



Heathlands Newsletter Autumn Term 2015



Dear Parents/Carers

I hope you enjoy this newsletter in which we share so many of the positive things which have happened over the last term. We also have the second edition of the school newspaper written by the children linked to the theme of "time travel".

In October several staff members attended the Old Heathlandians 40th anniversary reunion. A very grand occasion! What a pleasure to meet up again with past pupils and to see how much they have achieved since leaving Heathlands; families, travel, college or university success, responsible jobs and leaders of their own companies. We are also very grateful to the Old Heathlandian's fundraising efforts on behalf of the school that evening to buy a further ipad for the children's use.

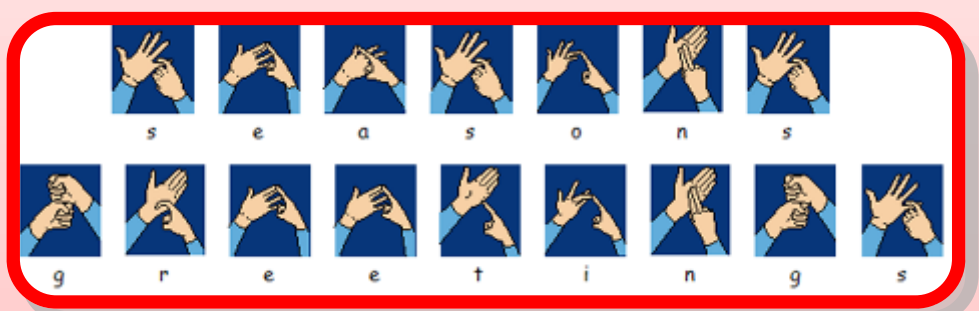
I was thrilled to see so many parents attend Heathlands' production of the Tempest at the Shakespeare School's Festival in November. What impressive performances by our young people! I felt proud of them all both for their skills and the commitment shown through the rehearsal period. The Lower School play was a similarly enjoyable event with pupils involved in everything from script writing, making props and costumes to performance.

This term we have continued to develop our curriculum to ensure it matches pupils' needs and is flexible to accommodate individuals. We have introduced the new Enquiring Minds curriculum for KS3. This approach uses projects to target the development of study skills applicable to all curriculum areas: research, planning, presentation, teamwork. Two other initiatives this term have been the introduction of music therapy and a Modern Foreign Language (Spanish) for targeted students, both of which have been popular and motivating for those involved.

As you can see the builders have been back on site and things are progressing well. This development unfortunately involved three classes of children moving into temporary accommodation but staff and students have coped well with the change. We will move into the new premises in February and it will be worth the wait. In addition to new art facilities we will have, refurbished toilets, a new office for lower school senior staff, improved lower school classrooms suited for modern teaching and a roof without leaks!

Our very best wishes go to all Heathlands families and friends for the holiday period. We look forward to seeing pupils back at school on 5th January 2016.

Deborah Jones-Stevens
Head Teacher





Lower School Autumn Term 2015



Lower School have had another busy term as Summer has changed to Autumn and winter has begun. After a term full of exciting learning opportunities the Lower School children are all looking forward to Christmas. As usual we would like all children to keep **holiday diaries** over Christmas. This is a fantastic opportunity for pupils to practise their writing skills and the children enjoy looking at each others' diaries when they return. All those who have tried their best or shown significant improvement will get a prize. All the diaries will be shared in class and in assembly.



This term, LS1 focused on **People Around Us** and enjoyed a variety of role play areas including a hospital, an optician, a vet and a school office.



Children drew portraits of staff members who have proudly displayed them in their work place. Do you know these very important people are?



People who help us



LS2, 3 and 4 have been learning about 'People who help us' in PSHECE. They particularly enjoyed a visit when the police came in. The children asked good questions and learnt more about how the police help keep people



safe. One of the highlights was being able to sit in a police car!



