



ELMWOOD SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2025 – NO. 209

www.elmwood.walsall.sch.uk

Year 7 Geography Fieldwork Trip



On Tuesday 1st April, Year 7 pupils were given a fantastic opportunity to participate in geographical learning outside of the classroom, and utilise skills previously learnt in lessons to different situations and activities. This trip will allow pupils to use cross curricular skills, particularly maths and science but

also prepare pupils for their upcoming fieldwork topic in geography!



When we first arrived at Bishops Wood, we settled into our classroom for the day and was told the exciting activities that were planned for us. In the morning we began our fieldwork trip with random sampling where we were searching for different varieties of insects across a 10m x 10m grid. Pupils were very inquisitive to understand the names of creatures and to understand their different habitats.



After lunch, we went to a different area of the woods to trial orienteering using six-figure grid references. Pupils were utilising their map skills to work their way through the woods using landmarks for navigation. At each point, pupils were understanding the effects of climate change on different areas of the world and different species across the globe.

We concluded our day back in the classroom and consolidated learning in preparation for geography lessons to come.



Pupils highlighted outstanding teamwork throughout the day, they were working with staff and pupils from other year 7 groups and were able to share responsibilities between themselves. Moreover, pupils were respectful to our leader at Bishops Wood, asking enlightening and deep thought provoking questions to enrich our understanding and pupils were eager to learn more! Many pupils were resilient in conquering fears today, spiders, the outdoors, reading aloud in groups and touching many insects! All pupils highlighted true Elmwood values and should be very proud of themselves for their conduct and behaviour, definitely a credit to Elmwood School!

Thank you to the wonderful staff that accompanied the trip and ensured all pupils were enjoying the day out!

More photographs are available on the school website, photo gallery page.

Report by Miss Rose, Humanities Teacher



STAFFING NEWS

A warm welcome to Bella Ryder who joined the team on Monday 31st March assisting

Lynne the Cook in the kitchen for a couple of hours each day. Due to the number of pupils now on roll, this extra help has been gratefully received by Lynne who has been doing a sterling job on her own for a long time. Bella is soon settling in and enjoying being part of the Elmwood team.

PARENT GOVERNOR POST

We are pleased to confirm that Carli Jones (mom to a Year 10 and Year 11 pupils) has been successful in being elected as a parent governor. Commiserations to Scott Paddock, dad to a Year 8 pupil, who came a very close runner up with the votes 11 v 9.

Due to the school having a proposed conversion date of the 1.9.25, the position may only be for the summer term but we hope that Carli enjoys the experience.

The summer termly meeting of the governing body is on Thursday 5th June when Carli will be warmly welcomed by the team.

EASTER TREAT

When pupils returned from their reward trip on Friday 11th April, they found another treat with an Easter egg waiting for them. These were purchased through our private school fund account and were very gratefully received by pupils.

Outdoor Learning at Kingswood Charity Trust Centre

Our Year 8 pupils swapped the classroom for the countryside as they took part in an outdoor education trip to the Kingswood Charity Trust Centre in Shropshire. The visit was packed with activities that encouraged teamwork and problem-solving.



The day began with pond dipping. Armed with nets and trays the pupils explored the Centre's pond and discovered ten newts, along with other pond life. The blindfold course brought lots of laughter as pupils guided each other around obstacles using only verbal instructions. Even the staff got involved, albeit that some staff made it incredibly challenging for their colleagues. Next up was orienteering, where small groups navigated the scenic grounds using maps and compasses. This tested their communication and teamwork skills, as well as their ability to stay calm under pressure.



Then was the animal care session, where pupils got the chance to meet and care for a variety of friendly animals, including rabbits and guinea pigs. This was most likely the highlight of the day for most of our children.

Throughout the day, the pupils worked together brilliantly, supporting one another and making the most of every moment. It was a fantastic opportunity to learn new skills and build friendships. I for one really relished the opportunity to work with the year 8s out of the traditional classroom environment. My personal highlight was one of our pupils saying how it was one of the best outdoor trips they've been on in the school.



Another highlight of the day was the visit to the Anderson air raid shelter, where pupils learned about World War II history. They experienced what it was like to take shelter during air raids, gaining valuable insights into the lives of people during the war. This immersive experience helped pupils appreciate the significance of historical events and the resilience of those who lived through them.

Our pupils had wonderful things to say about their visit to Kingswood Centre. Here are some of their comments:

"I loved pond dipping! Finding newts was so cool, and I learned a lot about the creatures living in the water."

"The blindfold trail was my favourite. It was fun to trust my friends and work together to get through the obstacles."

"Feeding the animals was amazing. I never knew guinea pigs could be so cute!"

"Orienteering was like a treasure hunt. It was exciting to use the map and find the hidden spots."

"The air raid shelter was really interesting. It made me think about what people went through during the war."

A big thank you to all the staff that helped to facilitate the learning and experiences gained in the day, we look forward to future trips at the Kingswood Centre.

