



Heathlands Newsletter - Autumn Term 2016

Dear Parents and Carers

The Autumn term is generally the longest but ends in such a celebratory way with all the Christmas activities. I hope you enjoy this newsletter in which we share so many of the positive things which have happened over the last term. You can see the focus, as it should be, is on learning with some really interesting and stimulating enrichment activities arranged by staff.

I'd also like to congratulate our PTA "Friends of Heathlands (FoH)" for their fantastic fundraising effort this Christmas. FoH was set up only a year ago after years of us being without a PTA. All parents and carers are welcome so please volunteer for the next event – it really helps!

We have had a lovely end of term; the fantastic performance of Charlie and the Chocolate factory, a London travel challenge for Upper School and a very special visitor. As usual Heathlands' Santa came in a blue bus, reindeers being in short supply locally.

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

Deborah Jones-Stevens

Head Teacher

E safety

This term there has been a whole school focus on personal safety. As part of this we have done a lot of work on E safety including use of social media. Many of our children are using things like Facebook, ooVoo, 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.

In school, on a regular basis we are sorting out issues related to problems with social media use which have happened in the evenings and at weekends. 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 the school's website and we are always happy to support parents on an individual basis if they need help with sorting out things like privacy settings on phones and apps.

Governor News

I am delighted to tell parents that Mr Tom Lichy has become our new parent governor. Tom is the father of pupils in both Upper and Lower Schools so has an interest in all aspects of the schools' work. He has past experience as a Governor in another school and in senior positions for other deaf community organisations.

Weather Warning

As the winter sets we may experience snow and travel disruption for both children and staff. The school will do all it can to remain operational but in extreme conditions it may be necessary to close. A notice will be put on our school facebook page and a text sent to parents and taxis. Please make sure the school office has your current text number so that you get the message. Please remember we can only assess the weather conditions around school. Most of the children have very long journeys and parents need to assess if it is safe to travel from home.

Lower School - Autumn Term 2016

Once again we have had a busy term of learning in Lower school. Topics have included South America, Rainforests, Mayans and chocolate in KS2 and Celebrations in KS1. Foundation topics have included learning related to myself and my family, light and dark and night and day. We have also had opportunity for a lot of enrichment activities.

As usual we can only include a few in this newsletter.



The children on our school council have been voted for by their peers to represent each class. This year the school garden is hoping to finish the special 'bee garden' which they have been planning. They will be asking parents and friends for help, such as seed donations or offers of time to do digging. Look out for more information from them in the coming year about how you can be involved.

Oak class were lucky enough to meet a world champion Paralympic tennis player and get some



tips to improve their game when they attended a tennis coaching session in London.

A huge thank you to parents for the generous donation of food given at the Harvest festival. These were given to those in need through the local foodbank, FEED.



Lime class have used a lot of creative, and tasty, ways of learning about different celebrations this term.



The Maya were famous for chocolate. Holly class tried roasting and crushing their own cocoa beans to try and make chocolate. They also created some pictures from chocolate.



Pupils from Silver birch and Oak class worked together to investigate and create timeline of the Maya people.



The Maya made colourful masks which were important for celebrations, going into battle and to mark important life events. Willow class used paper mosaic to make their own masks.



Several of the KS2 groups were lucky enough to have a music workshop on South American music.



Foundation children enjoyed their traditional Christmas visit to a local garden centre to see the themed display and buy their Christmas tree.



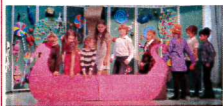
Foundation enjoy learning through role play. They collected autumn leaves and used them to make a pretend bonfire which they sat around to sign campfire songs while drinking hot soup.



It was fantastic to see so many par-



ents for the Christmas play, Charlie and the Chocolate factory. The script had been written by pupils themselves. The nursery also performed the traditional nativity, with the help of some of their friends.



We enjoy welcoming parents and carers of any preschool child to come and learn alongside their child at Sign and Play on a Wednesday afternoon. Contact the school office if you know a pre school child who would be interested.