Sporting news



- Lower School 4 and 5 played their first ever competitive football games with Samuel Ryder

School and Skyswood School

- Lower School 6 and 7 played football competitively against Garden Fields School
- Lower School 6 attended a Panathlon Boccia Competition and were placed 2nd overall
- GB Triple Jumper Nathan Fox visited Heathlands and pupils worked extremely hard to raise £440 to support Nathan's training for the Rio Olympics next year



Heathlands Harmony.



Heathlands Harmony choir have had a number of exciting opportunities so far this year including regular practises with the

choir at Garden Fields school. Children from both schools worked with Sign singer 'Fletch' as part of Sign Health's Sign 2 Sing to produce a pop video. The two school choirs also went Carol singing in the Maltings. In the new year they will be joining other Hertfordshire schools to perform in a choral festival at the Royal Albert hall.





LS 5,6 and 7 have been learning about WW2.

Visit to WW2 centre. Report by Thalia (LS5)

On Monday 23rd Nov. LS5,6 and 7 went to a trip to Lincolnsfield WW2 centre to learn about WW2.

Firstly we went in 1939 classroom. It was so dirty and smelly so I and Sara grabbed 2 seats for us I front . Soon we met a teacher called Miss Summerhayes, she told us about the ink hole (in the wooden desks) and she gave us an ID card for us so she said "This for WW2 and you must never lose it." So I didn't lose it, and she told us about the blackboard.

After that we had a ride on a jeep to the Blitz (experience). In the jeep it was rough and very hard seats. Later we went in shelter. I felt so scared because a man who lead us he said there had a lot of rat! So I went like "ahggghhh RATS!" Also I held Charlotte's hand so tight. When we got out we went back to jeep and drove ...

Later we arrived to Soldier Museum. I felt so interested plus I had been try holding a gun then I had try wear soldier's backpack and helmet.

Then we went to the 1940 house and new lady. She showed us about fake (wedding) cake, just like fake cake (when you picked it up) turned into real cake and she showed us a baby's gas mask and she led us to 1940s toys also she let us play with the toys and she told us about toilet in a pot (under the bed). I had been try wear real fox scarf, it really rough! So I don't like it.

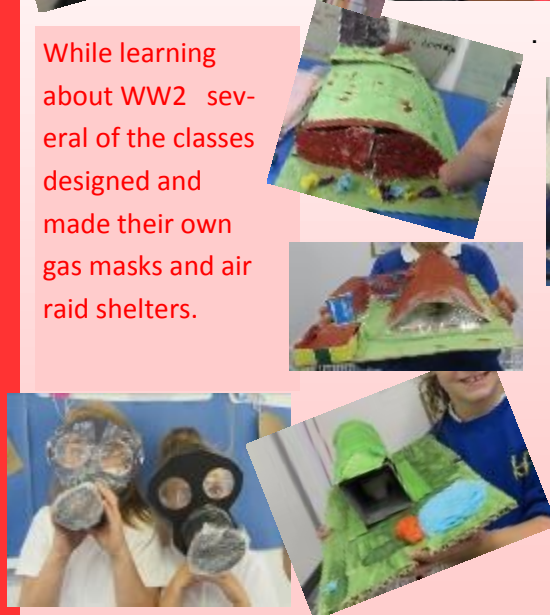
Finally we all went to 1940's gardens. I and all have been stroked a rabbit. They are so cute (but they kept them to eat them in the 1940s). Later we went in Anderson Shelter. After that I did pump (water) and Sara hold the hose to solve (put out) the fire. In the end the water ran out so we passed water in a pot...

In the end we went back to school.



Learning Science

While learning about WW2 several of the classes designed and made their own gas masks and air raid shelters.



Lower school pupils enjoy learning about science, whether it be developing their investigation skills by conducting experiments, attending Science club or learning about such things as materials, 'looking after teeth' or 'our bodies'. Science is fun and interactive.





Upper School

Autumn Term 2015



Recent KS4 Science work in Upper School



The Year 11 Entry Level Science group worked together on a practical assignment to model and investigate impact craters from meteorites for their coursework.

