

# *Heathlands Newsletter*

## *Spring Term 2016*



Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope you enjoy reading the newsletter and catching up on the events in all departments. Now that news is so readily available on Facebook or our website this is likely to be the last paper newsletter we send home as we move to a more “paperless” way of working. This is all part of the schools’ cost cutting efforts so that we can focus resources on children’s learning!

Without question one of the highlights of the term was to see our children performing in the Albert Hall as part of the Hertfordshire Schools’ Music Festival. What a fantastic experience for our students and I think possibly one or two parents, like me, felt very proud and had a tear in their eye!

I’m sure some parents have now seen the new art area and refurbished lower school classrooms. The end result was worth the wait! Art provision will be further improved with the installation of a pottery kiln over the holidays. The new media facilities will be immediately put to good use when some students start their film makers’ course with “Into Film” in the summer term.

The total building project came in under budget meaning that we have sufficient funds to refurbish the old art room into a library and learning centre which has been designed as a flexible space to suit the wide age range of pupils on roll.

Another significant development this year has been the re-launch of the PTA “Friends of Heathlands” Thanks to those parents who have volunteered thus far; I know the committee would welcome more volunteers. Parents’ involvement in school and children’s learning is crucial but can be difficult when so many of you live far away. We are planning a family learning day for late in the summer term so hope as many parents as possible will be able to join us to share in learning or offer an activity.

As the term comes to an end we have to say goodbye to some staff and welcome others. We thank all our staff for the contribution they make to children’s learning and activities – nothing happens without them!

- Ms Jacques will be reducing her teaching time in Upper School. She is replaced by Mrs Lorrigan Hughes who will take on her teaching timetable and act as a form tutor with S2.
- Mrs Round is now on maternity leave. Mrs Alison Hayes is now teaching LS6.
- Megan, the LSA working with LS5 leaves us this term to start her training to become a midwife. After the holidays a new LSA, Jeanette Pollard will be joining us.

My best wishes to all families for a relaxing holiday. We look forward to seeing pupils back on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> April.

# Lower School Spring Term 2016

Welcome to the Lower school newsletter. We have had another busy term of **learning**. KS2 have been learning about Natural Disasters, a topic with both Geography and History links. KS1's learning included work on keeping healthy and looking at famous people in history such as Florence Nightingale. In Foundation they have been learning about materials.



**Reading** is a very important part of learning. For all ages The lower school pupils celebrated **book week** for World Book Day with a daily signed story time and finished the week with a book character themed fancy dress parade. LS2, 3 and 4 pupils also visited a book shop to spend their World Book Day tokens.



Foundation children show a lot of **creativity** and even a cardboard box can be the start of an adventure!

While learning about light in **Science** LS6 pupils made periscopes.



As part of work on **Natural Disasters** LS5, 6 and 7 all made Volcanos and used the chemical reaction found when Bicarbonate of Soda and Vinegar mix to cause them to erupt. Perhaps you could



For the first part of the year LS5, 6 and 7 were learning in portacabins. We were glad to see them go at February half term and to move into our beautiful, newly refurbished classrooms.



For the first half of the Spring term our **assembly theme** was **responsibility**. We learnt that we are responsible for caring for our school environment and the children helped do this by doing a litter pick in the grounds.



# Lower School Spring Term 2016



In February, as part of **RE, PSHE** and **maths**, LS5 organised several activities to raise money for the **charity** Sign Health and their campaign "Sign to Sing." The children organised a book and toy sale, went to St Albans market sign singing and arranged a cake sale. They did all the pricing and selling of items themselves and counted the money to find out how much they had raised. They achieved a magnificent total of **£309.23**. Thank you to everyone who contributed.



In March the children in **Heathlands Harmony Signing Choir** were fortunate to have the opportunity to perform at the famous Albert Hall in London as part of the Hertfordshire schools festival. The choir practised hard during their lunchtimes for several months to reach the high standard required to perform in the festival. Thanks go to Mrs Brinsden, Mrs Reeves- Costi and Miss Jackson.

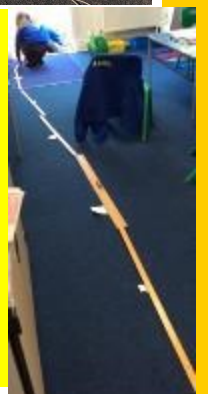
There are many aspects of the curriculum that pupils revisit at different ages and stages as they develop their skills.



