



Elmbank School

# Elmbank Update

ISSUE 3

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2016

## SCHOOL DATES:

- Parents' drop-in meetings  
Monday 10th  
October 4.30-5.30pm
- October Holidays  
School closes 1pm on  
Fri 14th October  
School reopens at 9am  
on Mon 31st October
- Progress Reports  
Posted to parents on  
Friday 9th December
- Christmas Holidays  
School closes 3.25pm  
on Wed 21st December  
School reopens at 9am  
on Thu 5th January

## CONTACT US:

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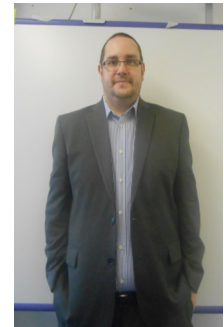
## Welcome to our bumper third newsletter!

Welcome to issue 3 of our Elmbank newsletter! After a refreshing summer holiday, staff are back and working hard to provide opportunities for our young people to succeed. In this issue, you will see examples of the hard work of staff and pupils, including our work with Zoolab, the art studio,

music, and outdoor learning.

We are also continuing to develop our links with mainstream schools as we move forward with Dumfries Learning Town.

As ever, I would welcome any comments. Please feel free to contact me at the school.



Steven Jewell,  
Headteacher

## Your views



Included with this newsletter is a parental survey.

We would very much appreciate it if you could fill this in and return it to us at the school.

The survey asks your opinion on how well we support pupils, how well the school is led, and about pupil progress.

Please be honest and tell us what you think.

Pupils and staff are receiving a similar questionnaire which will allow the school to plan our areas for improvement.

Please return the enclosed survey sheet to the school by **Friday 14th October 2016.**

## Drop In and Reporting

We look forward to welcoming parents/carers into the school from **4.30—5.30pm on Monday 10th October 2016** to informally meet with teachers and other staff to discuss pupil progress. Tea/coffee/biscuits will be available and the Headteacher will be available to meet, too.



On **Friday 9th December 2016**, we will also post out a progress report to each parent/carer that will give details of pupil progress and will allow you to monitor how your child is doing at Elmbank. Copies of these will also be sent to the pupil's mainstream school if appropriate.

## Focus on...Art

### ELMBANK STAFF 2016-17

**Mr S Jewell**  
(Headteacher)

**Mr G Smith**  
(Principal Teacher)

**Mrs S Murdoch**  
(Teacher)

**Mr S Thornely**  
(Teacher)

**Mr F Hayes**  
(Learning Assistant)

**Mrs F Marchbank**  
(Learning Assistant)

**Mr J Robson**  
(Learning Assistant)

**Mr A Barnes**  
(Supply Learning  
Assistant)

**Mrs E McGuire**  
(Supply Learning  
Assistant)

**Mrs J Diab**  
(Clerical Assistant)

**Mr D McEwan**  
(Facilities Assistant)

**Mr C Hall**  
(Shed Project)

### Associated Staff

**Mrs C Clanachan**  
(Area Manager, Supporting  
Learners—Nithsdale)

**Mrs L Gillies**  
(Pupil Support Officer)

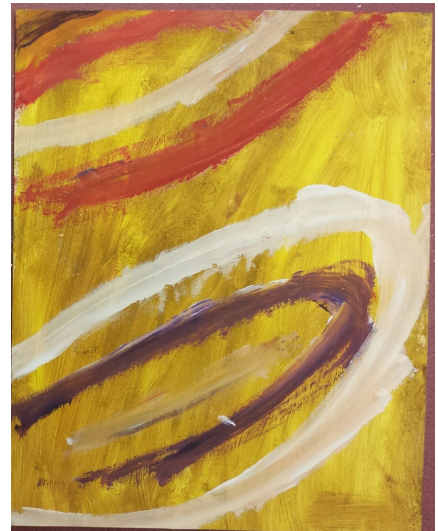
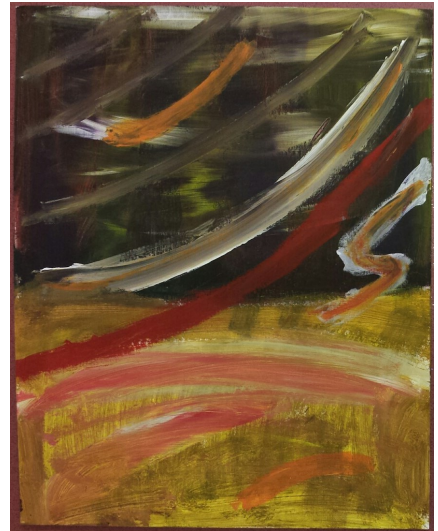
**Mrs S Harper**  
(Educational Psychologist)