The Year 11 GCSE science group have been learning about diabetes and about how to test for the presence of glucose in the urine.

They carried out an investigation in the lab using a method called the reduction of potassium permanganate. They plot a standard curve graph using standard solutions of potassium permanganate and glucose. They were able to find out the percentage concentration of glucose in unknown samples which helped them to identify which patients had diabetes.



Year 10 students have been learning about how to plan and carry out investigations for their coursework. Recently, they investigated the reactions of metals with

acids; they put small pieces of metal in a test tube mixed with hydrochloric acid. Recording

Ex Students Reunion Football Tournament



Over 50 ex students visited Heathlands one Friday afternoon, prior to a weekend reunion held at Sopwell House. They were delighted to



visit the new facilities including the Technology block, dance / drama studio, ICT room and suite of secondary classrooms

and see lessons taking place. There was also a football tournament with four ex student teams, a staff team and an team of current students. It was a close fought event but the staff team were the winners and are seen holding the golden boot!

Personal & Social Development



US5 have been learning about the effect of litter on the environment and the importance of 'reduce, reuse, recycle.' In the run up to Christmas they have been

Geography and Science Field Trip

On 16th October 11A headed off to Cromer in Norfolk for a weekend to gather evidence for their Geography controlled assessment, to practise different data collecting skills for their science course and even had time for some exciting activities. It was a great opportunity to mix and develop our team building skills.



We arrived on Friday afternoon and learnt about the history of Cromer and why tourists might want to visit. Then we headed out to the climbing wall and worked in teams to ensure the climber was safe.



On the Saturday we went into Cromer and collected all the information we needed before heading back to the centre to create graphs and maps using the data.



We had time to complete some team building games – the best group the leader had ever seen! We then went back into the classroom to find out about what we would be doing the next day in the river.

On Sunday we went off to the river in time to visit 3 different sites. At each site we had to get in (luckily wearing waders to keep us dry – except Darlene!)



We carried out some measurements and then counted the number of species in the water. In the evening those of us

without injuries played aeroball (basketball on trampolines) which was really good fun!! After packing and clearing the rooms after breakfast on Monday, we headed out for a walk as we had completed so much work over the weekend we didn't need to use the computer lab any more. The tide was in so we couldn't go on the beach, but we managed to find a sweet shop to buy some goodies for the journey home. Back at the centre we had our last activity – archery – before eating lunch and making our way back to school in time for the taxis.





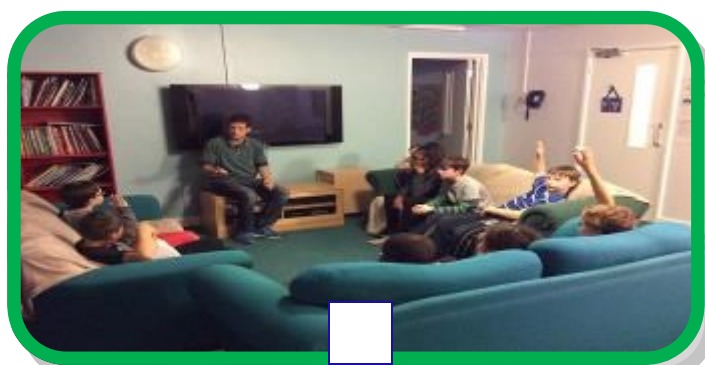
Heath House

Autumn Term 2015



We can not believe how fast this term has gone it seems like summer was only a few weeks ago and now we have the Christmas tree in place. In September we welcomed a number of young people into the Heath House "family"..

It has been a very busy term with lots of activities and events. Term always starts with staff and students meeting to decide what this term would involve. The students were able to give ideas on what activities they wanted so that staff could help them to organise these.



This term a number of our younger children joined a local Beavers group. We were able to offer a few places to some of our extended day students. The children worked hard to learn their Beavers promise and are now fully pledged Beavers. The children enjoy integrating with others, developing new skills are learning to take responsibility for their uniforms .