In **Design technology** LS7 have been learning to use a sewing machine. So have pupils in LS1.



In **maths** children from LS1 and LS4 have been learning about measuring. And LS5 used measuring to make a scale model of the solar system.



# Upper School

## Spring Term 2016



A group of students have been attending a Landmark Animal Care Course at Oaklands College. They have learnt how to care for different animals including horses, sheep, chicks, ducks and reptiles. They have also experienced working on a farm and witnessed twin lambs being born. Students have learnt a lot and are really enjoying the course.

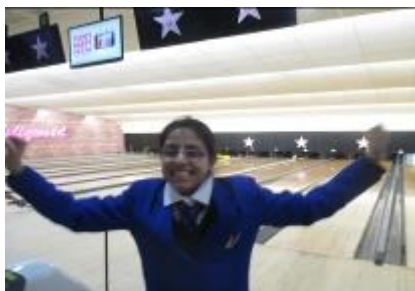


### GCSE Revision Clubs

A timetable of revision clubs has been posted for Year 11 students to help them prepare for their upcoming GCSE examinations.

Teachers will be providing extra tuition at lunchtime and at after school clubs, starting after the spring school holiday break to support them.

US3 went bowling as part of their ASDAN Life Skills course. This was to support their work on independent choices and practicing communication skills. They were also able to work on maths skills in a 'real life' situation



Students on the BTEC Beauty course have been attending a local college one morning a week where they work in a specially adapted salon and are taught by a fully qualified

beautician. For their final assessment they had to select a friend to act as a model and were given a timed period to prepare for a catwalk presentation. They then had to present their portfolio to the audience.





# Upper School

## Spring Term 2016



### 'Voluntears' talk—Year 11

On 20th January the year 11s and a few parents had a truly inspirational talk from Richard Clowes. He and a friend have set up a new charity 'Voluntears' which organises volunteering trips for deaf people, their families and anyone interested in helping support deaf children in Sri Lanka in the school holidays.

The trips looked amazing with a real mixture of work, play and cultural experiences over the two weeks. Anyone going on it would benefit in so many ways and also help others who are less fortunate than themselves. A number of the students (and some of the staff) are keen to apply for a place!

Be warned—if any of the students are accepted on a trip, they will be organising fund raising activities both in school and in the deaf community to try and raise the money they need!



US 1 and 3 took part in their STEM Day on 3<sup>rd</sup> March. STEM stands for Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths. They had the opportunity to meet and hold animals including a toad, a tarantula, a cockroach, a snake and lastly a fluffy rabbit! Students were very enthusiastic and keen to ask lots of questions about the animals. Some were brave enough to



carry the snake around their necks!

There were various activities throughout the day such as a Bake Off in Food Technology, building strong bridges in D&T and drawing tessellation patterns in Maths. In Science, the



students took on the role of forensic scientists trying to solve a murder in the Science laboratory

where they applied techniques such as analysing fingerprints and collecting evidence.



# *Upper School Spring Term 2016*



## **Heathlands Girls win third consecutive DCSA Football Championship**



The annual Deaf schools' football event took place on the 2nd February in Derby. Twenty-six students from our Upper School department attended the event organised by The Royal School for the Deaf, Derby (RSDD) under the



umbrella of the newly named DCSA (Deaf Children's Sporting Association). Heathlands had five teams competing in the event, three boys teams and two girls. For some pupils it was their first experience of attending the football event. For others it was an opportunity to showcase their footballing talent, engage competitively against other deaf students, and a chance to write themselves into the history books by bringing back the Championship trophy. The boys were unlucky and lost in the semi finals to the eventual winners, Braidwood, but won their final game and finished 3rd overall. The girls put in an fantastic performance of hard work, determination and excellent team working skills winning the Championship which was the third in a row for our girls' team. All the students enjoyed the experience of attending the DCSA event in Derby. Many thanks to the RSDD for organising the event and for Heathlands' staff for supporting on the day and in the preparation for the event.

## **Paper Recycling Initiative**

On 2nd February, four KS4 students were a great help collecting and transporting all the paper to the Frogmore Paper Mill. In the past a lorry has come and taken away all the paper, but this service has now stopped so this was a perfect opportunity while most of the upper school were in Derby to take a trip to Hemel Hempstead. All four students worked really hard to collect all the paper, move it into the minibuss and then unload it all at the mill. Unfortunately we didn't have time to go in to the mill this time, but the more paper we collect the more free tickets we can earn. It was great to see the students working well as a team and so quickly.