**Ms M Smith**  
(Education Officer)

**Mrs E Wallace**  
(Careers' Advisor)

Well done to Max Duff (S5) who completed his abstract Art project with Mr Hayes. Max studied various artists including Wassily Kandinsky and Gerhard Richter and very successfully developed his own skills in painting, understanding of colour and composition.

Abstract Art can be one of the most complex forms, and as you can see below, Max has completed some excellent pieces. His final big piece (below left) measures 2 feet by 4 feet on board.





## Outdoor Learning...



Kayaking continued to develop the skills of two of our pupils, Lawrie Marshall and Darrel Robinson (both S4).



Congratulations to both of them for navigating the lost gorge of The Cairn and achieving their one star kayaking certificate. A video of their paddle is online at [vimeo.com/182926335](https://vimeo.com/182926335)

As part of the wider Outdoor Learning programme, Darrel and Lawrie collected wild blackberries and made their blackberry and apple jam (with apples from the tree Mrs McColm planted at Elmbank). It was delicious on bread, toasted on the fire.

The next week they collected fresh twigs and turned them into artist's charcoal by packing an empty syrup tin with a hole in the top. This was placed on the fire, the combustion of the twigs was restricted by the lack of oxygen so all the moisture and gases were removed by the heat. Pure charcoal was left. Darrel and Lawrie then tried it out on the bark of surrounding trees.



Thanks again to Mr Thornely for organising the outdoor learning programme for pupils at Elmbank, as well as Mr Robson and Mrs Marchbank for assisting, and the Outdoor Education team for the kayaking experience!

## Reading...



Some pupils are helping to turn part of the English classroom into a reading area. So far we have a rug, some chairs and coverings and curtains but we are looking to develop it further – if anyone has any suggestions or items they would like to offer as a donation please call Mr Thornely at Elmbank on 01387 254438.

In addition, all pupils are being encouraged to read more for pleasure, and we would like to ask parents/carers to encourage this at home, too. See this for inspiration! <http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/books/features/the-top-20-books-every-student-should-read-before-leaving-secondary-school-10437063.html>

**Quotations from our new inspirational social area!**

The pupil social area at Elmbank has been redesigned with new furniture and some framed inspirational quotes. We hope to include pictures of this in the next newsletter. In the meantime, here are some of the inspiring messages for our young people:

**BELIEVE YOU CAN AND YOU'RE HALF WAY THERE**

IT'S A GOOD DAY TO HAVE A GOOD DAY  
**LAUGH MORE WORRY LESS**  
 DO MORE OF WHAT YOU LOVE  
 BE THE BEST VERSION OF YOU  
 TRY & FAIL DON'T GIVE UP  
 FAIL TO TRY  
 Stay positive Regret nothing  
**WORK HARD BE HUMBLE**  
 EVERY DAY MAY NOT BE GOOD BUT  
 THERE IS SOMETHING GOOD IN EVERY DAY  
 LIVE LAUGH LOVE  
**FOLLOW YOUR DREAMS**  
 BELIEVE IN YOURSELF  
 DON'T FORGET TO BE **> AWESOME!**

**EDUCATION IS THE MOST POWERFUL WEAPON WHICH YOU CAN USE TO CHANGE THE WORLD.**  
 - NELSON MANDELA -

**Focus on...Music**

Thanks to the kind donation of funding from Friends of Elmbank, Kieran Lamont (S4) and Mr Hayes are working with Blair McGee at The Stove in Dumfries to produce music tracks.

Kieran is a skilled rapper, MC and beatboxer and has already fully completed one track during his weekly session at The Stove and is currently working on a second track.

Kieran has written the lyrics to the tracks himself, during his English lessons with Mr Thornely. Mr Hayes and Blair are helping him to record them, add music, beats and effects, and then complete them using the state of the art equipment available at The Stove.