Lower school pupils had the opportunity to visit Kidzania to learn more about the world of work .

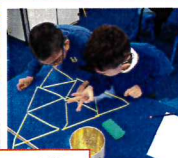


Activities included things like working in a garage, estate agents, ice cream parlour, chocolate factory, clothes shop and fire fighting. It is well worth a visit.

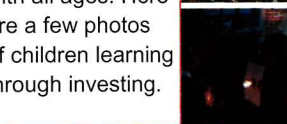
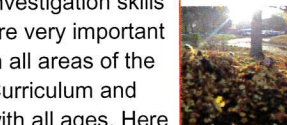


Oak class designed their own chocolate bars complete with packaging. On a visit to a real chocolate factory they were given feedback and the best presented

product was judged.



Investigation skills are very important in all areas of the Curriculum and with all ages. Here are a few photos of children learning through investing.



The children were fortunate once again to welcome the marvellous Krazy Kat theatre company with their production of Rapunzel and the Witch. Some of the children from one of our inclusion partner schools,

Garden Fields, came to join us for the show.



Upper School - Autumn Term 2016

The autumn term kicked off to a good start with a full day workshop in October led by ex professional footballer Luther Blissett, the workshop was called 'Give Racism the Red Card.' Students spent the day learning about racism in football and how this can affect players but also how racism affects people everyday. Racism was discussed through several different workshops, the students gave speeches, made posters and had some practical coaching from Luther. The day was enjoyed by all and most importantly made all students think about some important issues to be aware of.



Fully grown courgettes were picked from the school's mini-garden, and given to the Food Technology Department so that US3 students could make Courgette Carbonara and they enjoyed tasting it!



US1 have been learning about mapping as part of their Geography studies. They have been learning to use satellite photographs,

street maps and ordnance survey maps. The students participated in a field trip to find various landmarks in St Albans.



Maths Challenge

Students have been taking part in a weekly maths challenge that is displayed on a corridor noticeboard. All students who enter are awarded one house point. Depending on the type of challenge the best answers are awarded four house points or if there can be only one answer, a draw is made from all correct answers submitted. The solution is explained by the winning student in the weekly assembly each Friday.



In English this term, US1 students read Shakespeare's play, "Macbeth". The students were shown scenes from various productions of the play. They were given a character to portray and had to learn their lines and act key scenes. They wrote character descriptions, scene synopses, newspaper reports and letters from the characters explaining their motives. It was a challenging unit of work for them, but they put in a magnificent effort.



All the students have been working really hard this term. In particular two students were pleased with their progress, one said: "I am proud of myself because I'm improve behaviour. I got non-school uniform certificate as first time, I got 72 points! If you have over 40 points mean you can had non-school uniform for one special day. If you have under 40 points means you still must school uniform."

The other said: "I been nice happy work. I happy good behaviour. Good luck high points me 44 happy."



Students in US2 debated the pros and cons of home-schooling



linked with the book Skellig. Luckily, they decided that attending school is the best option!



US5 have been learning about Christian baptisms as part of their studies on Religious Initiation Rites.



They made invitation cards for a baptism as part of their coursework and then held their own baptism service. They assumed the roles of various participants, such as the vicar, the parents and godparents. They acted the various events that occur during a service, such as making a promise to look after the new baby, wetting the baby's head, making a sign of the cross on the baby's forehead, signing the certificate and giving participants a candle to help guide the baby in his or her new life.

Students in years 7 and 8 took part in a Deaf Hope workshop about anti-bullying. Here they are preparing dramas about how to stop bullying.



Gagan said: "I learnt bullying make people upset. I learnt how tell teacher if person bullying."

Stephanie said: "I need to help friends if people are bullying them."



Upper School Enterprise Day

Just before half term US5,6,7,8 and 9 took part in an Enterprise Day. US5 worked on an independent project making things to sell at the Children in Need stall on Halloween. They made a range of spooky, disgusting things to eat, drink or display.

They came into the hall at the end of the day to show us what they had been making. We were all very impressed.

