of what they do, to see if we could join them. They were excited to have us as their first 'Special School' and want us for our expertise in positive behaviour management.

The initial stages of the application have been done and we are about to enter the period of formal consultation in two weeks before and two weeks after the summer holiday where you can have your say. It is anticipated that we will convert in October.

We will be having a public meeting to outline what this will mean for Elmwood and your child. There will be no changes to our core offer and we will still be the school for Walsall's most vulnerable children. Be assured that none of us would be looking at this as an option if we didn't feel it would improve the education that we can offer our young people.

I will keep you updated as and when there is more information to share.

STAFFING NEWS

Unfortunately Mr Webb continues to be absent from School and we wish him a speedy recovery.

Congratulations to Robyn Francis who will be getting married on Saturday 25th June before heading off for a honeymoon in the Caribbean . We wish Robyn a lovely day.



Well done to Ms Mayo who took part in the Sutton Fun Run on Sunday 5th June. Despite soaring temperature Ms Mayo did an

excellent time and to date has helped to raise £132.80 in support of a very brave little girl, Isobel, who was diagnosed in 2014, at just 3 yrs 10 months old, with Neuroblastoma, a rare childhood cancer. Unfortunately Isobel passed peacefully away at home in August 2015 aged 5yrs 3months. Further information is available on the charity's just giving page is : <https://www.justgiving.com/teams/teamisobel> for further information.

WELL DONE TOOTOOT

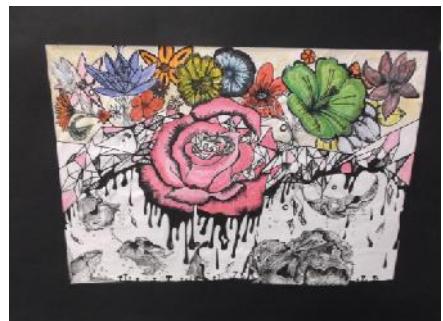
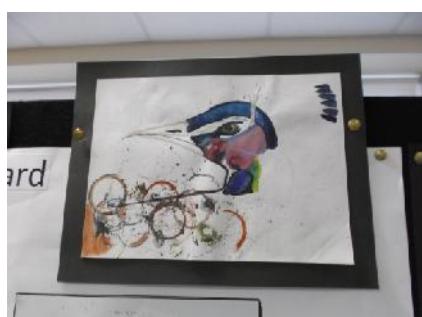
As you are aware the School has partnered up with Tootoot which is an on line bullying tool. We were pleased to learn that Tootoot has won the best educational product and service of 2016 at this years Digital Safety Awards. Currently over 500 schools worldwide use the system from as far afield as Russia and Nepal. Tootoot allows staff to stop small problems becoming larger issues with it comes to student concerns. The direct confident and discreet line of communication it offers between student and mentor allows a detailed picture to be created and a swift resolution to be provided. Many congratulations to Tootoot on their success and through funding allowing the School to access the system free of charge for a twelve month period.

ART WORK DISPLAY



All staff and students have had the opportunity to view the art work produced by Ricardo Vidal in Year 11 which has been on display in the Vocational Centre. Ricardo has been supported in School by Mr Collins and at Shelfield Ormiston School by John Burton and it is hoped that Ricardo's

hard work will be rewarded with a possible B grade at GCSE. Good luck Ricardo and also with your future College placement; you and your family should be very proud of what you have achieved.



NEWS FROM THE WELFARE TEAM

Where
were you
all????



Bev and Sonia, our Family Welfare Officers, have been busy organising events including recent coffee mornings. On the 27th May Bev and Zoe Carter (mom to Thomas in Year 9) visited our feeder School, the Phoenix School in Bloxwich to join in one of their coffee mornings. Zoe offered to talk to upcoming parents and carers to hopefully allay any concerns they may have during their child's transition from primary to secondary. This was followed by a coffee morning on 7th June organised by Zoe and Helen Osborne (Carer of Year 9 pupil) when it was hoped that the Phoenix parents/carers would join them. Unfortunately there were no takers so they missed out on the lovely carrot cake made by Helen. Dave Matthews, our School Nurse, was able to join the ladies to introduce himself and offer any advice and guidance as well as Mo, Family Welfare Officer from Phoenix. Zoe and Helen are actively encouraging parents and carers to come and join them for coffee morning sessions, the next one is taking place on Tuesday 12th July from 10 am to 12 noon. If there are any problems with transport and getting to Elmwood, please give School a call as Zoe has kindly offered to collect a couple of parents dependent upon area. The aim of the coffee mornings is to speak with other families who are experiencing the same difficulties and anxieties. Refreshments are always on offer and we now have six new laptops available for use by parents.

