



ELMWOOD SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 2023 – NO. 193

www.elmwood.walsall.sch.uk

FUNDAY FRIDAYS

Funday Fridays are a curriculum enhancement that look to support your child's personal development – and the breadth of the school's curriculum. Pupils progress through a carousel of activities. These activities act as vehicles to develop your child's **communication, leadership** and **preparation for adulthood** as well as them demonstrating the school's observable behaviours aligned to our values of Care for Self, Others and the Environment.

Staff will utilise the group's success within communication, leadership and preparation for adulthood to plan for opportunities to address in their next activity.

These experiences are a core component of your child's education and are not a reward trip. They are an essential experience that supports the school's curriculum.

This half terms activities include: Historic immersive trip to The Black Country Museum, travel experiences, geocaching, pupils planning lessons, enterprising ideas and a nature walk experience.

Here are a selection of IMPACT measures following this half terms experience:

Nurture	Transition	Pathways
<p>7a showed their creative sides and worked together as a team in order to create an assembly to be shared by the whole school. The task stretched their communication skills and demonstrated individual leadership qualities within the group.</p> <p>7b took a step back in history and enjoyed a fascinating day to the Black Country Museum. Pupils communicated appropriately with staff there and indeed other members of the public. One pupil showed incredible kindness and donated his fairground tokens away to a younger member of the public – well done to that young man you are living into our Elmwood Values of caring for others already!</p> <p>8a demonstrated great team work and discovered lots of new information on the world of Geocaching! Not only were they able to learn new skills but actually explored our local community and found some hidden gems of their own.</p> <p>8b showed great courage and planning skills to be able to plan a whole lesson of their own that they delivered to a KS4 class during the afternoon session! Communicating with older peers is no mean feat but one they mastered with maturity and pride.</p> <p>8c completed a busy day of travel training exploring the local community on bus, train and on foot – phew! The day was a tiring one with many miles covered but they have mastered skills of independence and travel that will prepare them for adulthood.</p>	<p>9a overcame their initial nerves by creating a Sulp lesson that they were able to deliver to a member of the Leadership Team. They showed great comradery working together to gain confidence from one another which resulted in a fab demonstration of their bravery and communication skills.</p> <p>9b prepared Halloween treats to feed our hungry bellies and worked together as a team to decorate cakes and biscuits available to buy. As a result the initial £10 that the group started off with, grew to an impressive £46.71 which shows a fabulous day's efforts – well done!</p>	<p>10a brainstormed together for the morning session to decide what makes a good lesson. They then worked as a team to create the lesson and presented it to a KS3 class. Pupils who have been less confident to speak publicly really shone and cared for our Elmwood community in supporting younger peers to achieve success. What a fantastic group of leaders we have!</p> <p>10b showed true grit and determination by not only braving the autumnal elements, but also challenging their own personal boundaries in overcoming a nature walk at Cannock Chase. The group communicated positively and politely throughout and were notably caring to members of the community when in the Chase café.</p> <p>11a commuted to Walsall by bus in order to collect goodies that they could use in order to run a raffle. The group worked well together and were able to show fabulous consideration for one another's individual needs – a great day that will prepare them for adulthood.</p> <p>11b were unable to secure a work experience placement due to the recent rise in Covid cases and additional health and safety precautions that have been put in place in some working environments. As an alternative they planned their route to Lichfield Cathedral and combined travel training with a cultural immersion to the 'Museum of the Moon'. Pupils were in awe of the giant lunar imagery, the moonlight display, and surround sound composition created by BAFTA and Ivor Novello award winning composer Dan Jones. A fabulous day all round that gave a newly formed group valuable time to bond and memories to cherish.</p>

UNDER THE SPOTLIGHT

This month our featured member of staff under the spotlight is Tracy Jackson, Teaching Assistant

How long have you worked at Elmwood? *I have been at Elmwood for two years.*

What do you love about your job? *I love how each day I'm learning new things, new subjects and watching the students grow. No two days are the same and I enjoy spending social times with my form group 10a.*

What films have you watched recently? *Operation Mincemeat, it's a true story from World War Two.*

Favourite Holiday? *I love cruising and cruising around the Caribbean is my favourite way to spend a holiday.*

Tell us something that people would be surprised to hear? *I'm really interested in World War Two and have been to the D day landings and other famous significant places in France on numerous occasions.*



SPOOKY TIMES



On Thursday 26th October, staff and pupils

got into the spirit of Halloween and arrived at school dressed for the occasion. Pupils also had great fun taking part in spooky activities. Can you work out whose behind the masks?