All the other groups were split up into teams of 5 or 6 people to become competitors in the business challenge. Mark Bolton from NDCS came to talk to all the groups about what makes a business work. The students completed an activity making towers from marshmallows and spaghetti which made us really work as a team and think about costings.

Three volunteers also came to help us throughout the day and share their business knowledge: Simon from NDCS, Lara Steward, owner of Greenfield Pet Shop & Co-Director of PAD Productions Limited and Jeff McWhinney, Chief Executive of Significant (SignVideo) and formerly CEx of the British Deaf Association. We are very grateful to all of them for giving up their time.

In the afternoon the students had to work fast to get ready to pitch our ideas to the dragons (Simon, Lara, Jeff and Mr Hazrati) in order to get the £250 capital to start their business. The dragons had a really hard job deciding which was the best. They finally decided the team who were crowned the winners and had the most original idea, had developed a colourful glove with a black spot to remind people about young people facing mental illness.

Mark, and the other dragons, were really impressed with the attitude and work ethic of all the students involved and some students deserved special mention for their business skills. A great day was had by all. Now we just need to get the business up and running. **Tesneem said:** "I feel confident about business now as I learnt lots about it"

another student said: "I learnt about designing T-shirts for my team" and **another said:** "I enjoyed making the marshmallow tower"



In science, US4 students did an investigation to make a neutral solution. They used a storyboard as a frame for describing how they carried out the

investigation. The use of the storyboard has engaged students in reflecting on their learning experience in a fun way.



This term in Enquiring Minds US1 thought about their identity.

They all formed a sign name for themselves.

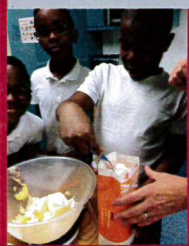


Heath House - Autumn Term 2016

We can't believe it is Christmas already, Heath House has been so busy over the past term with so many activities its hard to squeeze them all in the newsletter! Halloween was very exciting in Heath House, we held a competition to decorate each of the rooms, the creative ideas were brilliant making it very hard to judge the winners.



Along with the decorations, young people were making some spooky food for their Halloween party.



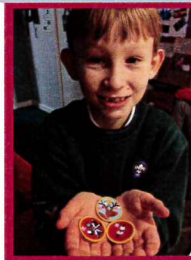
This term we welcomed Neal who started as a residential worker in November. However we are saying a very sad farewell to Nick. Nick has decided to spend his evenings with his new baby and wife. Nick will be starting a new job in January. We wish him good luck!

During the term the young people chose to go for a meal at Bill's restaurant in St. Albans. Some young people began assessments for free walking by walking in to town and finding Bill's themselves. Whilst at Bill's all children are expected to order their food for themselves.



Cubs, Guides and Scouts

Our Cubs, Guides and Scouts are all doing well this term with lots of new students making their promises and working hard to earn badges.



After school clubs continue to be popular. This term the students have enjoyed gym club, football, golf and youth club. The students were involved with a golf tournament that one Heath House student won.

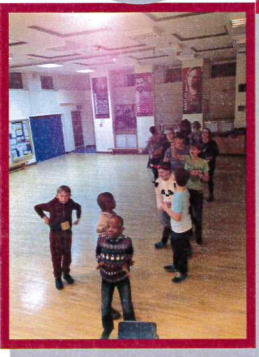


End of term.

We all enjoyed the "all you can eat" Chinese buffet as chosen by the young people, far too much was eaten by all. We also had a great time at the Christmas party, thank you to all that joined us for the evening.



From all of us at Heath House we wish you a very happy Christmas and look forward to seeing you all in January.



BSL Centre - Autumn Term 2016

With Christmas only a few weeks away we have been busy with the first exams for some classes and mock exams for others. Our new learners have settled in well and are enjoying their courses. We have a large number of learners again this year, and additional courses were formed to accommodate numbers.

The parents group has both old and new faces. Its lovely to see our regular parents supporting our new parents, offering advice and a supportive environment to share information. They have been working their way through the BSL level 1 curriculum with additional signs for home use and story telling skills.