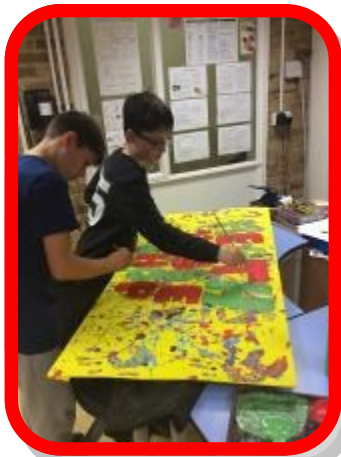


Cubs continues to be popular and one more pupil has just joined! He worked hard to learn his cub promise which he made in front of his cub pack



Recently all students went bowling. They enjoyed the evening and showed some impressive bowling skills!





Much of the 24 hour curriculum is spent teaching young people how to become independent adults. Currently young people are learning about money management . This involves trips to the shops and completing activities related to money. Young people are in the process of setting up their own Heath House shop where they will be able to purchase equipment needed for school and the odd sweet treat. As you can imagine creating the shop has needed a lot of planning. The sign for the shop was designed and created in art club. We look forward to showing you the progress of our shop in the next newsletter.



Empower Youth club remains a popular event every second Thursday. Students were able to give feedback on what they liked about the club and what they wanted to change.

Students are now able to have more free time in the club to socialise and talk in addition to all the games and activities offered.

We are also excited that in January deaf students from Knightsfield school are invited to join. We hope there will be lots of new faces to make new friends with.



Children helped to raise money for **Children in Need** this term by making cakes. They took the cakes to school and sold them.



We said a sad farewell to one friend this term. Luke has moved on to a different school but was able to come back for a final party. We wish him all the best in his new school.



In November children and staff enjoyed a night out in town. They went to a restaurant for a meal and enjoyed choosing different foods to eat. All the young people have become very good at ordering their own and communicating effectively with restaurant staff.



Tom and Jerry say **"We have worked hard all term making sure all the young people are learning and enjoying themselves. We are now off for a restful holiday and will see you all again in January."**





Building Work Progress

Autumn Term 2015



Its full speed ahead with the new Art and Design extension.
We are on track to open these facilities in February 2016.



We are refurbishing the downstairs areas at the same time. So Lower School will move back to fantastic new classrooms.





BSL Centre

Autumn Term 2015



In September 2015 we welcomed high numbers of people enrolling on courses at all levels; keeping us teaching, developing and supporting learners! We have a lovely mixture of previous learners returning and are happy to welcome new faces into the groups.

We have additional BSL Level 1 courses starting in January for anyone who wishes to start their BSL learning journey. Our enrolments for September 2016 courses will be open from February 2016 so please contact the BSL Centre if interested.



We have a high intake of BSL level 1 learners already working towards their second assessment. They are developing their vocabulary to be able to hold broader conversations.

Our BSL level 1 young persons' course has welcomed a new cohort of young learners eager to develop their BSL. They have been learning through playing games to expand their vocabulary and then conversation practice

We have three BSL Level 2 classes this year. Students have been developing their vocabulary as well as their receptive and productive skills. Working on presentation skills helps ensure information is conveyed in a visual way.

The parents' group have been developing their BSL linguistics and have found this knowledge useful when using their skills in conversation.

The parents' group is open to any parent of a deaf child within in Hertfordshire or if your child attends Heathlands school. It is free to attend so come and join us on Mondays 9.30am-12.00pm.

If you , family or friends would like to learn BSL please contact us about courses or workshops. We have BSL Level 1 fast track courses starting in January 2016. Give a loved one the gift of communication this Christmas, enrol them on a BSL course!

