



ELMWOOD SCHOOL NEWSLETTER DECEMBER 2018 – NO. 139

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MESSAGE FROM MR CROSS, ACTING HEADTEACHER

A little message of thanks to all parents/carers for their constant support of me in my position as Acting Headteacher. I am looking forward to a well earned rest and an opportunity to spend time with my family and loved ones. I hope that you all have a restful Christmas break and that you look after each other. Please remember that if there are any challenges over the holiday period please let us know via the school email address or leave a message on the answerphone, that way we can support you and your child on their return to School in January. In addition to this please remind your child that they will have their reward trip to look forward to on Friday 11th January. Christmas greetings to you all.

CHRISTMAS COFFEE MORNING & CONCERT



A big thank you to the parents and carers, together with Governors (and surprise guests members of Mr Webb's family) who were able to make the coffee morning on 18th December. After enjoying a coffee and mince pie, the drama musical group performed a selection of songs chosen by the pupils which was thoroughly enjoyed by all. The above is all made possible thanks to Mr Webb, Mr Damms and Jenna Wilkins who give their free time after school which is much appreciated. Well done to everyone involved in making the event such a great success.

VARIETY CLUB CHRISTMAS PARTY



On 14th December some Year 7 students were chosen to attend the Variety Children's Charity Christmas Party at the Village Hotel in Solihull. Students were involved in entertainment throughout the day such as magic shows, dance competitions and face painting. Students were able to meet Santa and were given presents which they loved! Later they also enjoyed a buffet lunch provided by the



charity event. Ricky won best dancer for his super flossing moves which were noticed by all and got him a minion cuddly toy as his prize! Students behaviour was impeccable and were a credit to Elmwood school. Harry's act of kindness by tying a younger pupil's shoe lace from another school was just an example of the kind youngsters we have at Elmwood School. A very big thank you to the Variety Club for giving our pupils such a memorable, lovely day. Report by Mr Bullock, Year 7 teacher



END OF TERM

A reminder that pupils will break up for the Christmas break on **Friday 21st December at 12.30 pm** and return on Monday 7th January 2019. We wish you all a very happy Christmas and New Year.

STAFFING NEWS

Mr Hubbard and Mr Donaldson continue to be absent from School and we send them our very best wishes.

Ms Tina Lloyd, is supporting Mr Cross by taking on the roll of Acting Deputy and is proving to be a real strength to the School.

Nicole Roberts and Shelli George, supply cover Teaching Assistants, will continue to support in January.

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 will either be 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



Year 7 visit Dudley Zoo



Students in Year 7 were lucky enough to be invited to the Mad Hatter's Christmas event at Dudley Zoo on Friday 30th November. On arrival students were quick to start exploring all of the different animals that were at the Zoo and were constantly asking questions and having debates amongst themselves about the animals and their natural habitats.

Students had the opportunity to meet Santa and were lucky enough to receive a present too! All students thoroughly enjoyed the trip and we thank The Mad Hatter's Charity for giving our pupils this Dudley Zoo experience. Report by Mr Bullock, Year 7 Teacher



DIARY DATES

Unfortunately the pantomime that was scheduled to take place in January has been put back to possibly the summer. The drama team have been so busy focusing on their Christmas concert, more time was needed to ensure another quality production. We will keep you posted.

On 6th February a coffee morning will take place from 9.30 am when all parents and carers are warmly invited to join Bev and James, Family Welfare Officers. The coffee morning will also be attended by our school nurse.

LUCKY STUDENTS

The Early Help Team will be making Christmas extra special for a number of pupils and their siblings following their generosity in providing Christmas gifts. The office filing room has been transformed into Santa's Grotto and each child will be receiving a personalised bag of goodies suggested by our Family Welfare Officers. A very big thank you to the Team who have made this possible, it is so very much appreciated and will help put big smiles on lots of faces.

PROGRESS AND ACHIEVEMENT EVENT

Our Autumn Term progress and achievement event took place on Thursday 13th December when all parents/carers were given appointments to review their child's progress and look at targets for the Spring term. In addition pupils and carers received a copy of their child's autumn term report. A big thank you to the parents and carers who came along (61.9%). It was however disappointing that some parents and carers were unable to attend which is upsetting for the pupils concerned. For future reference our Spring Term date is Thursday 4th April 2019 and the Summer Term date is Thursday 11th July 2019 Please try and support your child's progress at Elmwood School. If you are unable to make the set date, staff may be able to accommodate seeing you on an alternative day. Thank you to Ms Shaw, Food Technology Teacher, for organising the refreshments which was much appreciated.