Massive thanks go to Blair at The Stove, as well as Friends of Elmbank for their generous funding, and Mr Hayes and Mr Thornely for helping Kieran.



**Focus on...ASDAN**

As part of their Physical Education, Cookery and PSHE work, pupils at Elmbank can gain short course awards from ASDAN. ASDAN stands for the Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network, and provides a range of short courses in topics such as Practical Cookery, Animal Care and Fitness. They also offer Bronze, Silver and Gold qualifications, which some of our pupils take part in if they attend our partners at Aberlour.

As part of her PSHE lessons, Chiara McLean (S4) used her interest in horses to produce an informative and interesting booklet about horse care.



Above: Chiara with her equine care booklet.

As part of their cookery lessons, Chad Dilley (S2) and Cairen Brown (S3) made some lovely food (see below):



Left: Chad's fresh salad and garlic bread



Below: Cairen's doorstep vanilla cheesecake





# ZooLab...

This week, we had a very enjoyable visit in school from Tristan at Zoolab. He brought in a variety of exotic and interesting animals for us to see, touch and even hold! Young people and staff were fascinated by some of these animals and the information about their habitat. See below for some pictures of some of the creatures we encountered...



Most of our pupils were brave enough to hold some of the animals, including Cairen Brown (S3) who is holding the terrifyingly large, but beautifully marked, snake on the left.

The same cannot be said of most of the staff, some of whom covered in corners at the sight of spiders and snakes! The small tortoise and toad shown above were slightly more popular!



**Elmbank School**  
**Proposed Mainstream School Link Teachers**  
**From Monday 11<sup>th</sup> April 2016**

<b>Mr S Jewell (Headteacher)</b>	<b>Mr G Smith (Principal Teacher)</b>	<b>Mrs S Murdoch (Class Teacher)</b>	<b>Mr S Thornely (Class Teacher)</b>
Maxwelltown High School Moffat Academy	Castle Douglas High School Sanquar Academy St Joseph's College Wallace Hall Academy	Dalbeattie High School Douglas Ewart High School Dumfries High School Kirkcudbright Academy Stranraer Academy	Annan Academy Dalry Secondary School Dumfries Academy Langholm Academy Lockerbie Academy

## Children's Panel Resource Fair..

On Wednesday 12th September 2016, Mr Smith, Mr Thornely and Mr Hayes attended the Children's Panel Resource Fair at The Usual Place, Dumfries. This event gave Children's Panel members an opportunity to engage with a range of agencies and providers for young people, including Elmbank.



We were able to promote the good work we do to enhance the understanding of Elmbank within the Children's Panel system.



In addition, many attendees were added to our newsletter distribution list so hello if you are reading this!

## Mrs McColm's Plaque

In the last newsletter, we included the sad news that Mrs McColm, a Learning Assistant for several years at Elmbank, had passed away. To mark Mrs McColm's impact at Elmbank, we have placed a plaque on the outside wall of the school, next to an apple tree she planted.



Mrs McColm's daughter Julie came in to school last week to see the plaque and to taste some jam that was made from the apples.

We hope the plaque will be a lasting memory to Mrs McColm and the positive impact she had on so many young people during her time at Elmbank.



## Focus on...PE



Elmbank pupils benefit from our membership of Nunholm Sports Club and take part in a variety of sports and fitness activities there. This term, given the recent Paralympics in Rio, Mr Robson has been teaching some young people to play boccia. Boccia is a bowls sport played at national and international level by players with disabilities. In addition, some pupils have been perfecting their swing at the driving range!



## ELMBANK SCHOOL VALUES

**Mutual Respect**      **Fairness**  
**Responsibility**      **Support**  
**Enjoyment**

## ELMBANK VISION STATEMENT



**BY WORKING TOGETHER  
 WITHIN SCHOOL, WE WILL ENSURE  
 ALL OUR PUPILS ARE PROVIDED WITH  
 A SAFE AND POSITIVE ENVIRONMENT  
 WHERE THEY CAN  
 CONTINUE TO BECOME**



**EFFECTIVE CONTRIBUTORS  
 SUCCESSFUL LEARNERS  
 RESPONSIBLE CITIZENS  
 AND  
 CONFIDENT INDIVIDUALS**

