



ELMWOOD SCHOOL NEWSLETTER MARCH 2021 – NO. 164

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UNDER THE SPOTLIGHT

A new feature in our newsletters that Mr Hawkes, Assistant Headteacher, has introduced is a spotlight article on a member of staff. This month the staff member is James Hawkins, Family Support Officer.



How long have you worked at Elmwood

4 Years

What do you love about your job?

What I love about my Job and working at Elmwood is the sense of family and community around the school.

What film have you watched recently?

I recently watched The Chronicles of Narnia: The Voyage of the Dawn Treader. I only watched it as there was nothing else on.. my opinion is that none of the Chronicles of Narnia films make any sense.

What was your favourite holiday?

The Island of KOS. It was a beautiful place. We went on an excursion to a little village at the top of mount Zia and had a sunset dinner. The views were breath-taking.

Tell us something that people would be surprised to hear?

Most people are surprised to hear I have two grown up children age 20 and 17.

SCHOOL MEAL INCREASE

Due to food cost increases and the effects of Brexit, the catering services department at Walsall Council will be increasing the cost of paid school meals from 1st April 2021. The price of a school meal will rise by 10p per meal to £2.05 (£10.25 per week).

Can parents and carers please be mindful of this increase when paying for their child's school meals to Lynne the Cook ; Lynne does an excellent job in providing our pupils and staff with such tasty meals.

HELP A CHILD TO LEARN CAMPAIGN

The school has been successful in its bid for the 'help a child to learn' campaign' via the Walsall NEU working party (thanks to Mr Whittaker), who have agreed to gift the school £200 to help to fund their project.

We are very grateful to the NEU who nationally have raised over 1 million pounds in their 'help a child to learn' campaign; in addition Walsall NEU have donated over £5000 to schools for projects. Staff will be purchasing suitable items for pupils with this additional funding over the coming weeks.

EASTER GIFTS



As is tradition, we like to provide our pupils with a sweet treat at Easter time. This year pupils have had a change from traditional Easter eggs with an Easter goody bag of chocolates. Happy eating—we hope they go down well. A reminder that pupils return to school after the Easter break which starts from Monday 29th March on Monday 19th April 2021.

GOVERNOR NEWS PARENT GOVERNOR POST



As previously mentioned the term of office for Suzanne Hill, one of our parent governors, came to an end on 16th March 2021.

Following the appeal for a new parent or carer to join the governing body, we are pleased to confirm that Sarah Thornton, mom to Adam in Year 8, was the successful applicant for the post.

Sarah's appointment took effect from 17th March 2021 and will run to 16th March 2025 and we look forward to welcoming Sarah to her first meeting. Due to the current COVID situation, meetings are taking place remotely but hopefully by the summer term, face to face meetings will be able to resume.

A big thank you to Sarah for supporting the School and we hope she enjoys the experience.

WORLD BOOK DAY—THURSDAY 4TH MARCH 2021



Elmwood School celebrated World Book Day this year in style. Pupils and staff joined in by wearing pyjamas and onesies for the day. One pupil even came to school as a war hero dressed in army gear head to toe. Our Head of English, Mr Bowen created a whole school book quiz which tutors completed with pupils in the morning. This was able to highlight the importance of reading and allowing staff to share the titles of their favourite books.



The SLT created a "masked reader" challenge, whereby each member of the team wore a virtual mask and read their favourite book. Pupils then had to work out who was reading the book, what the title of the book was and who was the author. Walking around the school in the morning it became clear how difficult it was to guess the masked reader. I think the SLT had fantastic disguises which included a frog, a sloth, Yoda, an egg and a blueberry. Some groups were able to correctly identify the book title and author of at least 2 of the masked readers. We look forward to the masked reader 2, which we hope to launch again next year.

Report by Mr M Hawkes, Assistant Headteacher



PUPIL REPORT ON WORLD BOOK DAY

World Book Day at Elmwood School is such a fun experience. The pupils and teachers joined in to dress in their pyjamas and onesies. World Book Day is a time to enjoy yourselves and dress up as your favourite book characters.

