



Dear Parents and Carers

As I write this the snow has melted but Christmas is in full flow; plays, parties and a very special visitor. 2017 marks 10 years of Santa visiting Heathlands in his blue bus and the ongoing generosity of the local company who started this tradition is much appreciated.

Reflecting back on the term is a joy when you see the activities and projects covered in all departments of the school - some fantastic learning has taken place. The start of our student leaders project has been very exciting and is featured strongly in the Upper School pages. Our older pupils performed magnificently in Twelfth Night for the Schools Shakespeare Festival and benefitted from our first careers fair. Younger children have also shown their dramatic and creative skills in the Christmas production and when involved "Up for It" and See Hear productions. They are a talented lot and should aim high!

Lastly we cannot let this term pass without remembering Ofsted and the assessment of our school as outstanding in all areas. This is only achieved with tremendous commitment and dedication from a staff team who regularly go the "extra mile" and my thanks go to them. We should also be very proud of our pupils and the part they played in sharing their achievements and enthusiasm for learning with the inspectors, and for being articulate about their views.

Parents please don't worry - we will not relax but will continue in our efforts to do the best we can for pupils!

I hope all our families enjoy the holidays and have a safe and relaxing Christmas.

Deborah Jones-Stevens

Staffing Update

We have said a temporary goodbye to Mrs Marris and Mrs Goodwin who have both started their maternity leave – there could be a couple of Christmas babies. Mrs Shields has now returned from her leave and will be working Monday to Thursday. Mrs George has also joined the staff team covering for Mrs Goodwin's absence.

In addition we have welcomed Mrs Kellett as Admin assistant and Miss Parker who works as a LSA in Lower school.

Safety on phones and the Internet

A lot of our young people are hoping Santa will deliver a phone or tablet this Christmas.

Many of our children are using things like Facebook, Snapchat and Instagram. These are all fantastic resources if used appropriately but can be open to misuse. They also have age restrictions which are not always adhered to.

All parents are advised to check their child's internet use and the age restrictions which should be followed. There is advice on this on www.heathlandscomputing.co.uk or you can contact us for more help

Lets keep our children safe this Christmas.

Lower School Autumn Term 2017



At the time of writing the weather is feeling particularly 'festive'. This term has been a long one, spanning the end of summer and Harvest time, through to the snows of winter. The children have continued to work hard and a considerable amount of learning had happened, before, during and after our 'outstanding' OFSTED. Here are just a few examples of our learning in Lower School.



We have many talented pupils at Heathlands who have a wide range of interests outside school. Children have hobbies ranging from swimming to cooking to VV (drama/mime) to fashion design and



football to name a few. Heathlands Harmony choir and some of the lower school pupils were very proud to be filmed for the credits of the recent se-

ries of "Up for it". Several Heathlands pupils also featured showcasing their talents. One of the presenters, Mia, is an ex



pupil and popped in for an assembly one Friday.



Congratulations to Mrs Roberts who received a surprise award from the Book Trust and Book Start for excellence in promoting literacy in the Early Years Foundation Stage. A well deserved award.



This year our Christmas plays were written and acted by each class, joined by the theme of "Around the world at Christmas". There were 7 different plays from 7 different classes. The children had all worked hard learning their lines and making props. Thank you to all the parents who attended to support their children. The performances were followed by a successful Christmas Fete organised by the Friends of Heathlands.



Back in October we held our Harvest Festival. Parents and pupils who attended enjoyed a range of Harvest

themed learning activities and gave a generous gift of food, which pupils were later able to



A reminder to lower school pupils: keep a diary over the Christmas holidays. We always enjoy reading them when we return.





In September we had an impressive Harvest of vegetables from our new vegetable garden and from the nursery garden. Seeing the vegetables growing and being able to pick them

inspired lots of learning for pupils across the full lower school age range.



This year the class groups are named after birds. Early in the term Owls class got to meet some owls!



Some of the KS1 pupils learnt about "people who help us" as part of PSHCE. In Robins class they created a hospital and all became doctors and nurses. The whole department was lucky enough to get a visit from two working police horses, thanks to one of our parents. Starlings class also got the chance to go in a fire engine while on a visit out.