GOVERNOR NEWS

At the autumn termly meeting of the Governing Body held on Thursday 29th November, Ms Brandwood kindly agreed to continue as Chair of Governors. Ms Brandwood has done an amazing job over the last year and is a great asset to the Governing Body.

We are also pleased to announce that Mrs Tuckwell-Allen was appointed Vice Chair of Governors. Mrs Tuckwell-Allen will be a great support to the Chair and is also very supportive of the School.

A big thank you to Mrs Burley, former Vice Chair, for her support and commitment.

TOO MUCH CHOICE!

Pupils in Year 9 recently enjoyed making healthy breakfast choices in food technology lessons with Bal Shabhir, supply Food Technology Teacher. As you can see from the picture, Billy was spoilt for choice.



Fröhliche Weihnachten!

Once again the German Christmas Market has come back to Birmingham city centre and Elmwood pupils have had the opportunity to go and experience this amazing cultural festival during their 'Out & About' lessons.

The variety of stalls has given the pupils and Mr Holmes as well as Mr Whittaker the opportunity to try traditional German festive foods such as filled pretzels, crepes and Bratwurst hot dogs. Staff and pupils also got to look at the stalls selling traditional wooden toys, Christmas candles and decorations, hats and jewellery.

Items purchased by pupils included keyrings, secret Christmas gifts for family members (sorry cannot say anymore) and even the odd harmonica or two!

All classes have been well behaved, polite to the stall holders and a credit to Elmwood. We would like to also add a special well done to those pupils who don't like being in unfamiliar environments with lots of other people, as they all coped tremendously well.

Last but never least, a big thank you to all of the Teaching Assistants who have accompanied the pupils, making these trips possible and run so smoothly.

Report by Mr Holmes, Outdoor Learning Teacher

CALLUM'S EPIC TRIP

Callum, one of our Year 11 pupils, is attempting to complete a 75 mile bike ride challenge in aid of Embrace (Child Victims of Crime <https://embracecvoc.org.uk>). He is anticipating that this will take him eight hours to complete and he will be using his morning activity time, social time and his ASDAN Wider Key Skills lessons to help complete the challenge. He has contacted other local Special Schools to help him achieve his target of raising £50.00 for this good cause. We will keep you posted on his progress and of course any donations will be gratefully appreciated! Callum began his epic trip week commencing 10th December 2018. We wish him every success.



WELCOMING TREE

Mr Whittaker, Head of outdoor learning, has certainly brightened up the front of School with this creative wooden tree. Thanks to help from Rhys Leach in Year 9, who did the painting, the tree looks amazing. Well done to all involved.

CHRISTMAS GIFTS

Pupils had a lovely surprise waiting for them in class following the whole School Christmas meal on Wednesday 19th December 2018. Thanks to our school fund account, a selection box gift was purchased for every child. A big thank you to Stan, husband to Dawn in the office who once again wrapped the parcels (no mean feat with over 70 to do!).

CHRISTMAS RAFFLE



Well done to James Hawkins, Family Welfare Officer, who has been busy sourcing prizes for our Christmas raffle. A very big thank you to the following Companies for their kind donations:

- Now Education—Amazon Echo dot
- SEN Central—Tower of treats
- Blakemore Foundation—£25 hamper donation
- Francesco Group, Walsall—cut and finish
- Dudley Zoo—2 child entrance complimentary tickets
- Wolverhampton Grand Theatre—half price tickets for Sleeping Beauty Pantomime
- Tesco Walsall—Amazon Echo Dot
- Better Gym, Walsall Wood—one month membership for 2

The prize draw was held on Tuesday 18th December and a list of prize winners is available on our School website (Charity fundraising page), well done to the lucky winners, enjoy your prizes. As a result of the above, we have been able to raise £348.82 for school funds, which is fantastic. Many thanks for all those who supported our fundraiser; especially Mr Hawkins for all his hard work and Suzanne Hill, Parent Governor, who sold over £70 worth of raffle tickets—what a star!