



# ELMWOOD SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

## JUNE 2023 – NO. 189

[www.elmwood.walsall.sch.uk](http://www.elmwood.walsall.sch.uk)

### LIFE SKILLS OPPORTUNITY



During this final half term of the academic year we begin focussing on the transition for our Year 11 pupils as they start to ready themselves for life after Elmwood. This can be a challenging time as pupils who have invariably spent 5 years in the supportive bubble of Elmwood life, need to start thinking about operating without the support of trusted staff, without the familiarity of our surroundings, but very much with the academic and social skills they have learned during their time with us. This can feel exciting and scary in equal measure so I'm incredibly proud that a proportion of our Year 11 boys have been able to access a transitional programme that has allowed them to successfully engage with an intervention run by Brightstar Boxing for a period of 6 weeks.

During this time pupils attended the academy 2 days a week to enable them to take on new challenges, meet new people and learn new skills – but still with the support and familiarity of each other. The scheme focuses on improving Aspiration, Respect, be Inspirational, support Self-discipline, and be Empowering (ASPIRE).

Pupils were delighted when their participation to the scheme was also recognised by the BBC so our young men enjoyed their 5 minutes of fame appearing on Midlands Today and also in the Express & Star. They made a fabulous first impression and staff at the boxing academy shared several positive comments stating one pupil 'engages in lesson time and always puts in maximum effort with lots of energy'. Another 'really enjoyed being here and was very polite and well mannered, was very talkative and likes to engage with everyone'. Finally- one pupil 'was somewhat the captain of the group, likes to make sure everything is in order with his peers'.

The boys showed growth and development throughout the half term of attending and I'm sure they have taken on even more life skills that they will be able to draw upon in the forthcoming months as we continue to gallop towards the end of Year 11. Great work guys and thank you for representing Elmwood so positively. Report by Mrs Francis, Deputy Headteacher

### Coalface to Wildspace



Students from key stage 3 have been involved with a new project in the Walsall area that is helping to build connections with nature.

Coalface to Wildspace is an exciting, new project funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund and the West Midlands Combined Authority.



There has previously been very little focus on amphibian and reptile conservation in this region, so this project will raise awareness through public engagement, improve habitat through community interventions and bring attention to local heritage.

### Future Events

29th July - Pop-up Wildlife Gardening Workshop at Brownhills Summer Festival. For information and booking please contact [info@froglife.org](mailto:info@froglife.org)  
Report by Dr A Price, Curriculum Lead of Science

## UNDER THE SPOTLIGHT

This month our featured member of staff under the spotlight is Rubina Mumtaz, Teaching Assistant



**How long have you worked at Elmwood?** *I have worked at Elmwood School for one and a half years and have loved every single day.*

**What do you love about your job?** *I really don't know where to start as there are so many reasons, no day is the same, keeps me on my toes, thinking and learning! Another reason is the light bulb moment. When you've been working with the young people who have been struggling with something and then all of a sudden the light bulb goes off and the biggest smile appears on their faces because they get it, knowing that I have made a hard experience (mentally, physically, ability wise) fun, enjoyable and hopefully enriching! Finally, I feel lucky to work in a school where the whole staffing team support each other through tough and good times. We bounce ideas of each other and see them through. We live in our values in caring for each other and caring for the young people.*

**What films have you watched recently?** *Even though I have watched this film many times before, I watched it again over the weekend as it was on television, it is one of my all time favourite films ever GLADIATOR starring Russell Crowe. I'm not really a cinema person.*

**Favourite Holiday?** *My favourite holiday destination has to be Dubai. I love the food, shopping and sightseeing. Weirdly I hated going up the tallest building in the world (Burj Khalifa), whilst people were making videos and taking selfies I came back down after 10 minutes on my own (left my family up there) and went shopping instead in the famous Dubai Mall.*

**Tell us something that people would be surprised to hear?** *I have never drunk tea! Oh and I have met our late Queen .*

### SURPRISE VISIT

At the end of half term, we had a surprise visit from Tina Lloyd, former assistant head at the school, who moved to live in Spain back in 2020. She is always one of the first to spot the latest newsletter on the school website as she enjoys keeping up to date with what has been going on in school.



