



# ELMWOOD SCHOOL NEWSLETTER JANUARY 2021 – NO. 162

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## CHRISTMAS LUNCH

The Christmas lunch on Tuesday 15th December went ahead as planned even though pupil and staff numbers were significantly reduced. Pupils and staff looked very festive in their Christmas tops.



As always Lynne the Cook ensured that a delicious turkey meal or fish pie followed by Christmas pudding to those who like it, was served. Unfortunately, due to COVID, we were unable to sit as a whole school to enjoy the experience and pupils/staff ate in their own bubble areas. Mr Cross, Headteacher, and Lynn/Dawn from the office shared their lunch in the library which was kindly decorated by Ms Shaw, Food Technology Teacher.



Lynne the Cook was presented with a thank you gift for all her hard work and a big thank you to all staff who ensured that everyone had a great time.

## CHRISTMAS OUT AND ABOUT VISITS

As you will be aware, we were unable to visit the Birmingham German Market this year. As an alternative venue, we visited the Hollybush Garden Centre near Cannock.

Pupils enjoyed seeing the ghost carp and sturgeon as well as other pond fish. We also got to see some of the pet animals and were fascinated by the leaf cutter ants. One group bought two new fish for the science room aquarium. Naturally, pupils enjoyed their visit to the sweet shop and were also treated to hot doughnuts.



Pupils have also enjoyed their visit to the farm to collect their class Christmas tree. Its always an event to see the pigs, piglets, cows, calves and donkeys which the pupils enjoyed.

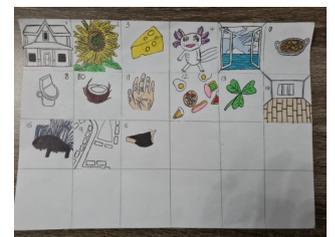


Report by Mr Whittaker,  
Head of Outdoor Learning

## WORKING HARD AT HOME



Callum in Year 9 has been very busy whilst self isolating at home. He challenged himself to draw a transformer with lots of detail. He has also been working on one of the DT challenges from the school website; has started reading Macbeth (as also recommended on the school website) as well as looking at other websites to help him understand. He has also tried to complete three tasks that are on Literacy planet as well as joining in other activities including baking, playing outdoors,



playing board games and watching movies. Callum has also been expertly looking after Hetty, the class hamster, which he is really enjoying doing.



Well done Callum on such excellent achievements.

### HOME LEARNING

For parents and carers who have chosen not to take up the school offer and are keeping their child at home during the latest period of national lockdown, a reminder that there is a variety of work and activities for pupils to access on the school website either on the pupil information or self isolation pages. In addition to this paper activities are also being produced for pupils to complete.

To support pupils and parents, Mr Hawkes, Assistant Head, has completed three videos to navigate you through the school website. This will hopefully reduce further anxieties and stresses for you all and provide you with a variety of enriching activities to support your child's academic progress as well as their social and emotional wellbeing. This approach is based on the feedback from parents / carers from the first national lockdown and build upon our home learning offer.

Staff are also completing weekly safe and well visits to pupils not in school which often include a walk outdoors, so please use these visits to pass on any queries or concerns that you may have with regards to your child.

### STAFFING NEWS

Unfortunately Grant Hunt, teaching assistant in pathways, is not able to return to school at the moment for health reasons. We send Grant our best wishes and look forward to seeing him back in school when he is able to do so.

Julie Burnell, cleaner, has been in the wars again and injured her knee in a fall. We wish Julie a speedy recovery and hope to see her back on her feet soon.

David Gould, Teacher, is currently working in transition base on supply and is settling in well and forging good relationships with both pupils and staff.

### AUTUMN TERM ATTENDANCE ACHIEVERS

Despite the challenges pupils have faced during the autumn term with regards to Coronavirus, we are pleased to confirm that 19 pupils achieved 100% attendance for the whole of the academic year—this is the same number as the previous autumn term which is amazing.

Many congratulations to:

Connor Berry, Re'Shea P, Charlie Haddock, Courtney Allport, Alice Dewsbury, Sennen Gregory, Jake Hall, Miles Hall, Isabella Hough, Jack Hulse, Rhys Humphries, Joseph Jenkins, Kayden Cox, Swayvon O'Connor, Jack Poxon, Carson Price, Mark Reddington, Logan Gosling and Craig Williamson.

Well done to all students on this achievement who were presented with a £5 gift voucher in recognition of this either when in school or sent by post to home.

### PROGRESS AND ACHIEVEMENT EVENT

A big thank you to all parents and carers who were able to take part in a telephone consultation to discuss their child's progress and achievement during the autumn term. During these conversations staff were able to discuss the contents of their child's autumn term report, set targets and action any concerns/points raised.

The overall figures were consultations for 68/71 pupils equating to 95.7%, which is a brilliant result and a school record. For information, the spring term event will take place on Wednesday 31st March 2021 and, depending on the situation at that time, may also need to be held via phone consultation.

### HEALTH AND SAFETY CLOSURE DAYS

**A reminder that any pupils currently attending school that the school will be closed for health and safety training from Wednesday 10th February. Pupils will therefore return after the half term break on Monday 22nd February 2021.**

## SERVICE TO OTHERS

After a great deal of organising, with exchange of risk assessments for gardening tool use and Covid 19 protocols, pupils were able to visit Aldridge Airfield, just down the road. to offer some 'service to others' as part of their Character Education, Care for Others and also practicing the out and about virtue of altruism.