My favourite book is Diary of a Wimpy Kid. I didn't dress up as the character Greg Heffley, I chose to come to school in my Simpsons onesie. World Book Day changes lives through reading and sharing your book to the world.

Reading is for pleasure and gaining better English skills. What I learned a long time ago is that when you read your brain grows bigger which helps you with a lot more things like for example, writing a story or a book report.

World Book Day at Elmwood School is so fun and brings you closer to other people and even though a pandemic [a virus outbreak] is going around infecting people; we at Elmwood School didn't let that spoil our fun.

Report done by Swayvon, Year 10 pupil at Elmwood School

BACK TO SCHOOL NEWSLETTER FROM WEST MIDLANDS POLICE

A copy of the above is available on the safeguarding information page for parents and carers which you may find of interest. The Hollie Guard app is useful as the app can trace movements and it alerts your main contact when a pupil may feel in danger.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

This annual event took place on Monday 8th March 2021 with this topic also being covered by pupils during their Votes for Schools platform when this year's theme of #ChooseToChallenge was discussed. During lessons pupils focused on the gender biases we all encounter in our day-to-day lives and discussed the question: "Does gender bias cause problems for everyone?"

STAFFING NEWS

Unfortunately both Grant Hunt, teaching assistant and Julie Burnell, cleaner, have not yet been able to return to work. We send them our very best wishes and hope to see them soon.

Many congratulations to Adam Mitchell, teaching assistant, who became a dad for the first time on Sunday 14th March 2021—what a great gift for Mother's Day.

Interviews took place on Monday 15th March 2021 for an additional English teacher from September. We are pleased to confirm that the successful candidate was Charlotte Clarke, teaching assistant at the school who has been completing an ITT course in English. Well done Charlotte.

ACTS OF KINDNESS

Once again 4 Steps to a Smile have come to the rescue and supported the school. Having been contacted by James Hawkins, Family Support Worker, Linda Sandhar-Haynes from the organisation was asked for assistance with the purchase of an item for a pupil, they instantly pledged their help and made the request possible.

We are extremely grateful for 4 Steps to a Smile's help and support—THANK YOU.

Also a big thank you to Mr Bullock's mom who kindly came into school and did a pamper session with one of our female pupils making her feel very special.

ANOTHER BUSY TIME IN FOOD TECH LESSONS



Year 7s were welcomed back into food tech lessons with the making of a creamy Irish potato, cabbage and onion dish called colcannon, Year 8s made a very tasty Kerry apple cake topped with a sprinkling of brown sugar and nutmeg, Year 9s made a very warming dish called Dublin coddle made with bacon, sausages,

potatoes and onions which is left to stew on the hob until a nice thick dish has formed. Years 10 and 11 made an Irish soda bread with the Dublin coddle and colcannon for their BTEC lessons to celebrate St Patrick's Day on 17th March 2021.



Challenge week was all about pupils discovering what is involved in the design process when it come to the manufacturing of food; scenarios were set to challenge all the pupils if they could produce a range of healthy muffins to sell at a local ice rink, small bakery and for a local football club.

Then came the serious business of using chocolate in cooking, discovering the origins of chocolate and being able to use the very skilful method of using silicone moulds to make Easter eggs, making little bird's nests with the eggs placed in them, celebrating that the egg is start of new life, welcoming Spring and another exciting term in food tech technology.

Happy Easter everyone. Report by Ms Shaw, Food Technology Teacher

HETTY THE HAMSTER

After being loved and cared for by Callum Wilkinson in Year 9, Hetty the hamster has finally returned to school.

A big thank you to both Callum and his mom for taking such good care of Hetty since before Christmas—you have done an amazing job as seen by the photos in January's newsletter.

Also a big thank you also to Kerry Bowen, Teaching Assistant, for the flowers and chocolates that she passed onto mom in recognition of the above.