Tina and Neil, her partner, were also finally able to have their delayed wedding from 2020 on Wednesday 21st June, when they got married in Gibraltar. Many congratulations to them both and Mr & Mrs Alcock were able to stop by and say hello on Friday 23rd June when they were travelling to visit family in Wales.

### BEING CRAFTY



Once again pupils in Friday afternoon's craft club with Shelli George, teaching assistant, have been busy and recently made these novel bird feeders.

The three feeders are proudly hanging in the entrance quad and brighten up the fencing.

Well done to George, Josh and Ty in Year 8 on doing such a great job, which will also be enjoyed by the local wildlife.

### DIARY DATES

A reminder that the summer term progress and achievement event will be taking place on Wednesday 12th July. Pupils will leave at 12.30 pm (unless you have booked an early appointment). Staff will shortly be in touch to arrange a suitable appointment time .

We will also be hosting a mini summer fayre thanks to Jo Hughes, teaching assistant. Your support in helping us raise school funds would be much appreciated. A very big thank you to the parents and carers who have already sent items in for use as raffle or tombola prizes. A big shout out to Alfie in Year 7's grandparents who have generously donated an array of prizes which is amazing.

Our annual sports day will be taking place on Tuesday 11th July to which parents and carers are warmly invited to come along and support their child. The day will commence around 10.00 am to 2.00 pm and refreshments will be available outside.

We look forward to hopefully seeing you then.

## BUSY TIME IN OUT AND ABOUT LESSONS

### THE MALVERN AGRICULTURAL SHOW



The Malvern Agricultural Show trip took place on Friday 16th June. Sophie Byrne, Rebecca Spendlove, George Hancox, Aidan Garbett and Nathan Scott in Years 7 and 8 accompanied myself and Nicole Rose, Teaching Assistant to the Three Counties Showground, Malvern. It was a great educational opportunity for Elmwood pupils to become aware of a variety of different careers. Pupils enjoyed getting involved with the Police and Army stands, trying on the equipment and holding weapons, sitting in the air ambulance cockpit as well as the work of the Severn Rescue Team. Pupils experienced VR headsets and George wired a generator simulator. We really enjoyed the lumberjack tree climbing race where a 12 year old competed!! The farrier competition and blacksmithing event was interesting to see. Also very popular were the animal marquees where we saw alpacas, goats and bees; we also saw tractors, quad bikes and off road vehicles. The behaviour of the pupils was exemplary and we were fortunate to have good weather. More photographs are available on the photo gallery page of the school website.



### BBQ TIME AGAIN

Our annual BBQ lunches have been run by myself again this summer. The weather was mixed but pupils have enjoyed and been grateful of the treat, whatever the weather. For some pupils it was their first experience of having a bbq.

A big thank you also to Lynne the cook for her help with making the above happen and all the support of our teaching assistants who helped to make everything run smoothly. Thank you also to the parents and carers who made voluntary donations towards the cost of the bbqs and also to school fund for its contribution of providing additional burgers.

### CAN YOU BELIEVE IT?

We are all aware of how important bees are to future crops and how their populations are in decline. Pupils have always been interested in the windowed hives at the Malvern Show. Other pupils were lucky enough to visit the allotment last summer (during enrichment), where their beekeeper lifted the lid on their hive. Pupils were excited to wear bee suits and experience the bees swarm around. The noise was exhilarating.

On the strength of this, I underwent an online qualification this year to enable me to open the hive and care for a hive. This has meant that pupils have been able to visit the hive and see the use of smoke to calm the bees as well as learning about the fascinating hierarchy of a productive bee colony. Pupils have practised the virtues of respect and courage.