More photographs are available on the school website, photo gallery page.

Report by Mr Hawkes, Assistant Head and Stacey Urmson, Teaching Assistant

UNDER THE SPOTLIGHT

This month our featured member of staff under the spotlight is Michael O'Callaghan, Teacher.



How long have you worked at Elmwood? *I have only technically been working at Elmwood since September 2024, but I was fortunate enough to complete my last term of training here in the summer term prior.*

What do you love about your job? *I love the fact that every day is different and that I get to be a part of our wonderful young people's journey.*

What films have you watched recently? *I have watched Midas Man which was all about Brian Epstein who some called 'the fifth Beatle'. I have also watched A Complete Unknown which is a biopic about the great Bob Dylan.*

Favourite Holiday? *My favourite holiday is anywhere with my family. I am particularly fond of Cornwall and Krakow in Poland though.*

Tell us something that people would be surprised to hear? *I once met Sir Clive Woodward (ex England Rugby Manager) and even got paid by O2 for the privilege. He gave me some great advice that has stuck with me, "Always TCUP", which stands for think correctly under pressure.*

PUPIL UNDER THE SPOTLIGHT

Our pupil under the spotlight this month is Lily May Prescott in Year 10 so a big thank you to Lily for her responses.

What do you like most about coming to Elmwood School? *The opportunities it gives you—social and educational skills.*

Have you any thoughts about what you might like to do after leaving Elmwood? *I would like to go to college and after work with kids who struggle.*

In your spare time, what do you most like to do? *I either go to football or gym and out with friends.*

If you could go anywhere or do anything, what would you choose? *I would go to Egypt and do quad biking on the sand dunes.*

READING RAFFLE PRIZE DRAW

The spring term reading raffle draw took place on Friday 11th April.

The two lucky winners from the 52 entries were Zachary Page in Year 7 and Brandon Holland in Year 9.

Both boys received a £10 Amazon gift voucher as their prize.

Many congratulations to both boys and commiserations to all the other entrants.

Good luck for next time and remember you have to be in it to win it.

MORE POSITIVE FEEDBACK

We recently welcomed Caitlin Kilgallen, John Taylor SCITT student, to Elmwood School and wanted to share the positive email that she sent following her experience:

I had a great time at Elmwood for my SEND placement, and it was great to have lots of opportunity to get stuck in with PE, a variety of subjects and interact with the different year groups and getting to know the pupils.

All the staff were very welcoming, and I felt very comfortable helping out and asking any questions. It was also lovely to see how supportive all the staff are to each other especially when observing the check in at the end of the day.

We are always happy to support students as part of their training and wish Caitlin all the best for the future.

KEY STAGE 3 VISIT TO GO APE ON 4.4.25



Our recent visit to Go Ape was an incredible experience for all the pupils and staff. We are thrilled to share that many of the pupils faced and conquered their fears of heights with remarkable courage. Throughout the various courses, the pupils demonstrated immense support and encouragement for one another, creating a positive and uplifting environment. The day was filled with exciting activities, including zip-lining, rope bridges, and treetop obstacles. Each pupil had the opportunity to challenge themselves and push their limits in a safe and controlled setting. The zip-lining was particularly popular, with many pupils overcoming initial apprehensions and enjoying the exhilarating ride through the trees. The rope bridges and treetop obstacles required teamwork and communication, fostering a sense of unity and collaboration among the pupils



Despite the fun, the pupils faced several challenges. Some pupils initially struggled with the height and complexity of the obstacles, but with the encouragement of their peers and staff, they persevered and completed the courses. There were moments of hesitation and fear, especially on the higher platforms and more difficult rope bridges. However, the supportive atmosphere helped them to overcome these obstacles, building their confidence and resilience. It was heartwarming to see how well the pupils mixed with each other, forming new friendships, and strengthening existing ones. The teamwork displayed were truly inspiring, and we are all proud of how they all came together to make this adventure a memorable and enriching experience.



More photographs are available on the school website, photo gallery page.

A big thank you to Mrs Francis, Deputy Head, for organising this fabulous event and also to Waj at NA cars, for his help in providing additional transport.

Report by Stacey Urmson, Teaching Assistant

TESCO FRESH FRUIT AND VEG SCHEME UPDATE

We continue to benefit from the generous grant from Tesco in which pupils have access to fruit and veg every day. This grant has had a positive impact on pupils behaviour as well as providing pupils a real breadth of different fruit and vegetables to try - without the worry of wasting money. Here are a selection of quotes:

"Pupils love the baby cucumbers, they have always disappeared by the end of Monday"

"A lot of the pupils are grateful that they have had the opportunity to try new fruits/veggies that they would not normally have at home"

"The fruit is yummy and starts my morning off nice."

"I cannot get her to eat fruit, I can now give her fruit at home."

We have been approved by Tesco to continue to provide this opportunity into the summer term 2025 and beyond into the next academic year - the new Year 7's will be blown away by this amazing offer.

Report by Mr Cross, Headteacher