"I really enjoyed it" (Francesca) "I want to go back to the mill to look around" (Klaudia)

# Heath House

## Spring Term 2016



  
**Ofsted**  
**Outstanding**

This term we had our residential inspection. This is an unannounced inspection which lasts three days. During the inspection young people and parents are asked their opinion on the care provided by Heath House. It was great to hear such positive reviews from the children and also the parents. At the end of the inspection staff were exhausted but were thrilled to know we received an outstanding grading in all categories which of course gives us an outstanding grading overall. We were so happy to maintain this standard for another year and would like to thank our parents for their support.



Another yearly event happened this term which was more enjoyable for the children— pancake day! The young people all enjoyed making their pancakes and seeing who could catch them in the pan.



In our continued efforts to make Heath House homely we have bought new sofas for both living rooms. The young people chose two new sofas from Ikea. The corner sofas are excellent for group communication. The new decorations for the girls' bedrooms will be going up over the Easter break.





# Heath House

## Spring Term 2016



Cubs and Beavers groups are still very popular and our young people have worked hard to gain badges. This term all of our Beavers gained Blue Peter badges. We were very proud of them. Cubs were busy raising money for charity this term and Jamie and Justin contributed by running a game stall one evening.

Older residents have now started attending Scouts and Guides.

The children are learning how to cook safely in the kitchen. This week younger residents were lucky enough to be taught how to make chocolate biscuits by an older student.



Learning about current and world events is a key part of our 24 hour curriculum. Each evening the students watch 'Newsround' with staff and discuss the news. They are very keen to find out what is happening.



Young people are continuing to develop their understanding of responsibility by looking after others. They are learning how to look after Tom and Jerry by bathing them and cleaning the hutch. The young people have a budget to purchase what they need each week and go shopping for guinea pig supplies.







# *BSL Centre Newsletter*

## *Spring Term 2016*



Since Christmas the BSL Centre has been busy with the start of BSL Level 1 fast track course on a Thursday morning. The course is going well and learners have already sat their first assessment. All our courses from September have had learners working hard on developing their BSL skills.

We are now focusing on promoting courses for September 2016. Interviews will be held over the next term for BSL levels 2, 3 and 4. If you know anyone or have family members who have shown an interest in learning BSL then please point them in our direction. We can help them start their learning journey and support them to develop their BSL skills.

Parents group on Monday Mornings has welcomed new parents and carers. It has been lovely to see new faces. We have livened up the parents group by creating two classes, one for beginners and those progressing on the Level 1 course of study and a second class for those who have their BSL level 2 and are continuing to develop their skills and linguistic knowledge.



Level 1 learners are doing really well, they have been working towards their second assessments. One student met a deaf person at work and was able to have a conversation with them, she felt very proud to be able to sign confidently and understand them too.

Our BSL level 1 young persons course is going really well too, they are working towards their second assessment.

We have a large BSL Level 2 class on a Thursday evening, they have been working hard on developing their vocabulary to be able to create presentations to deliver. They have also enjoyed learning some basic linguistics enabling them to understand why signs are created.

Learners are now working towards their assessments next term. They are practising their stories, receptive skills and conversational skills.

Receptive skills are developed through watching BSL in different ways; face to face conversations or DVDs are a great way to learn new signs.





# *BSL Centre Newsletter*

## *Spring Term 2016*



Year 11 have sat their BSL Level 2 mocks and will be completing their real assessments after Easter.

BSL Level 3 has been a popular course again this year, we have two courses both full of eager learners. They have completed one assessment and are now focusing on their receptive skills ready for their next assessment in June.

They have enjoyed learning about the History of BSL and researching information for presentations on famous Deaf people, Schools for the Deaf and the Milan conference of 1880.

They have also enjoyed discussion and debates on medical and cultural issues.



We have three BSL level 4 courses running this year. Our Tuesday group have been completing assessments. Whilst our two Thursday groups have been developing their linguistic knowledge even further. BSL level 4 linguistics is quite a jump from the Level 3 and can be tricky for learners to get to grips with. They have worked well and are aiming to take their assessments next term.

