



ELMWOOD SCHOOL NEWSLETTER JANUARY 2018 – NO. 129

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SING ALONG A CHRISTMAS



What a wonderful show our drama students delivered on Tuesday 19th December 2017. With a mixture of comedy sketches and songs (the majority of which were chosen by students), parents (including Mr Webb's parents), staff and pupils were treated to an hour of excellent entertainment. Pupils regularly stayed after School to practice with staff and their hard work certainly paid off so very well done to Kacey Swayers, Connor Berry, Thomas Carter, Rhys Leach, Callum Roberts-Smith, Tyrone Peakman, Adam Choudhury, Billy Cunningham, Courtney Allport, and Krystian Kastelik. Well done in particular to Kacey Sawyers

who sang beautifully, Connor Berry for his enthusiasm and acting prowess and Thomas Carter for his guitar playing skills. Special thanks also to the staff involved namely Mr Webb, Mr Damms, Ms Bowen, Miss Wilkins and Mr Whittaker. Also a big thank you to Mrs Powers who organised the lovely carpet for the stage courtesy of Carpetright at Bescot and also to Leon Donaldson who kindly videoed the event. We can't wait to see what is planned for the next show. Photographs can be seen on our School website photo gallery page.



CHRISTMAS MEAL



On Wednesday 20th December the whole School enjoyed a Christmas meal together which took a lot of organisation due to how many students and staff were involved (approx. 100). As some of our young people struggle to cope in crowded situations a smaller, quieter, dining area was organised (thanks to Mr Cross) so that they could enjoy the experience. Once again the kitchen staff (Lynne, the

Cook and Teresa, Assistant Cook) produced a turkey or fish dinner with all the trimmings followed by traditional Christmas pudding or other sweet delights. We also warmly welcomed back to help on the day two former students, namely Ethan Parker and Steven Clarke, who have continued with their catering training at College and helped to prepare the food as well as serve. With the option of wearing Christmas jumpers for the meal, there was a lovely display of novelty ones on show. A big thank you also to Lynn Maritza, School Business Manager, who managed to source additional tables and chairs and also to Callum Walker, Year 10 pupil, who organised for everyone to join in singing a Christmas carol at the end of the meal. Mr Hubbard was suitably embarrassed when everyone also joined in singing happy birthday to him. Finally thank you to the pupils who presented gifts at the end of the meal namely Thomas, Tom, Mark, Connor and Krystian.



PANTOMIME VISIT



On Thursday 21st December, 28 lucky pupils and 6 staff were fortunate enough to see Peter Pan at the Birmingham Arena thanks to Ms Mayo who was able to obtain free tickets via the Rotary Club. Students from Years 7-11 who opted to go on the trip enjoyed a fabulous production which featured comedy legend Bradley Walsh as the comical Mr Smee and Spandau Ballet guitarist/EastEnders bad boy and 'Let It Shine' judge Martin Kemp as the fearsome Captain Hook.

Based on the original story by J. M. Barrie, the production brought Peter Pan to life as never before, with a cast of over 100 performers including a team of BMX riders, trapeze artists, and stuntmen – not to mention a 20-foot-long animatronic crocodile! The Jolly Roger pirate ship sailed around three arena stages in front of a 10,000-gallon water wall and with a giant 60 feet-wide LED screen, computer graphic imagery and a live close-up TV-relay ensured audience members never missed a single moment. A big thank you to the parents/carers who forwarded donations which was much appreciated and helped towards the cost of the coach hire which was £225.



COFFEE MORNING EVENT



Parents and Carers were invited not only to watch the Christmas production on the 19th December but also to a coffee morning. An array of cakes were on sale made by students with Ms Shaw during food technology lessons which helped to

raise money for school fund. A big thank you to Suzanne Hill, Parent Governor, who helped out on the day.



CHRISTMAS GIFT

On returning from the lovely Christmas meal pupils discovered a gift waiting under their class Christmas trees.

Selection boxes were purchased through School fund money for each child to take home at the end of term. A big thank you to Stan Canham (husband of Dawn in the office) who had the lovely job of wrapping over 60 boxes.

HELPING THE HOMELESS

As a result of wearing Christmas jumpers, Xmas card donations and the sale of a few ornaments made in DT, we were able to raise £55 for the homeless.



This money was used to help a local organisation called the Homeless Angels who support vulnerable people in the Walsall and Cannock area. Hitting the post Christmas sales, Dawn Canham and her sister purchased reduced Christmas food items, toiletries, fleecy blankets, socks and 20 scarves, gloves and hats reduced to a bargain 89p each were purchased. In addition, as some homeless people enjoy the company of a dog, dog treats were also bought.



The Homeless Angels were thrilled and touched at the generosity shown by the School and have been out sharing the items with those in need. Many thanks to everyone who have helped to make a difference.

STAFFING NEWS

We were pleased to welcome Chris Bowen, English Teacher, back to work following the Christmas break. Chris has been missed by both pupils and staff and he is now settling back into School life.

We are sorry to say however that Grant Hunt, Teaching Assistant in Year 9, was taken ill at the end of term and is likely to be off for work for a few weeks to come. We send Grant our very best wishes for a speedy recovery.