Unfortunately, due to no response and lack of funding, plans for a summer school have had to be cancelled for this year. Hopefully we may be able to offer something next time.

Over the half term break a new office area was created for our Family Welfare Officers and they now have their own private office within the library area where they can carry out their vital work.

FINANCE AUDIT

On 14-15th June 2016 the School received a very thorough financial audit organised by the Local Authority via a Company called Mazars. Mark Lockyer, Auditor, covered seventeen areas including Governance and Financial Controls. Initial feedback at the end of the audit highlighted only a couple of minor housekeeping items and we are hoping for a very positive report. A big thank you and well done to Lynn Maritza, School Business Manager and Dawn Canham, Secretary/Clerk to the Governors, for all their hard work both before and during the visit, which was reiterated by Simon Hubbard, Headteacher to staff.

VISIT TO SHEEPWASH FARM



It is a very busy time in Nurture Group who are involved in various activities and trips. This included a visit on 10th June to Sheepwash Farm near Lichfield.

Pupils enjoyed learning about how crops are grown; what they are used for as well as observing other farm practices. A new addition to the farm was inside the huge metal barn which contains a bio methane burner as well as a wind turbine. The highlight of the day for many though was the trip to the strawberry fields where all students received a punnet of strawberries to take home.



WORKSHOP BY CONTACT A FAMILY

Parents and Carers are welcome to attend a free workshop around the disability living allowance for children organised by Contact a Family. This is taking place on Friday 8th July from 10.15 am to 12.15 pm at the Birmingham Settlement, 359-361 Witton Road, Aston. Advice will be offered on how to complete a claim form effectively as well as the process of challenging a benefit decision through the appeals process.

PERFORMING AT THE OLYMPICS

Good luck to Tully Kearney (daughter to Amanda Kearney our Speech and Language Therapist) who was not only runner up in the BBC's Young Sports Personality of the Year Competition but who has also been selected to represent Great Britain's Paralympic swimming team in Rio this September. Tully collected four gold medals in last year's World Championships so hopefully her luck will continue. Well done and good luck - Amanda must be one very proud mom!

Back to the stone age

Through his role as a National School Leader in Education, Mr Whittaker will be sharing his expertise as an outdoor learning specialist with local teachers in association with Lindens School (part of Teaching School Alliance). As the new primary curriculum includes the stone age, Mr Whittaker will be sharing his expertise in ancient technology, fire lighting, archery, foraging & cooking, tool making and much more. It is planned that he will, ultimately, share these skills with primary pupils from the area. Elmwood pupils have already or will be sharing these skills too.



To assist this delivery, the School has purchased a pre-owned tipi to provide a more 'authentic' outdoor classroom.

Elmwood pupils will be enjoying learning the skills of stone masonry too, this will take place during out and about lessons. One resource required to hold the blocks steady is a carpet piece per pupil. Hearnshaws Carpets & Curtains of Walsall have kindly donated two rugs which is very much appreciated and will be put to good use.

Report by Mr D Whittaker, Teacher of Outdoor Learning

GOODBYE TO YEAR 11



Friday 24th June is the official leaving date for our current year 11 students. A celebration assembly is taking place on 22nd June when parents and carers will be able to share their child's journey through Elmwood. Students will be presented with their record of achievement folders as well as a leaving card/gift. To end their time at Elmwood a celebration meal with key staff is due to take place on Tuesday 12th July, which will no doubt be a popular activity! When Marcus visited the office recently he was already saying that he was going to miss School. We wish our young people every success at their future placements, you will be missed.