Pupils in 9a and 9b also enjoyed taking part in apple bobbing. This did involve



changing the apple and water each time but was worth the effort for the fun that was had!



New out and about activity



This term pupils have whittled a 'bushcraft spoon'. This involved sawing a suitable piece of branch from a tree then whittling this and splitting (battening) the end to hold a seashell. This then had a string lashing (whipping) tied close to the end to hold the shell

in place and then varnish painted over the lashing to keep it in place.

As you can see Brandon in 8c is enjoying using his spoon.

Report by Mr Whittaker, Head of Outdoor Learning

NEW GIRLS ARRIVING SOON



I am pleased to say that thanks to the British Hen Welfare Trust (bhwt.org.uk), we have managed to secure Elmwood's newest recruits!!

The ladies are currently getting used to being in the open air and building up their muscles after 18 months of being enclosed in an area the size of an A4 piece of paper. The Cross family are also getting them used to being handled so they are better prepared to live into "The Elmwood Way".

Due to Mr Cross' injury the ladies will not be on site until January 2024 (as Mrs Francis won't allow poultry in her nice clean car!)



Keep your eyes and ears open in the transition quad.

Report by Mr Cross, Headteacher

Christmas raffle

Raffle tickets are now on sale from the school office, and will also be available at our mini Christmas Fayre taking place on Wednesday 13th December.

Tickets cost 50p each and prizes include a £100 gift voucher, food hampers, Farmfoods voucher, alcohol etc.

The draw will take place on Thursday 14th December.

Your support would be appreciated and all monies raised go into school funds which is spent solely to benefit pupils.

STAFFING NEWS

Jo Hughes, teaching assistant, ended her time at Elmwood on Tuesday 24th October 2023.

Mr Cross is continuing to recover from the accident he incurred during the summer break. He is now boot free and is trying to get around using two walking sticks (which he is managing but far too quickly for his own good!).

Mr Hinsley returned to school on Monday 20th November following the birth of his daughter Grace. Mr Hinsley was presented with cards and gifts from staff to celebrate this event.

KIND DONATION

My daughter in law works for "My dentist" and they have recently donated four boxes of goggles to school. Two of these boxes were given to the science department and the other two went to good use in DT.



A huge Thank you to "My dentist" in Walsall for their kind donation, especially Beth, Eric and all the staff who thought we could put them to good use.

Report by Kerry Bowen, Teaching Assistant

PROGRESS AND ACHIEVEMENT REMINDER

Our progress and achievement event will be taking place on Wednesday 13th December which will also coincide with our fundraising mini Christmas Fayre. Staff will be contacting parents and carers to organise individual appointments for you to come and discuss your child's progress this term as well as set new targets.

If you are able to donate any bottles, tins or chocolate/sweets for use in our Christmas Fayre, these would be gratefully received.

TESCO STRONGER UPDATE



We are continuing to collect the blue counters being issued by Tesco as part of our participation in the above scheme.

Our collection point is in the Walsall Tesco Extra store where Ms Shaw kindly deposits any counters received in school when she goes to purchase the ingredients needed for food technology lessons.

At the end of October it looks as if it was very close between ourselves and Christ Church School.

The scheme runs until 14th January so please keep sharing with friends and family "as every little helps as the saying goes".



UNIFORM DONATION



We have been fortunate to receive 50 pairs of new school trousers/skirts and shorts thanks to Newlife, the Charity for Disabled Children based in Cannock.

