



ELMWOOD SCHOOL

NEWSLETTER

Choose your adventure

SEPTEMBER 2025



Newsletter—September 2025—Issue 213

WELCOME BACK TO SCHOOL

As we begin another exciting school year, we would like to extend a heartfelt welcome to all our returning students and a special warm greeting to those who joined us for the first time. We are thrilled to have you as part of our school family. Our community thrives on support, kindness, and celebration to making this year a positive, inclusive, and enriching experience for everyone. We look forward to the growth, learning, and achievements that lie ahead and we are excited to work together to create a year filled with joys, success and lasting memories.

Welcome to the start of a wonderful new journey!

LAST MONTH

- Our staff underwent an amazing **Teambuilding programme** under the guidance of the Matrix Academy Trust
- **Year 7 students** joined us the second week back at school
- Favourite **Enrichment and Reward activities** were enjoyed by our students every single week
- **CCF cadets** from Barr Beacon School visited us to speak to the children
- **Flu vaccines** were administered to families who consented
- **School photos** were taken and the order cards sent home
- Our **school's promotional video** has been published on Matrix Academy Trust website.
www.matrixacademytrust.co.uk/elmwoodwelcome

Year 11 GCSE Results by Mr Lee Cross, Headteacher

It is with great pleasure that I can confirm that despite the significant disruption caused by the National Education Union during their 47 days of industrial action the Class of 2025 were able to demonstrate **resilience** to overcome such obstacles by truly **living into the core values of Elmwood** (these skills will be stay with you as you continue with your education into 6th Forms, Colleges and Training Providers).

This has been a real **team effort** involving not only the staff at Elmwood but also parents / carers for their unwavering support, colleagues from across our Special School family and a real determination from our new family members at The Matrix Academy Trust.

- * **93% of pupils** achieved their **EKS4 Target** (secured from baseline entry into the school) across **English and Maths**.
- * **100% of pupils** achieved their **EKS4 Targets** across their **BTEC & City and Guilds qualifications** (Sport, Home Cooking, Work-skills, Construction and Land Based Studies).
- * **83% of pupils** who were entered for their **GCSE Biology** achieved at least a **Grade 3**.
- * **100% of pupils** who were entered for their **IGCSE English Language** achieved at least a **Grade 3**.
- * **86% of pupils** who were entered for their **GCSE Maths** achieved at least a **Grade 3**.
- * **Special recognition** to **Ellis Bird** was able to secure **Grade 4's** across **English, Maths and Science**.

Staff Training in a military style!

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Right at the beginning of this academic year, our staff joined the team at **Barr Beacon School**, that is part of Matrix Academy Trust, and tested their skills and abilities outdoors. The new and old staff bonded during physical and mental tasks at this unique **teambuilding** event led by **CCF Cadets**.

The focus was on strengthening camaraderie, fostering trust, and developing a sense of unity within our groups. Activities, such as **target shooting, paintballing, teamwork activities** were designed to push our staff beyond their comfort zones, emphasizing collaboration, communication, and problem-solving under pressure. Just like soldiers in a unit, staff members were encouraged to rely on each other, drawing on each person's strengths to overcome challenges. Through physical tasks, strategic games, and simulations that mimic real-world obstacles, our team broke down barriers, getting to know each other's capabilities, work styles, and personalities.



The goal was to build a cohesive, resilient team where everyone understands their role and is prepared to work together to achieve shared objectives, both in the classroom and beyond. We are proud to report that despite few unfortunate injuries while performing these tasks, we had a lot of laughter and learned more about each other that strengthened our relationships and positively motivated us to start the new school year ahead.



Interested in being a cadet?

Our school has developed an amazing relationship with the **Combined Cadet Force (CCF)** based in Barr Beacon School. The Staff Sergeant *Mr D Dobble* visited our pupils on several occasions and delivered a motivational talk about the CCF. The CCF offers a unique opportunity for students to build **confidence, leadership, and teamwork skills** while taking part in exciting **military-inspired activities**. From learning fieldcraft and navigation to taking part in adventurous training such as camping, flying, or sailing, the CCF gives you the chance to push yourself and discover new strengths. It's not about preparing you for a career in the armed forces—though some may choose that path—but about giving you experiences that will benefit you in school, university, and beyond. Most importantly, it's about friendship, challenge, and fun.



Mr Dobble is currently **working with some of our students on one-to-one basis** and helping them to build their life skills, self-esteem, positivity and shape their behaviour as well as teaching them how to manage their emotions.