BSL COURSES

Signature
excellence in communication
with deaf people

TRAINING COURSES

**January 2015-
July 2016**

Basic BSL & Deaf Awareness workshops

BSL 101- Introduction to British Sign
Language (frontline staff/health care)

Deaf Awareness & Communication Tactics

BSL Level 1- Young People

BSL Level 1- Day or Evening

BSL Level 1- (Fast track) Day or Evening

BSL Level 2- Day or Evening

Pre-Level 3- Productive & Receptive

BSL Level 3- Day or Evening

BSL Level 4- Day or Evening

If you want more information, please contact us on:
bsl@heathlands.herts.sch.uk
Direct line: 01727 807810
www.heathlands.herts.sch.uk





We have two BSL level 3 groups who are preparing for their linguistics assessment. They have been developing their linguistic knowledge and learning about how and why signs are created.



Learners discussing in teams before debating the difference between medical and cultural views of Deafness.

This is always an interesting topic that generates great enthusiasm from classes.



Learners have also been discussing the topic areas of Home life and Deaf History and Culture.



Having an understanding of BSL linguistics enables learners to develop their skills with a purpose. They are able to begin self-analysing and look at how they are signing something, recognise when it's not quite right and improve on their production of BSL. Learners seem to make a transition when on the BSL Level 3 course. They begin the course with different opinions about BSL and Deaf culture then by the end of the course they acquire understanding of how BSL is part of a wider culture and not just a language to learn as a hobby.



We have three BSL level 4 classes, one group are sitting their assessments and have been gathering evidence for their portfolios.

The other two classes have been developing their BSL linguistic knowledge even further and learning new terminology. They have also been practising their translation skills, BSL to English.





Parent Pages

Autumn Term 2015



Our Survey said...

1st

Summer Fete

2nd

Behaviour Management

3rd

Meet the Parents Afternoon Tea

We are hoping that the FOH will run some of these events, so please let us know if you would like to help.



Friends of Heathlands

We have been lucky to have Mr Jordan-Caws and

Mrs Rimmington volunteer to get our PTA up and running alongside Mrs McGarry.

Should you want to get involved please contact the new FOH email address on:



Launch of the Heathlands App

We launched our new School App on 16th December.

It is to support children, taxi escorts, Parents and Carers.

We are hoping it will be a valuable tool in building a bridge between home and school.



School letters can be translated into the language of your choice

e.g. Urdu, Tamil etc. Please ask if your language is not an option.

Deaf World News and Events

Picture Dictionary

Useful phrases in BSL/English

Q and A



language of your

language is not



Heathlands Newsletter



Attendance – Its Important!

Regular attendance is really important and we have set a target of 95% for everyone. We review attendance every four weeks and are carefully monitoring this. At the moment our attendance is just below the target at 93.45%.

We know some absences are unavoidable but good attendance leads to good progress.

- Please make non-emergency medical appointments, e.g. audiology reviews and dental checks, in the school holidays. In some cases the school may ask for evidence before authorising medical absences.
- Do not take holidays in term time – in the vast majority of cases these cannot be authorised.

Spring Term 2016

Inset Day	Monday 4 January 2016 (no pupils in school)
Term Starts	Tuesday 5 January 2016
Half Term Holiday	Mon 15 February 2016– Fri 19 February 2016
Good Friday	Friday 25 March 2016 (no pupils in school)
Easter Monday	Monday 28 March 2016 (no pupils in school)
Term Ends	Friday 1 April 2016 @ 12.30 pm

Summer Term 2016

Term Starts	Monday 18 April 2016
Bank Holiday	Monday 2 May 2016
Half Term Holiday	Monday 30 May 2016 – Friday 3 June 2016
Term Ends	Friday 22 July 2016 @ 12.30 pm
Inset Day	Monday 25 July 2016 (no pupils in school)

Snow Procedures

Fortunately we have had no bad weather this term but over the winter months snow is always a risk. We will do all we can to keep the school open for pupils but on occasion it is simply impossible to immediately make the site safe or for staff to travel to work. If the school has to close we will inform parents via facebook and/or the group call text alert.

Most of the children have long journeys each day and we can only judge the weather conditions in St Albans. Parents in consultation with their children's taxis need to make the decision about whether or not it is safe to travel. Occasionally we may open late or close school early if heavy snow is predicted so please keep us informed of any changed mobile numbers so that we can update you via text.