The uniform has been donated by Sainsburys and George at Asda, and are available free of charge to any pupil. Please contact the school office if you would like to receive any of these items—these will also be available to pick up during our progress and achievement event on 13th December. Chloe certainly looks very smart wearing one of the skirts that are available.

A very big thank you to Newlife for their support, it is very much appreciated.



REMEMBRANCE DAY SERVICE



Year 7a had a fabulous morning on Thursday 9th November showing off their cooking skills in the presence of our VIP guests from the Staffordshire Regiment (thanks to Ms Shaw for organising), who attended for our annual Remembrance Day Service.



Busily making freshly baked flapjacks safely, and following hygiene rules, their behaviour was exemplary and a credit to Elmwood School. Our guests were offered tea, coffee, grapes, cakes, and a lovely warm hearty soup, subsequently giving the class top marks for their hospitality. The whole school then gathered to show their respect by listening to a reading and standing for their 1 minute silence.

Report by Stacey Urmson, Teaching Assistant

SHOWING RESPECT



As part of our Remembrance commemorations, Mr Middleton and myself have taken the pupils to the National Memorial Arboretum during Out and About lessons. As well as finding their family names on the huge memorial, they have also laid their nail art

poppies at a memorial of their choice.

Pupils have enjoyed making these poppies in previous Out and About lessons. Both sessions have proved to be popular and the virtues of altruism, self-reliance, patience and empathy have been practiced.

Report by Mr Whittaker, Head of Outdoor Learning

POPPY SELLERS

Well done to our poppy sellers this year in particular to Charlie Anne Barfield who went around school every day and judging from the weight of the collection pot, has done a great job.

Thank you to everyone who helped to support this good cause.

WHAT A SEND OFF



On Thursday 16th November, Rose Burley, former co-opted governor, was given a good Elmwood send off when her time as a governor of 15 years was celebrated. Also joining in the celebration were fellow governors Tracy MacDonald, Sallyann Tuckwell Allen, Sarah Thornton, Lisa Jones and Leon Donaldson.



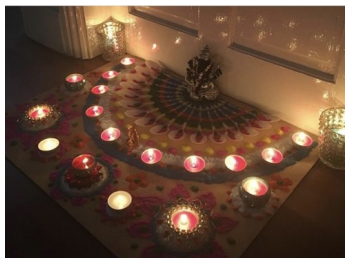
Ms Shaw, food technology teacher, organised an afternoon tea for everyone to enjoy ably assisted by Jack in Year 10 and Jordan in 11, who acted as the perfect hosts.

Mr Francis, Lead Teacher of Technologies, used his creative skills to make an engraved candle holder gift as a memento of Rose's time at Elmwood, which was actually made from an old door frame. Rose was also presented with other gifts to mark the occasion.

A big thank you to everyone who helped to make the event a special one for Rose.



Bringing Culture to Elmwood



Twinkling lights, colourful costumes and delicious food... it can only mean one thing... it's Diwali time!!!!



On Friday 17th November Elmwood pupils experienced a little taste of Indian culture through a

Diwali assembly delivered by Hina Patel and Miss Diponio. To kick start the celebration pupils engaged in a beautiful presentation about the history behind the intricate designs of Rangoli, the cuisines and traditional garments people wear when celebrating Diwali. Following this, pupils were transported through the magical tale of the birth of Diwali and educated on tradition values and culture that has been kept alive and celebrated for hundreds of years. Each pupil was gifted with a Rangoli patterned bookmark to be a part of the celebrations and embrace the culture. Like any other Bollywood movie, we all closed the show by taking part in an Indian dance



masterclass taught by our very own Hina. Pupils and staff all rose to the occasion and were encouraged to express themselves through the wonderful artform of Bollywood dance. We all look forward to many more years of celebrating culture and sharing knowledge within Elmwood... Happy Diwali everyone and Namaste. Report by Miss Diponio, Teacher and Hina Patel



FREE TREES

Once again we have been successful in applying for 420 free trees courtesy of the Woodland Trust. Pupils are now busy planting these saplings during out and about lessons. These will not only brighten up our outdoor grounds but also provide habitat and food for local wildlife.