Several of the KS2 classes have been studying the Ancient Egyptians this term. The learning has involved lots of hands on activities such as making Shadufs, mud bricks and canopic jars, learning hieroglyphics and how to paint like an Egyptian, learning about mummification and the famous mummy Tutankhamun, learning about the importance of the Nile and much more.



Maths is fun and there are



lots of opportunities at home for parents to reinforce maths skills as part of every day activities. Cooking, shopping, present wrapping, laying the table etc provide opportunities for measuring, weighing, telling the time, money, adding, subtracting, counting, problem solving etc. Have a 'mathematical' Christmas!

For the last 10 years a kind local business man has lent Santa his blue bus to visit the Lower school children. The pupils made a special present. To say thank you.





Student Leaders—We have been busy this term, setting up a new Student Leadership Group. This group consists of nine senior students and five peer mentors. We have appointed senior students based on their maturity, aptitude and application. They have received training which includes leadership skills and presentation skills. We have established five focus groups: Learning Culture, Sport and Community, Health and Well-being, Student Council and ECO school. Each focus group is led by a small group of the senior students.



The Student Council has been established with representatives from different form groups who meet half termly with the senior students. A senior student oversees the student council with the support of a member of staff.

Five year 8 students have been selected and trained as peer mentors. This is an ongoing programme which runs throughout the year.

This term the peer mentors have been given the opportunity to use their skills working with younger students in school.



Peer mentors led a 'get to know each other' session to help all the new students to settle into school.

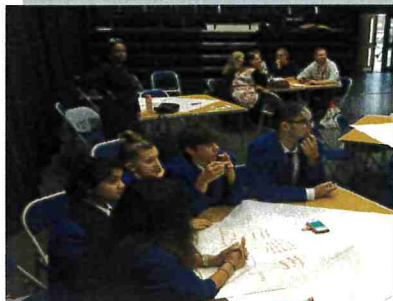


Congratulations to Mr Priestley who won an award for his contribution to disability sport at the St Albans City & District Sports Awards that took place in September.



A feedback session organised by the peer mentors was set up to collect their views about the activities they would like us to provide at break time.

Preparation for Adulthood. The partnership between Heathlands and Danie French, our Careers and Enterprise (C&E) Adviser from T&B Contractors, is in full swing now and lots of different visits and events have been happening this term. The C&E Adviser helps us to develop meaningful links with employers so that our students experience the world of work and become more aware of the opportunities available to them.



In October we had a visit from 'Being Her' Fashion and Travel Bloggers and our year 10 students visited Bedford College for a Deaf Independence Day where they learned about the resources and services available post 16.

In November US4,5,6,8 and 9 had an inspirational talk from a deaf doctor. Also this month all of Upper School and Key Stage 2 classes attended Heathlands first ever Deaf Careers Day. We were so lucky to have people from the deaf community give up their time to talk to our students about the different jobs they do. Amongst the visitors were Artists, Nurses, Police Constables and Fashion designers.



Children in Need In the Student Council meeting we discussed ideas to raise money for Children in Need. One idea we agreed to was to make pancakes and sell them during break times. I had to ask our Head Teacher for permission,



permission was given so we went ahead and organised this event. I joined in making pancakes with the other student council representatives, it was great. I was surprised how easy it was and we managed to sell a lot of pancakes, raising £51.11. I am looking forward to lead the 'Heathlands Got Talent' show which is going to be an even bigger event.



Anti-Bullying Week 2017 took place during week 13-17th November. One of the senior students delivered a presentation on the theme of 'All Different All Equal' to reinforce the messages about why bullying students is not acceptable. It was a great week with different activities organised by staff to raise awareness about the long-term impact bullying can have on friendships, self-esteem as well as health and well-being.