All our BSL Level 1 learners have taken their first exams and are now developing their BSL skills and vocabulary working towards their 102 assessment in March/April time.

Our BSL Level 1 young persons group is thriving, it's the biggest group we've had so far. Some are keen to continue onto BSL Level 2!

We have three BSL Level 2 classes, all learners have been practising their receptive skills with weekly homework tasks. They have had to learn a lot of vocabulary to develop their productive skills, but they are doing really well.



BSL Level 3 has been popular this year. We have two groups, both full. They have been learning linguistics of BSL and how to apply this to their productive skills. They have been involved in debates, discussions and created presentations to film. They are now revising for their linguistics exams.



BSL Level 4, new cohort this year have been developing their linguistic knowledge, conversational skills and filming for their portfolios. They have learnt how to self analyse their film clips and recognise the linguistic elements to tick off.



Due to the demand for BSL practice and development of skills, we created two courses this year. The first course is suitable for learners who have BSL level 2/3 and would like to develop these skills. The second course is for learners who have BSL level 3/4 and want to refresh linguistics as well as develop receptive and productive skills. Both course have been going well, learners are enjoying the class and not having the pressure of exams.



New courses starting in January 2017

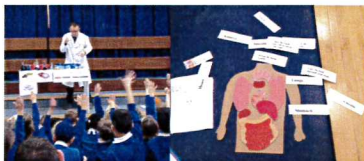
BSL Level 1 fast track evening course– TUESDAY 5pm-8pm.

BSL Level 1 fast track day course- THURSDAY 10am-1pm.

If you would like more information regarding the course please e-mail us at:

bsl@heathlands.herts.sch.uk

Parents' Page - Autumn Term 2016



Harvest Festival

We had a Science themed event this year for Harvest. We received donations to take to the local food bank again this year. FEED were very grateful as they are one of the largest in the country giving out 90 bags a week.

Sign Singing

The Friends of Heathlands came to our Christmas event this year at the Maltings with buckets to collect. We raised £400 in less than an hour! Next year we think we will go for two! The children signed festive songs such as, Mrs Reeves-Costi's favourite, Mistletoe and Wine by Cliff Richard. We received a lovely email from a member of the local community. She said "They were all having such fun and looked so festive in their Christmas jumpers. All the shoppers were enjoying it, it gave a real lift to the spirits! What a lovely way to make the children part of the community."



Christmas Fair

The Friends of Heathlands Christmas fair was on Friday 16th December. It was great to see so many parents getting involved. The Christmas Market had sewn decorations for your tree, gift tags, reindeer food and several Santa face painted children. We were also very lucky to have a signing Santa in our grotto, who had photos taken with both the children and some of the adults! We also had some fun games and refreshments, the mulled wine went down a storm.

We managed to raise £254.86

Amended Home/School Agreement

We took some time to edit this to bring it up to date with current thinking. It is now called 'Engagement with Education'. All parents have been given a copy as stakeholders it is important we take on your input. We will be asking all families to sign their agreements during the Spring term. Make sure you get your comments into the school office soon.



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Waitrose, St Albans Supports Heathlands in January 2017



Waitrose in St Albans has chosen Heathlands School for their Community Matters programme during January 2017 only!



Tokens mean money for Heathlands! Choose the Heathlands box to post your green tokens each time you shop in January. At the end of January Waitrose make a donation to the school. More tokens = more money!

Tokens from other Waitrose stores can be brought into Heathlands reception anytime throughout January. If you shop online and are within the St Albans area, you will be asked to vote for your good cause at the end of the check-out process.

Spring Term Dates 2017

Inset Days	Thursday 5th January 2017 Friday 6th January 2017 (No pupils in school)
Spring Term Starts	Monday 9th January 2017
Half Term Holiday	Monday 13th February - Friday 17th February 2017
Spring Term Ends	Friday 31st March 2017 @ 12.30pm
Summer Term starts	Tuesday 18th April 2017