DECEMBER DIARY DATES

Wednesday 6-8th December, Health and Safety school closure days

Wednesday 13th December—progress and achievement appointments and mini Christmas Fayre. Pupils leave at 12.30 pm.

Thursday 21st December—whole school Christmas lunch and the wearing of Christmas jumpers welcome.

Friday 22nd December—pupils break up for Christmas at normal time

ENJOYING A PUZZLE OR TWO



8C wanted to complete a jigsaw puzzle but realised that there were pieces missing. They truly lived into the Elmwood Values and cared for the environment and others.

Collectively,

8C worked as a group in their own time to complete the jigsaw puzzles with Grant Hunt, teaching assistant. It was wonderful to see them caring for the community room.

Report by Sonya Woollery, Teaching Assistant



WALSALL COLLEGE OPEN EVENT

On 5th December, Walsall College are running a SEND Open Day from 4pm – 7pm. This is an opportunity for pupils with an identified additional need and/or medical condition to go and have a tour of Walsall College, speak with tutors of their chosen areas whether this be supported learning or cross College and speak with inclusive support / EHCP Team in a much quieter and more relaxed environment. There will also be staff available to help support the pupils to make an application on the evening.

Pupils are able to take a maximum of **two** parents / carers with them, they will be required to book a free ticket to the event on the link below:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/send-open-day-tickets-755488806357?aff=WebsiteEvent>

Elmwood goes to the movies!

Pupils at Elmwood School have taken part in the world's largest youth film festival. Into Film is celebrating ten years of education through the medium of film. Elmwood School were able to secure tickets for pupils to attend screenings.

Pupils have written reviews of the film they watched, with extracts below:

Strange World:

'I thought it was a rather good film, the direction was good and I liked the way different characters were presented...' Aiden Garbett, Year 9

'A very cool refence to another film I think like Moana.' McKenzie Gonderton, Year 9

'I liked Ethan Clade because he was the cool guy.' Julian Wilkins-McCallum, Year 9

Lyle Lyle Crocodile:

'I recommend this film because it is entertaining and shows you can make friends with animals.' Ethan Cope, Year 7

'This film is great for family and friends.' Kyle Hously-Hardiman, Year 7

'The film is very good...it is very heart-warming.' Daniel Christie, Year 7

Pupils have been ambassadors for the school and school values.

Report by Mr Bowen, Curriculum Lead of English and edited by Joshua Till, Year 9 pupil

"Money.....Money....Money...."

At the start of the autumn term last year, I launched another plant competition across the school continuing the promotion of the joy of growing things and the love of plants. 2022- 2023 was the year of the money plant or Jade plant. Everyone was given a very small cutting from a plant that has been in my family for many, many years together with a brief outline of how to care for it. The rest was left up to each tutor group to find out more so that their plant could flourish.

Each tutor group were asked to bring their plant to my assembly in October, and I asked Lynn and Dawn from the office to judge the best overall plant. After some careful consideration and deliberation, the following judgement was given...

3rd place - goes to 9A and Nobby for a healthy and shiny appearance, which clearly shows a well looked after plant.

2nd place - goes to 11B and Bob Marley for new growth and excellent appearance.



Before...



After... (with the aloe vera from last year's competition)



1st place – goes to 8B and Bob 2 for a healthy appearance, size and attractive presentation.

8B have won a voucher to be able to spend on a treat for the whole class, so congratulations to them and well done.

Thank you to all the tutor groups for taking part and don't forget the new competition that was launched for this year.

Remember to name your Lace Aloe and get a photograph to me as soon as possible so that your tutor plant can be entered. Maybe you will be claiming the prize for best overall improvement or for your plant having the most babies next year. Good luck everyone and remember, never underestimate the power of nature and connecting with it.



The Lace Aloe or Torch Plant
(Aloe Aristata)

"Nature is the source of all true knowledge." – Leonardo da Vinci

"To forget how to dig the earth and to tend the soil is to forget ourselves." –Mahatma Gandhi

Report by Miss Pow, Teacher