All Different

All Equal

#ANTIBULLYINGWEEK

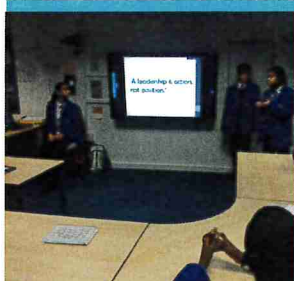




A presentation was delivered by two senior students on the importance of recycling waste. They discussed why it was important for us to become an ECO school and encouraged students to become involved in helping them to improve the school environment.



Senior students met with Mrs Jones-Stevens, our Head Teacher, to share student feedback on homework and English. It was a very productive meeting and some really good ideas were shared. Senior students are going to go away to think about what to do next.



Senior students led house assemblies on how we could use student feedback to improve our school learning culture.



Shakespeare School Festival

On the 21st of November, Heathlands participated in the Shakespeare School Festival. This year, we decided to do Twelfth Night, a play which is full of disguises and complicated love stories! A fantastic cast was brought together and we have been working hard (and having fun!) in our rehearsals. The props team also worked hard making things from office signs, beer bottles and a love letter.

Preparation did not only happen in the school, we also went to the Abbey Theatre for a workshop where we all learnt acting techniques and tips! We all came together to perform for the first time for Heathlands staff and pupils. The next day, we all went to the Abbey Theatre to perform to parents, friends, and the public.



Despite the nerves, we delivered a fantastic performance. Now, our exhausted actors and actresses are insisting on more plays!





Heath House Autumn Term 2017

Autumn term 2017: This autumn has been an extremely busy one for the children and young people. There has been a wide variety of Heath House activities, clubs and outings taking place. In addition to all this happening around Heath House there have also been a number of projects taking place. We have had a Hedgehog project and a gardening project. Some of the younger pupils have also been attending a number of after school clubs such as sports club and football club.



Rabbits: As the weather is getting colder Heath House purchased a new indoor hutch for the rabbits. The young people helped to build and get ready the hutch so that we could get move the rabbits inside.



Gardening: The young people in Heath House helped to plant up the Viking ship with bulbs and plants ready for the spring time.



Snorkelling: This term some of the children and young people have been attending a snorkelling course at Westminster Lodge. This is what they had to say:

"I am really enjoyed because when I wear my snorkel and goggles I could see everything in swimming pool."

"I really excited to learn snorkelling."

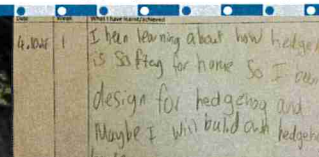
Free walking and money management: Staff have been working closely with the young people to develop their free walking skills. We have also been teaching the young people about purchasing their cookery ingredients independently. They have to use their recipes to work out what to buy and how much items cost they then pay for the items by themselves.



Tennis: Heath House have organised to have an outside deaf tennis instructor to come to the school to teach the children and young people how to play tennis.

"I am enjoy play tennis in school because I learn about skills."

Verity: We started a new project in the Autumn called Heath House Hedgehog Huts. The children and young people successfully completed 3 shelters which they named 'Pikachu', 'Rose' and 'Bart'. They wrote a weekly log to say what they felt they had learnt or accomplished. After collecting research and learning about hibernation the young people began to make the shelters using different materials. The young people were very excited when we were lucky enough to see two hedgehogs one evening. When the shelters were completed the children gathered hay and food and put them outside ready for any hedgehogs wishing to find a home. This was a fun and exciting project that we hope to revisit next Autumn!



Cubs: This term the children have continued to work towards more badges at Cubs. They managed to work towards and achieve the communicator activity badge, sports endurance badge, personal challenge badge, our world challenge award badge, pioneering badge and many more badges.

Flowerbed project: This term the children and young people planned to learn how to grow their own vegetables. Firstly they had to prepare the area where the flower bed was to go, by removing all the weeds and bushes. After this Thomas's brother came to build a flower bed for the young people.



After this the young people had to weather proof the flower bed. As a team they painted the flower bed.

"I had help flower bed and paint with my friends I help move soil as well".

"We painted the wood to help protect it from the weather."