If you are interested in joining or getting more information, please contact our school.

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UNDER THE SPOTLIGHT

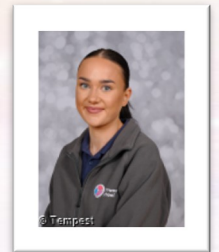
This month our featured member of staff under the spotlight is **Amber Wright**, Teaching Assistant.

How long have you worked at Elmwood? **I have worked at Elmwood since September 2025.**

What do you love about your job? **I have loved getting to know all of the children as well as the staff at Elmwood. Being able to learn about each individual child and beginning to build relationships has been lovely. I have also loved being able to get involved with all of the extra opportunities and activities the children are offered at Elmwood such as a recent trip to JumpXtreme, I've had great fun so far!**

What films have you watched recently? **As a lover of scary films I have recent rewatched the original "scream" which is one of my favourites!**

Favourite Holiday? **Last year I revisited Melbourne, Australia with my mum, nan and sister, where we stayed with family that live over there. We also popped over to the Gold Coast whilst we were there. It is the second time I've been over to Australia and I hope to be able to go again soon!**



PUPIL UNDER THE SPOTLIGHT

Our pupil under the spotlight this month is **Corey Murphy** in Year 7 so a big thank you to Corey for his responses.

What do you like most about coming to Elmwood School? **Computers and seeing friends.**

Have you any thoughts about what you might like to do after leaving Elmwood? **YouTuber, security guard and palaeontologist.**

In your spare time, what do you most like to do? **Play video games / eat snacks.**

Have you done anything that we might be surprised to learn about? **No.**

If you could go anywhere or do anything, what would you choose? **To go to Japan.**

ATTENDANCE SUPERSTARS

Very well done to the following pupils who achieved **100% attendance for the summer term** and received a £5 gift voucher and certificate.

Keegan B, Daniel C, Alex C, Cadence-Che, Harley G, Nate G, Maisie J, Elise M, Zach P, Alfie P, Leo P and Rebecca S.

The following staff were also very healthy and achieved **100% attendance for the summer term** and were presented with certificates. Very well done to:

Bev Bailey, Caroline Bratt, Julie Burnell, Deborah Causer, Leon Donaldson, Martin Hawkes, Lynn Maritza, Simon Murcott, Athena Nicholaou, Michael O'Callaghan, Tracey Pow, Alan Price, Nicole Rose, Mark Trahearn, Stacey Urmson, Sonya Wollery.

Congratulations to all!

GOLDEN TICKET WINNERS

As part of our visitor welcoming process, a copy of our school values and a golden ticket are issued to visitors.

Visitors are encouraged to award the golden ticket to any pupil who has demonstrated any of these values, which in turn pupils are able to hand into the office for a sweet reward.

Many congratulations to **Elise M in Year 8 and Maisie J in Year 9** who both received **5 tickets** and topped the leader board. All pupils will be accompanying Mr Cross, Headteacher, to a local restaurant for a tasty lunch over the coming weeks.

Rewards make us happy

Blood Brothers in Year 9



Year 9 have been exploring **Blood Brothers** in **Drama** this term, focusing on the theme of social class and its impact on characters' lives. Set in 1980s **Liverpool**, the play has provided a rich backdrop for students to investigate how environment and circumstance shape identity. Using freeze frames, students have brought key moments to life, capturing the tension, humour, and struggles within the story. This has encouraged them to think critically about social inequality while developing their performance skills. The work has been



creative, thought-provoking, and engaging, with students producing some powerful interpretations of the play's central themes.

Popular Fridays



Pupil **enrichment activities**, such as fishing, biking, outdoor learning, music, dance, and physical education (PE), provide valuable opportunities for students to engage in physical, creative, and social experiences that enhance their overall development. Fishing offers a calm, focused activity that improves patience and coordination while connecting students to nature. Biking promotes physical fitness, balance, and independence, encouraging outdoor exploration and teamwork. Outdoor learning fosters curiosity and environmental awareness, giving students hands-on experiences that complement classroom learning. Music and dance activities support self-expression, boost confidence, and improve motor skills, while also fostering emotional well-being and social interaction. PE provides essential opportunities for physical activity, teamwork, and self-discipline, helping students develop both physical and social skills. Together, these activities not only enrich the educational experience but also help students build important life skills, enhance their self-esteem, and form lasting positive relationships with peers and teachers.