The pupils came back buzzing!

### WE ARE SAILING



After a few years of approaching various sailing clubs in the region we have managed to agree an arrangement with Sutton Sailing Club, which means we can offer sailing to our pupils as part of our Friday enrichment programme.

The pupils have enjoyed this in the past and certainly have enjoyed it this time around, regardless of the weather. The Club has been so welcoming, even offering cold drinks after their sail. We are very grateful to them for manning the safety boat and rigging and de rigging the dinghy for us.

I have enjoyed sailing the pupils around the lake and getting them to work the sheets, dagger board and tiller. The Club have also been impressed with our pupils' behavior.

"Thanks, from our perspective, all of your students were a pleasure to be around and a credit to you and Elmwood School. Please pass on our congratulations to your colleagues who are obviously doing a great job".

It's been plain sailing, so far.

Reports by Mr D Whittaker, Head of Outdoor Learning



## ART SPLATTER PAINTING



Towards the end of the last half-term pupils got mucky! They took inspiration from the famous artist Jackson Pollock and created their own splatter paintings. They used a range of paint colours as well as

paintbrushes to create different splatter effects. Some pupils even used leaves, sticks and rocks to create shapes within the paint. Pupils worked sensibly and safely and have created some fantastic artwork. Mr Whittaker kindly donated some overalls so that pupils didn't get paint on their own clothes, but it seems Shelli George, teaching assistant, didn't get that message and ended up getting her own set of overalls covered in paint (which some pupils helped her with)!

Report by Ms Askins,  
Art Teacher



## Healthy Eating Week



What's it all about?....

The week highlights what you can do to have a healthier and more

sustainable diet and lifestyle in an affordable way.

Most of Elmwood's pupils took part in the British Nutrition Foundation Healthy Eating, making a very delicious Green Mac and Cheese. This dish is very popular at the moment but with the added broccoli, spinach, peas, and a choice of mixed vegetables, as well as low fat cheese, it makes this a very healthy and cheap meal to make for the family. We discussed the importance of eating fibre in our diet as well as staying hydrated with 8 glasses of water a day, especially in the hot weather.

Topics such as varying your protein in your daily diet, reducing food waste were discussed and pupils were made aware of how small changes can affect the food industry and the planet.

Report by Ms Shaw, Food Technology Teacher

## STAFFING NEWS

Bev Bailey, Family Welfare Officer, was able to return to work on 24th May following her recent illness. Welcome back Bev.

Grant Hunt, and Jade Lunt, teaching assistants, were both well enough to return after the half term break. It was great to see them both back in school.

Mr Francis, DT teacher, celebrated a special birthday on 10th June and was presented with gifts and cards from staff to mark the occasion. Congratulations also to Mr Francis on successfully completing his NPQLT qualification. What an achievement.

Someone else celebrating a special birthday was Carol Bratt, cleaner, who enjoyed her big day on 16th June— unfortunately a work day. Again staff made sure that Carol was spoilt with cards and gifts to mark the occasion.

We will be sadly saying goodbye to the following staff at the end of term:

Mr Holmes, Year 11 teacher, will be moving onto a new teaching post in another Local Authority. Mr Holmes has been working at Elmwood since 2009 adding great value to the team, which included taking on the temporary role of an Associate Assistant Headteacher as well as representing staff as a Staff Governor for four years. Mr Holmes' knowledge of first aid and outdoor learning will also be greatly missed.

Mr Bullock, Year 8 teacher, will be taking on a new role as an assistant SENCO at a secondary school. Mr Bullock has worked at Elmwood since 2018 and has forged great relationships with both staff and pupils. His enthusiasm for his subject area of PE, which is often conveyed within newsletter sports articles, is clear to see. Mr Bullock was also observed during our Ofsted inspection and received excellent feedback.

Anna Cahira, Year 7 teaching assistant, will be moving away from the Midlands area and re-joining her husband who has been working away for a while.