Next the young people had to measure up the flower bed so it could be lined with plastic sheeting. This is to help protect the wood from rotting in the future.



The young people worked with Thomas and Ursula to measure cut and staple the plastic sheeting to the inside of the flowerbed.



For the final step we had to order a ton of soil to put in the flower bed. The secondary boys worked together to move the soil into the flower bed. The young people are now looking forward to planting up the flower bed next year and learning to grow a variety of vegetables and herbs to have with our dinner in the evenings.



Multi purpose games table: As a reward for the continued positive behaviour of the young people in Heath House. Staff purchased a multi-purpose game table. The young people have enjoyed learning how to play pool and play air hockey with there friends in the evening.

"I really like learn play pool."



Harvester meal: The children and young people also choose to go for a meal out. The young people discussed going for a meal during the pupil meeting. They all agreed to go to the Harvester.

"I liked going for meal with friends. I had fun and enjoyed food chicken, salad and chips."

"We go for a meal after go pumpkin farm we had fun."



Pumpkin farm: To get ready for Halloween we went to a pumpkin farm so that the children and young people could select their own pumpkins.

"I been go to pumpkin farm and choose my own pumpkin for pumpkin carving."



Heath House Halloween pumpkin farm: The young people enjoyed having a Halloween party this term. They organised games, food and a party. The children displayed carved pumpkins in the pupil kitchen as well as making decorations and decorating Heath House.



Christmas party: This year the Heath House party was a successful one with lots of lovely food, games and a Christmas jumper competition. Thank you everyone for coming and to those that helped with organising and setting up this party and making it such an enjoyable evening for all involved.



Center Parcs: For our end of term activity we organised to go to Center Parcs. The young people enjoyed going to the pancake house, they also were entertained by fire breathers, fire dancers as well as a firework display. After this they went for a swim at the swimming centre where they enjoyed the flumes.



Well what a start to this academic year. The number of learners on courses this year is the largest since the BSL Centre opened in 2009. All courses which started in September are full to the brim! We have welcomed back past learners and greeted new learners, all developing their BSL skills within our safe learning environment.

The Signature Awards were held in November in Leeds, both Zayne Thomson and Emma Caswell were nominated for awards again. Zayne was shortlisted for the Emerging Teacher Award and Emma was short listed for the Professional Contribution Award. It was a magical night of networking, meeting excited nominees and a lovely sit down meal with old friends and new. Then the announcement of the awards winners; Zayne was unlucky this year, however Emma won her category. Emma was shocked and delighted to win the award, she has been working hard with Signature on various projects helping to improve BSL qualifications and create new ones.



"I was so shocked when my name was read out, having been nominated for an award for the last four years and runner up each time, I wasn't expecting to win. I am very lucky to have been handed the opportunities I have had over the last few years and working with Signature has been a learning curve."

Emma Caswell BSL Centre Manager

Well done Emma—we are all thrilled for you!

With two award winning teachers we will have to aim for an award for Centre of the Year next.

The parents group started back after the summer break, we had a few new faces too. They have been working on stories and topical vocabulary linked to topics taught in school.

BSL Level 1 groups have all taken their first assessments, some are awaiting results over this week. They are all enthusiastic and keen to learn.



We saw a rise in the number of learners applying for BSL Level 3 this year. We have 3 groups and each one is full. They have all been learning linguistics and developing their productive skills through research and presentations. They are now learning how to self-analyse and develop their skills further by applying the linguistic knowledge they have been acquiring.

Some learners have expressed how much harder the course is compared to BSL Level 2, however they are thoroughly enjoying it. BSL Level 3 is a step up from Level 2, you learn more linguistics and are expected to apply this to your productive skills. The only way to develop your BSL skills is by meeting Deaf people and using it, along with attending class!

This takes us to BSL Level 4, two classes again this year, both full and learning that Level 3 was actually easy compared to Level 4. Level 4 brings additional linguistic knowledge building upon the learning at Level 3. It also brings an expectation of taking control of your development as a learner. Level 4 is a foundation degree and the work is meant to be hard, the more effort you put in the greater the rewards.