On the first Friday of the new school year, a number of the pupils, who had achieved **Gold Reward**, went to **Alderford Lakes**. Luckily the weather was sunny and the water was warm.

Once the pupils had got over the initial surprise at the size of the lake, they all bravely

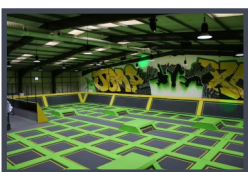
got in and swam over to the inflatable. They spent a tiring hour climbing, swinging, sliding and jumping into the lake and all showed courage and resilience in a fun but tough activity.



The same Friday, students had the wonderful opportunity to visit **Cannock Chase** as a **Bronze Reward** trip, where they got immersed in nature and outdoor activities. From walking scenic trails to enjoying games in the open fields, the trip was filled with laughter, learning, and team spirit.



The peaceful woodland setting provided a refreshing break from the classroom, allowing pupils to explore wildlife, bond with friends, and appreciate the beauty of the natural environment. It was a memorable experience that encouraged both physical activity and a deeper connection with nature.



Silver Reward

As a well-deserved reward for their hard work and positive behaviour, a group of pupils enjoyed an exciting visit to **Jump Xtreme trampoline park**. The atmosphere was filled with energy and laughter as students bounced, flipped, and challenged themselves on the various trampoline zones.

Important information for parents

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MARVELLOUSME



We are aware that some parents have been **struggling to access MarvellousMe** due to a extensive upgrade of their server and services. Parents should have received a letter with some **instructions** of how to **clear cache or cookies** to resolve the issue. If you are still experiencing technical issues, please contact our school office.



Macmillan Coffee morning

You're Invited: Macmillan Coffee Afternoon – Thursday 9th October 2025

We are delighted to invite all parents and carers to our Macmillan Coffee Event on **Thursday 9th October 2025**, from **12:30 PM to 2:00 PM**.

Following the wonderful success of last year's event, where we raised an incredible **£144** for Macmillan Cancer Support, we're excited to come together again for an afternoon of **coffee, cake, and community spirit** – all for a great cause. Whether you're popping in for a quick cuppa or staying for a chat, your presence will help make a difference. There will be a selection of **delicious cakes and refreshments** available, and every donation – big or small – goes directly to **supporting people living with cancer**.

Let's make this year even more special. We look forward to seeing you there!

DIARY DATES

9th October - Macmillan Coffee morning – 12:30pm to 2pm

9th October – Open Afternoon for Y5/Y6 students to visit our school – 3pm to 4.30pm

13th October – Wear it yellow – all pupils and staff – Mental Health Awareness

23rd October – Pupils break up for *half term*

24th October – Matrix Trust Day, *school closed*

3rd November – Pupils return to school

COLLEGE OPEN DAYS 2025-2026

Walsall College – Wisemore and Hawbush campuses

Thursday 9th October 2025 4.30pm – 7.30pm

Saturday 18th October 2025 10am – 2pm

Wednesday 26th November 2025 4.30pm – 7.30pm

www.walsallcollege.ac.uk – [register online for tickets](#)

Walsall Works—Apprenticeship Show

Thursday 6th November 2025 3.30pm–6.30pm

Art Gallery Square, Walsall, WS2 8LG

www.walsallworks.com – [no need to book tickets](#)

Wolverhampton College inc Wellington Road Campus (Bilston) for SEN provision

Saturday 22 November 2025 10am – 2pm

Wednesday 14 January 2026 4pm – 7pm

Wednesday 22 April 2026 4pm – 7pm

www.wolvcoll.ac.uk – [register online for tickets](#)

Birmingham Metropolitan College

Saturday 18th October 2025 10am - 1pm

www.bmet.ac.uk – [register online for tickets](#)

Dudley College

Saturday 11th October 2025 10.00am - 2.00pm

www.dudleycol.ac.uk – [register for tickets](#)

Sandwell College

Thursday 8th October 4pm – 7pm

Saturday 11th October 11am – 3pm

www.sandwell.ac.uk - [register for tickets](#)

South Staffordshire College inc Rodbaston and Tamworth TORC for Futures provision. Cannock and Lichfield campuses.

Saturday 11th October 2025 10am – 1pm

Saturday 22nd November 2025 10am - 1pm

www.southstaffs.ac.uk – [register online for tickets](#)

Check websites for further future dates for open days.