For a number of years Year 7 pupils have been allowed to harvest a pole from the woods at Aldridge (with special permission from the Ranger), in which they carve their name into to subsequently use for our adventure treks during out and about.

I felt it was time we offered some substantial work in return. We have litter picked at various sites for the Ranger in the past, but this time we have really got stuck into a project and I have to say that the pupils have really engaged and done a sterling job, given the short time there, lower numbers and only 3 visits, one with just one pupil.



The Rangers, Richard and Tom, intend to reinstate the Forest School area next to the hangar and eventually invite pupils from local Schools and redress some of the 'nature deficit disorder' that has occurred for many young people prior to, but certainly during the pandemic.

The area in the foreground of the photo was covered in thick moss and brambles, as thick as that seen in the background and needed loppers to release them from their thick roots and then rakes and spades to lift the carpets of matted roots to an area for

them to compost down.

We plan to perform some litter picking, elsewhere, (pickers, gloves and with appropriate risk assessment/briefing) post February half term and return to work at the Forest School area after Easter.



Well done and thank you to everyone involved, including pupils and TAs! Report by Mr Whittaker, Head of Outdoor Learning

## LITTER CONCERN



Jack in Year 10 was dismayed at the amount of litter on our walk around the urban park recently so this week we collected litter using the pickers. Jack really enjoyed it and we plan to collect from the areas of the big open space that we didn't get to do on a future visit.

Report by Mr Whittaker, Head of Outdoor Learning.

## NEWS FROM FOOD TECHNOLOGY

Every January is a time for food technology to join forces with Tesco and pupils have been making some very tasty dishes to celebrate Veganuary. We have been discovering options to replace animal products and alternative protein sources with products such as soya chunks, textured vegetable protein and plant based food. What started as a "Ewwww I don't do vegetables" to a "mmmmm nom, nom, nom these vegan burgers are delicious, you can't tell they are vegetables!!"



As always a wee celebration took place to remember Burns Night and yes with a vegan haggis as well. Pupils made haggis stacks as well as traditional haggis, neeps and tatties. Owen and Sammy in Year 9 could not wait to tuck into their dishes.

Report by Ms Shaw, Food Technology Teacher

## COURSES AVAILABLE FOR PARENTS AND CARERS BY WALSALL HEALTHCARE

A variety of courses are being run by Walsall Health Care and are available free of charge for Walsall parents and carers. These include:

- Understanding your pregnancy (including a version for women couples)
- Understanding your baby
- Understanding your child
- Understanding your child (0-19+ yrs) (main course)
- Understanding your child with additional needs (main course)
- Understanding your teenager's brain (short course)
- Understanding your brain (for teenagers only)
- Understanding your child's feelings (short, taster course) COMING SOON

To access any of these courses please go to [www.inourplace.co.uk](http://www.inourplace.co.uk).

The code to use once on the website to enable free access is WALSAPARENT

If you have any problems or queries, please contact Bev Bailey, Family Welfare Officer.

## OUT AND ABOUT HOME LEARNING PACKS



Mr Whikttaker, Head of Outdoor Learning, has put together a number of activity packs for pupils to complete whilst they are home learning.



The packs include making a nail art heart, a bird feeder, knot making, a weather project and clap for heroes. All items to make the kits are provided including birdseed, paper, wood, nails etc. The activity sheets are also available on the self isolation page of the website.

We would love to see any of the completed items so please send in any pictures to either Mr Hawkes, [mhawkes@elmwood.walsall.sch.uk](mailto:mhawkes@elmwood.walsall.sch.uk) who can share on our twitter feed or to [dcanham@elmwood.walsall.sch.uk](mailto:dcanham@elmwood.walsall.sch.uk) for inclusion in future newsletters.  
Happy making.



## CLEARING THE DECKS

As a result of the adverse weather recently, school had to close on Monday 25th January for safety reasons.



School staff arrived bright and early on Tuesday 26th January to make sure that the snow was cleared ahead of pupils arriving.



A big thank you to everyone who helped to achieve this; it was a good work out for Lynn in the office who was also celebrating her birthday.

Jack Hulse in Year 10 made a fantastic snow sculpture during an out and about visit with Adam Mitchell, TA on the 26th January. Well done Jack, it looks 'cool'.



## CHICKEN CARE



Cole in Year 7 helped Mr Cross, Headteacher on 26.1.21 when he helped tend to the chickens.

Our two chickens were in need of some tender loving care

following the snowy weather and Cole helped with the cleaning out and making sure the two chickens had some fuss.

Cole was rewarded with a newly laid egg which he was able to take home and enjoy.



## READING RAFFLE

The autumn draw took place on Wednesday 27th January 2021 for the reading raffle prize of a £10 Amazon Gift Voucher.

All pupils who read the requisite number of sessions receive a raffle ticket which goes into the end of term draw. A video showing Mr Cross making the draw is available on the school website with Theo in Year 10b and Connor B in Year 8b being the lucky winners. Well done to both boys.

## ELMWOOD SCHOOL PANTOMIME

ONCE UPON A TIME a girl named Cinderella lived with her stepmother and two stepsisters. Poor Cinderella had to work hard all day long so the others could rest. It was she who had to wake up each morning when it was still dark and cold to start the fire.

Thus begins one of the most famous folk tales of all time.

At Elmwood pupils will be watching a pantomime version brought into the classrooms. In addition, by going to the English section on the self isolation challenges page which can be found at the top of the school website, our pupils and families at home can also enjoy a pantomime in their own homes! Will you cheer on Buttons and Cinderella to reach Prince Charming's Ball? Report by Mr Bowen, Head of English