Learners have completed translation activities from both English to BSL and BSL to English, research into topics such as Jobs and Medicine for filming conversations. They have also been learning how to self-analyse and mark their conversation work.



What's on in January?

We have BSL Level 1 fast Track courses— Tuesday evening 5pm-8pm or Thursday Morning 10am-1pm. Places are filling up already.

We are looking at providing a BSL Level 6 course starting in February. Interviews to be held in January. Places are limited for this course, if you would like more information please contact the BSL Centre via bsl@heathlands.herts.sch.uk

Have a great Christmas and New Year from the BSL Centre Team

BSL COURSE



**BSL LEVEL ONE
FAST TRACK
COURSE**

**January 2018 –
July 2018**

Tuesday 5.00pm-8.00pm
Or
Thursday 10.00am-1.00pm

BSL COURSE



**BSL LEVEL 6
COURSE**

**February 2018 –
December 2018**

Course Interviews January 2018

Saturdays fortnightly
9.30am-4.30pm
BSL Centre
Heathlands School
bsl@heathlands.herts.sch.uk

Parents Page

Autumn Term 2017



Charity Number We are very excited to announce that we now have a charity number for Friends of Heathlands. This means that we can apply for lottery funding and claim gift aid. Friends of Heathlands are trying to raise money to improve access to technology for the children by purchasing a new set of laptops at an approximate cost of £3200! So any ideas or support at our events are welcome.



School BBQ In September we held our first new year BBQ, it was great to see lots of new faces. FOH held their AGM during the BBQ and we have a new Secretary for the committee. Welcome to Mrs Blacker who has kindly offered to take over the reins from Mrs McGarrie, thank you to you both for all your continued

Sign and Play This continues to be a popular afternoon for our families. This year has had a real family feel, with one new family bringing 7 members! Lovely to see new members in our community



Horsing around with the Met Police Horses The children were lucky to have a visit from the Metropolitan Police horses. A new parent to the school works for the horse division and was able to share some of the work they do with the children and tell us how they're looked after and what happens when they retire!

FOH Harvest and Christmas Fete At Harvest festival lots of parents donated food for our local food bank, we dropped them off to a delighted team of volunteers, who would like to thank the school community. Also thank you to all the parents and staff who helped with our Christmas fete this year. We managed to raise £lots of cash and had lots of fun! There were home-made bows for sale, lots of games to play, mulled Ribena and mince pies and of course signing Santa! Thank you to all the parents who either ran a stall or stayed to take part in the activities.



Tesco Bags of Help Scheme. Thank you to all the parents who have been helping raise funds as part of the Tesco Bags of Help Scheme. Heathlands School came second in the Hatfield store vote and got £2000 to spend on the lower school playground. We have already bought basketball hoops and will be buying some mirrors, chalkboards and whiteboards for the back of the climbing wall. You can still get tokens in the following stores until the end of December: Harpenden Express, Harpenden Luton Road Express, Jersey Farm Express, London Colney Express, St Albans Beech Road, St Albans Market and Wheathampstead Express. In January and February 2018 we are hoping to raise money for a ground trampoline, when tokens will be given out in the Watford, Bushey and Shenley area. Please encourage your family and friends to vote for Heathlands!





Spring and Summer Term Dates - 2018

Spring Term 2018

Inset Day	Fri 5 January 2018 (no pupils in school)
Term Starts	Mon 8 January 2018
Half Term Holiday	Mon 12 February 2018– Fri 16 February 2018
Term Ends	Thurs 29 March 2018 @ 12.30 pm

Summer Term 2018

Inset Day	Monday 16 April 2018 (no pupils in school)
Term Starts	Tuesday 17 April 2018
Bank Holiday	Monday 7 May 2018
Half Term Holiday	Monday 28 May 2018 – Friday 1 June 2018
Term Ends	Thursday 26 July 2018 @ 12.30 pm
Inset Day	Friday 27 July 2018 (no pupils in school)

Any changes or amendments will be announced on our website
www.heathlands.herts.sch.uk