



ELMWOOD SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2023 – NO. 185

www.elmwood.walsall.sch.uk

Out and About visit to 'The Lock up'



Pupils have had a great learning opportunity and fun at the West Midland's Police Museum this half term. As well as seeing inside the cells and experiencing how conditions have changed from using buckets as toilets when the police station was first built in Victorian times, to metal in cell toilets, when the cells ceased use in 2016.



Pupils saw displays of the history of policing, which included uniforms (which they were able to try on), tasers, handcuffs, breathalyzers, stingers, speed cameras, a model of a police horse, bicycles and motorbikes, fingerprinting, tape recording interviews, DNA, corporal punishment, honoured police officers, the Peaky Blinders, forensics and a genuine police box (as in the tardis).



Everyone learnt a lot and found the whole experience arresting!

Report by Mr Whittaker, Head of Outdoor Learning

COFFEE MORNING EVENT



On Friday 27th January, Elmwood hosted their first coffee morning of the year. The aim was for local partners to introduce themselves to parents/carers and discuss what services are available to support families in the local community. As you can see, a few of our new Year 7 parents were very engaged.

Thank you to SENDIAS, school nursing, HAF team and Sarah Tapscott - Early Help Locality Officer, for giving up a few hours of their time on a Friday morning.

Miss Pow's BTEC cooking group were excellent hosts, as usual, serving up refreshments.

Thank you to Reece Oxford, school ambassador, for collecting parents and showing them around school.

Well done to Charlie Anne and Ellie in 10b for making cakes and biscuits on the day and showcasing their talents.

A big shout out to Dawn in the office for organising the tea, coffee and biscuits.

Report by Jo Hughes, Family Support Assistant



STAFFING NEWS

Bev Bailey, Family Welfare Officer, was able to return to work for the odd day prior to the half term break and will be returning full time on 27.2.23. A warm welcome back to Bev, you have been missed.

Staff and pupils were also pleased to see Grant Hunt, Teaching Assistant, return on 14.2.23 following his recent admission to hospital.

Mr Bullock, PE Teacher, is hoping to return after the half term break following his recent accident, which is also good to hear.

THANK YOU

A big thank you to Lynne the cook who did a fantastic job on Wednesday 31st January in preparing not one, but two, school lunches. Lynne kindly prepared packed lunches for all pupils in receipt of a free school meal for Wednesday 1st February when the school was closed due to industrial action by teachers.

A big thank you also to parents/carers for their support during this closure day.

Lynne was also a star on 9th February when she came in to work extra early to prepare packed lunches for the pupils heading off to Kidzania in London.

UNDER THE SPOTLIGHT

This month our featured member of staff under the spotlight is Jo Hughes, Teaching Assistant, Medical TA and part time Family Support Worker.



How long have you worked at Elmwood? *Over 5 years now.*

What do you love about your job? *Making a difference and that no two days are ever the same. I have recently taken on an additional role supporting Bev as a Family Support Assistant and I am loving the challenge. My drive and passion are to support the mental wellbeing and pastoral care of all students and their extended families as necessary. I have trained as Early Help Lead to support our Elmwood community to achieve the best outcomes.*

What films have you watched recently? *Rewatched Top Gun - love the film and the soundtrack and recently watched The Rig on Prime. Gripping drama!*

Favourite Holiday? *Most definitely must be Mexico - I love the food anyway and we spent a lot of time touring around the Mayan temples, pyramids and swimming in the cenotes. A cenote is a natural sinkhole filled with freshwater and has the clearest water in the world. Highlight though was watching the baby turtles hatch on the beach and swimming with the whale sharks!!*

Tell us something that people would be surprised to hear? *I played wing defence for my high school netball team and we were Staffordshire County Champions.*

SASSY SWIMMING LESSONS

Please find below information about some new Sassy Sensory Swimming and Sports sessions that are going to be starting in February. These sessions are funded by Walsall Short Breaks and started on Sunday 4th February at Bloxwich active living centre. These sessions will run monthly for children with special educational needs and disabilities in Walsall. It is anticipated the demand for these sessions will be high so they are kindly asking if you could book one session per month, either the swimming session or the sports session.

Both sessions will be relaxed and will have sensory elements for the children to explore in a safe, tailored environment and siblings are most welcome. For booking, please see below the links.

Sassy Sports Session - <https://buytickets.at/sassysensorysurprises/835526>

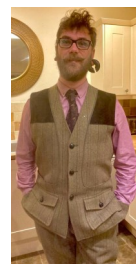
Sassy Relaxed pool session - <https://buytickets.at/sassysensorysurprises/835531>

MENTAL HEALTH WEEK

Children's Mental Health Week 2023 took place from 6-12th February 2023. This year's theme was Let's Connect. Let's Connect is about making meaningful connections. People thrive in communities, and this connection is vital for our wellbeing. When we have healthy connections – to family, friends and others – this can support our mental health and our sense of wellbeing.

For Children's Mental Health Week 2023, we encouraged people to connect with others in healthy, rewarding and meaningful ways.