Nicole Rose, Year 8 teaching assistant, will be joining the SCITT programme for the next academic year at Barr Beacon School where she will begin her teacher training.

Chris Young, teaching assistant, will be moving on to take a new role within a primary school setting.

We will miss all of our staff leavers and wish them every success as they commence on their new journeys.

Mr Bowen, Curriculum Lead of English and, his fiancé Claire, will be celebrating their wedding during the summer break and we wish them both every happiness for the future. We hope you have an amazing day.



## FRIDAY MORNING TREAT

Pupils are enjoying their Friday morning breakfast treat thanks to the £1,000 grant received from Kellogg's.

So far pupils have enjoyed croissants and pain au chocolate, as well as bacon or sausage sandwiches and hash browns.

A very big thank you to Lynne the cook, for kindly helping with the cooking of some of the above options and to Mrs Francis, Deputy Head, who goes and buys the food after work and helps to sort it out on the day.



### ART WORK ON DISPLAY

Pupils, staff and governors had the opportunity to view the GCSE art work that was on display following assessment by the art moderator.

Callum Wilkinson and Rianna Lewis, Year 11 pupils, have produced some stunning pieces of work which will hopefully be reflected in their examination grades.

Well done to them both and also to Laura Askins, art teacher, for her guidance and support.



## OLYMPIC SUCCESS



Well done Craig Williamson, former pupil, who represented Great Britain in the Special Olympics that took place from 17th to 25th June in Berlin. As you can see from the photo of Craig in his official kit, he looks very smart.

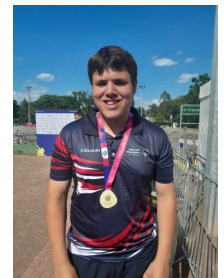
Craig flew from Heathrow on 15th June giving him a couple of days to acclimatise. He was then able to enjoy the opening ceremony ahead of hockey matches commencing from 18th to 23rd June.

The team played brilliantly and were rewarded with winning GOLD on Saturday 24th June. What a brilliant achievement and a proud moment for his family to witness.

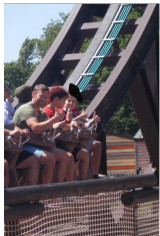
Before flying back on the 26th, Craig was able to enjoy the closing ceremony.

Hockey was a demo sport this year and what a wonderful experience for Craig to be selected. Craig's journey over the week can be read on the news section of the school website.

We are all very proud of Craig's success.



## Drayton Manor Trip -14th June 2023



Thanks to Mrs Francis' contact within The Rotary Club, our pupils once again benefitted from a free day out at Drayton Manor theme park earlier this term.

On a swelteringly hot day, almost the whole school had a fun day out going on the rides, spending money on slush puppies and ice creams. Some pupils and staff visited the animals in the zoo, whilst some found the best way to cool off - going on the Storm Force 10 water ride!

A big thank you goes to the accompanying staff who worked hard all day to try and get pupils onto the rides they wanted whilst ensuring they stayed safe and hydrated during a hot summer's day.

There were some tired young (and older) people on the journey home, with even the coach's air conditioning system struggling to cope - however, generally a fun day was had by all!

Report by Mr Holmes, Teacher

## WRITING COMPETITION

*A huge well done to the following pupils who entered the young writer's competition and have been selected to have their work published in 'The incredible diary... Worlds of Adventure' by Jenni Harrison.*

*During English lessons, pupils were challenged to come up with an exciting diary entry from memory or imagination and take a reader on a wondrous adventure through a variety of locations meeting some amazing characters on the way. Their word limit was 100 words so as you can imagine it was a real challenge for our wonderful young writers to try and limit themselves to a mere 100 words. But of course, in true Elmwood style our young superstars managed to wow the competition judges and win their place in a published book.*