BASKETBALL FOR ALL

Walsall 99ers is the region's leading Basketball coaching programme and is a fantastic opportunity to try basketball. Sessions for adults, juniors and walking basketball are on offer at a variety of local sporting venues. A flyer for these can be found on the Physical Education page on the school website. Students are encouraged to check this page out on a regular basis as it contains a wealth of useful Information from Mr Hawkes, PE Teacher.

AMAZING ATTENDANCE

Congratulations to the following students who achieved 100% attendance for the whole of the Autumn Term. This is a brilliant achievement and was recognised during an assembly on Friday 19th January when they were presented with a Certificate and £5 gift voucher.

Well done to: George Cocking, Year 11, Callum Groom, Year 10, Craig Williamson, Year 8 and Oliver Fletcher, Charlie Haddock, Jack Henworth, Jack Hulse, Rhys Humphries and Swayvon O'Connor in Year 7.

COMMENTS PLEASE

We have introduced a new comments slip for visitors/parents to complete after visiting the School. Any feedback received will help our self review to continually improve and we would therefore appreciate you taking the time and trouble to complete the pro forma. If you do not have time on the day a copy can be found on our School website on the contact us page.

COFFEE MORNING

Please join us for our next coffee morning on Monday 12th February at 10.00 am. You will be warmly welcomed by our Family Welfare Team.

OUT AND ABOUT HAVE BEEN VERY BUSY!



As you will recall Elmwood School achieved gold as part of the Woodland Trusts 'Green School Award'. This is the culmination of a variety of achievements that the School has accomplished, but in the main the planting of 450 sampling trees each year by pupils. Pupils have learnt about sustainable planting and, after collecting their class fir tree from the farm (taking a tree from the earth then give back 15 new trees to the planet), they discussed why we need trees for carbon capture and oxygen as well as links to theme and the war time use of timber which has contributed to the UK having only 8% woodland covering, well below any European country. We also discussed the wind breaking potential of hedges for PE on the School field as well as future foraging potential and wildlife benefits. At the end of term the trees were either donated to pupils and their families or advertised free for collection to the general public. A big thank you to Richard Tranter, Caretaker, for his help with organising this. Report by Mr D Whittaker, Outdoor Learning Teacher

REWARD TRIPS



On Friday 12th January 2018 all pupils enjoyed a gold, silver or bronze reward trip as a result of behaviour points earned during the autumn term. Gold students headed off to Jump Extreme in Tamworth where they not only had fun jumping and



running around but also tucked into a hot meal—Mr Webb certainly looked as if he enjoyed it! Silver students went to Waterworld at Stoke on Trent and Bronze students took to the ice at Silver Blades, Cannock. A big thank you once again to Lynn Maritza, School Business Manager, who organised all the venues and necessary transport to make it possible. A big thank you also to all staff, especially trip leaders, for helping to make the day such a great success.

CIRCUS FUN

We were fortunate to receive 18 tickets from Circus Starr for their Hollywood show on Monday 15th January 2018. Mr Damms (trip leader) together with Mr Webb, Mr Francis and Ms Powers kindly gave up their time after School to accompany pupils. Prior to going to the show the children remained in School and helped to prepare, cook and eat a meal together which not only went down well (pizza/chicken nuggets and french fries) but also helped with social skills. The highlight for many however was when members of staff, Mr Webb and Mr Francis, ended up on the stage which pupils found hilarious (Mr Damms managed to avoid it this year!). Pupils have written thank you letters to Circus Starr so that these can be shared with the Companies/Organisations who pay for the tickets that enable our young people to have such a fantastic experience. The pupils received a lovely letter of thanks back from Circus Starr which is on Our Supporters page of the website together with the letters sent by pupils.

CHARITY FUNDRAISING

Money raised from washing staff cars during Friday afternoon activities last term has now been forwarded to Birmingham Children's Hospital. School Council members voted for this charity to receive our donation of £43.37 which was gratefully received by the Hospital. Hopefully when the weather improves, the buckets and sponges will come out again!

TEACHER TRAINING STUDENTS

Week commencing 15th January we warmly welcomed 33 SCITT students from across the borough as part of our continued work with Barr Beacon and the Evolve Teaching School. Feedback from the students was extremely positive with all having an amazing experience and seeing a different approach to teaching and learning that will support them with their future studies/experiences. A big thank you to all staff and pupils who made the above possible and also to Lynne, the Cook, who made sure they had a delicious lunch.

GERMAN MARKET VISITS

All students had the opportunity to visit the Birmingham German market during out and about lessons at the end of the autumn term. Pupils were able to use their social skills to talk to stall holders and do a little Christmas shopping. Always popular were the food items on sale and the carousel ride

CHANGE4LIFE

In food technology we are promoting the "Change4life" website which encourages children to swap to a healthy 100 calorie snack <https://www.nhs.uk/change4life>. The website gives fun ideas, recipes, top tips and activities to help your child stay healthy. Make a change today with Change4Life! There is also a smart phone app for smart sugar which scans the bar code and your app will tell you how much sugar is in it.

Report by Ms Shaw, Food Technology Teacher