Pupils and staff took part in a Dress to Express day and were encouraged to wear something that expresses their personality (Mr Cross looked very much the country gent!). As part of Feel Good Friday pupils discussed the still face and eye contact experiments and how they impact human connection.



Here are other ways you can stay connected to family and friends over the half term holidays,

- Spending time outdoors with friends
- Sending a loved one a letter
- Talking to someone on the phone
- Doing a class or activity with a family member

Report by Mr Hawkes, Assistant Head teacher

KIDZANIA—9.2.23



In February we took our Year 9 pupils to Kidzania, in London. After a smooth journey, we enjoyed the valet parking lounge, where both classes reconvened and ate lunch before strolling to the Kidzania entrance.



Once inside the pupils had the opportunity to sample a variety of careers and earn kidzo currency. This can be spent on experiences inside the Kidzania indoor town. Examples of work range from cleaning windows to hosting the TV news, delivering packages or performing dentistry, performing in the theatre or being a firefighter, over 33 different roles.

The vast majority of pupils did very well and had an entertaining, educational and fun packed day.



Some learnt the virtue of patience whilst queuing. One pupil gave up his place in the queue to a disabled pupil from another school.

Several pupils flew a plane, sitting in a real cockpit of an actual Boeing aeroplane and gaining their pilot wings.



On departure we avoided the city congestion by leaving Westfield to travel an hour up the motorway to enjoy a relaxed meal in Wetherspoons at Beaconsfield Services; arriving back at school at around 6.45 pm.

It was good for the pupils to spend the day with staff in a different setting and the whole day was a valuable experience, enjoyed by the pupils due in no small part to our staff, especially Tracy Jackson and Rubina Mumtaz, Teaching Assistants, who both entertained pupils for 6 hours whilst travelling.

Finally a big thank you also to Mr Francis who drove one of the minibuses and also to the pupils who managed themselves well during the day. Photographs are available on the photo gallery page of the school website.

Report by Mr Whittaker, Head of Outdoor Learning

HOLIDAY ACTIVITIES PROGRAMME—3/4/23-6/4/23

To qualify for the HAF Programme you need to be in receipt of one or more of the below:

- ◆ Income related free school meals,
- ◆ Have an EHCP
- ◆ Open to a plan (EH, CIN, CP)
- ◆ Young Carer

Every parent that wants to book activities on HAF will need to register first. This will enable the team to gain the correct data including the below prior to parents booking onto activities:

- ◆ Dietary needs
- ◆ SEND needs
- ◆ Photo consent
- ◆ Emergency contact details

The sign up days are to support with registrations and any questions about HAF. Sessions will be available in various localities—these are listed on the parents/carers courses and information page on the school website.

BUSY TIME IN OUT AND ABOUT LESSONS

BUILDING SITE VISIT

Pupils have really enjoyed re-visiting the Lovell Homes development at Lockside, Walsall. We were invited back after we enjoyed laying bricks there last year as a careers experience as part of out and about lessons.



This year, we have visited the show homes and also seen first and second fix houses with electrics, plumbing and plastering underway. Pupils were made aware of the 120 job roles within the building industry such as marketing, Health and Safety, Human Resources etc.

Pupils also enjoyed wearing all the PPE. The virtues of trust and focus have been practiced among others. It was a constructive experience for all.

CORDAGE (STRING MAKING) NATURAL AND NOT!!



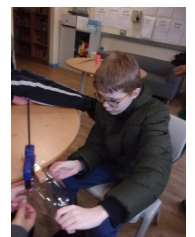
Elmwood pupils have enjoyed the process of creating string from natural materials, learning that nettles make an excellent resource, as does lime bark, raffia and others.



The virtue of patience was practiced with a technique involving a specific twisting of the fibres to create cord. Great satisfaction has come from creating a friendship bracelet for themselves.

Pupils also learnt the ancient craft of processing flax stalks into linen strands. To create , (a virtue), the flaxen hair-like threads you first break and stretch the outer coarse casings. This is then hackled away and later combed to leave the threads that can be turned into linen cloth, rope or combined with linseed oil to create linoleum or even boat building materials!

The final rotation was a very new technology whereby twine is constructed from 2 litre plastic bottles using a special tool. This required the virtue of determination to get the knack, just right. Once mastered it was great fun making reels of the cord, which is exceptionally strong.



All have added a new skill to their repertoire, you could say a new string to their bow!

FIRE MAKING

Classes have been learning the art of fire lighting. This practiced the virtues of self reliance and cooperation at different stages of the task.

Initially, they created sparks from the ancient flint and steel method, casting these onto the charred cloth to start a fire. We then moved onto using a modern ferro rod of high carbon with a striker to light cotton wool, which was then extended by adding petroleum jelly to lengthen the burn time. This also combined scientific thinking to the project. This was then practiced on natural materials. The final challenge was to work as a team to create friction fire with bow and drill. The difference from what you may have seen on the television is that this was with a giant sized set where responsibility (virtue) was key to their different roles in the process.

The lesson has sparked a lot of interest amongst the pupils.

Reports by Mr Whittaker, Head of Outdoor Learning