*Competition winners to have their work published:*

*Malachi Grainger  
Rebecca Spendlove  
Josie Evans  
Charlie Smyth  
R-Jay Manby  
Riley Cabrera  
Junior Stansbie  
Harry-Lee Cox  
Rhys Shaemar*

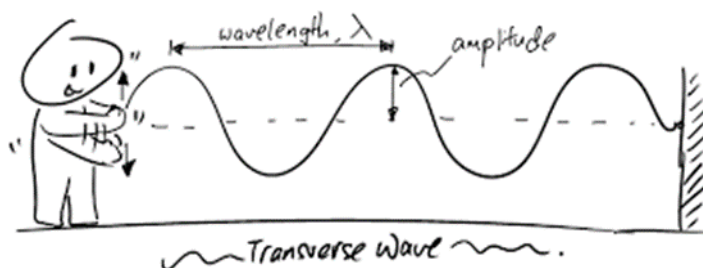


*Report by Mr Bullock, English Teacher*

## Science in the woods – surely not!



A group of year 10s pupils recently spent a day in the woods in Leicestershire to enhance their science learning. The pupils explored energy transfer in waves. A rope allowed them to produce a transverse wave, the faster the rope was moved the greater the wavelength. The greater the force, the larger the amplitude. Pupils were also able to feel an echo through the rope – an echo occurs when sound waves are reflected towards the hearer.



A fun day was had by all and we learnt that that if you stand to close to a rope making waves, you could get Hertz.

The day helped the young people to think about energy transfers in real life situations. They used friction, and then the sun, to start fire. Later they explored elastic energy firing a catapult.



Report by Dr A Price, Curriculum Lead of Science

### NATIONAL THANK A TEACHER DAY

Wednesday 21st June was national Thank a Teacher (or any member of staff) day. A big thank you to anyone who took the time and trouble to forward a thank you message to a member of staff. These messages are always much appreciated and gratefully received.

A special shout out to Logan Gosling in Year 9 who sent 6 messages of thanks to the following teachers and teaching assistants, which is brilliant and made Mr Francis, Ms Askins, Ms Diponio, Mr Price, Rubina Mumtaz and Kerry Bowen's day.

### WE HAVE A DEFIBRILLATOR

For our Community and Grow a Tenner day 7b decided to do something a little different and raise some money towards an AED for our Elmwood Community. For our community day we decided to run a car wash onsite where we washed over 20 cars and a minibus raising a total of £155 of which Waj from NA Cars taxi company donated £50.

When it came to our grow a tenner day we ran an Easter raffle with donations from Tesco Walsall, Morrisons Wallows Lane and the school community. Kerry also did a great job in Morrisons Walsall getting a number of items half price with our £10. Pupils from 7b then sold tickets to staff, pupils and parents /carers on progress and achievement day where we raised £115 bringing the total to £270. During this time the school were gifted an AED from the government as part of a new policy. The money raised from 7b has now been combined with donations from The Seeds School and Rushall Olympic Football Club to buy an outdoor cabinet to keep the AED outside so the local community can access it if needed. I just want to say a massive thank you to all pupils in 7b, Kerry, Ms Askins and Jade for all their hard work to help reach this milestone!

Report by Mr Hinsley, Teacher

### SEASIDE TRIP



On Tuesday 6th June 8a and 8b had a day out to the seaside! This trip was organised as part of their descriptive writing assessment which is what pupils are currently learning about in English this term.

For some pupils it was a first visiting the beach and we chose West Kirby as it is a much smaller beach, less crowded and is therefore a lot more comfortable place to be for all. The sun did shine but not until we were leaving, but it did not spoil the fun of the day.

It was great for pupils and staff to run around the beach and frolic in the sea, collecting seashells, playing bat and ball on the beach and just having a fun time! We ate chips and ice-cream on the beach and managed to eat them all without any seagulls bothering us.

Thanks to Shelli, Nicole and Mark for all their support and making it a memorable day.  
Report by Mr Webb, Year 7c teacher