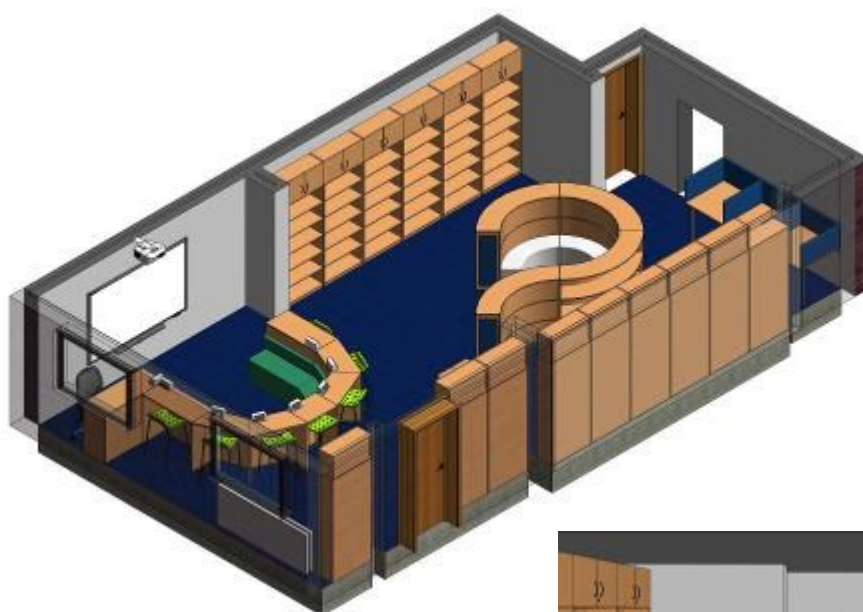
Learners have had to learn how to self-analyse by watching their film clips and picking out linguistic elements, this enables them to develop and improve their BSL skills.

**For full course information and details please see the Heathlands website.**





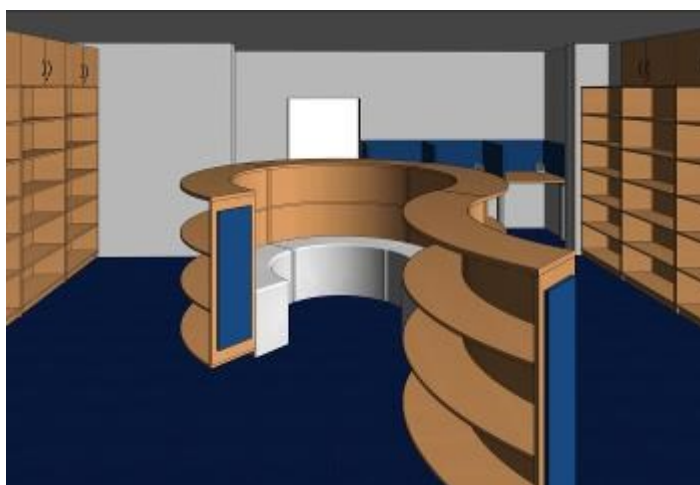
# *New Building Work Spring Term 2016*



## **Plans for our New Library**

We are converting the old art room into a new library for all students to use.

Work on the new library will start during the spring school holidays and should be completed by the end of April.



The room will consist of comfortable seating for reading, private study booths and areas for group discussion.

# Parents' Page

## Spring Term 2016



### Heathlands Recipe Book

We are working with a company called the Cookbook Initiative to create our own School Cookbook! We will be sending home Chef hats with the children, explaining how to contribute your favourite recipe. We will be selling these to raise money for our new Friends of Heathlands (FoH).

### Friends of Heathlands

FoH had their 1st AGM in January and have chosen Mr Jordan-Caws as Chairperson, Mrs Rimmington as Secretary and Ms Hewitt as Treasurer. We had several other parents join as Committee

members. They have offered to help out where they can. Should you want to join in too or have a question, you can email

[friends@heathlands.herts.sch.uk](mailto:friends@heathlands.herts.sch.uk)



Watch out for their events!



### Family Learning Day

In order to celebrate the completion of our new Arts area on the first floor we will be holding a family learning day in July. We aim to have lots of new activities you can try out with your children. We would love to see you there! Can you offer to lead an activity?

### Parent Volunteers

Our new website has a section called 'Getting involved' in the Parents' pages. We are looking for volunteers to help with Gardening, Reading and a Librarian! If you feel you can help, please see the adverts and get in touch.



### Heathlands app

**Remember to download the app now!**

If you would like a photo added to the Gallery, please email

[photos@heathlands.herts.sch.uk](mailto:photos@heathlands.herts.sch.uk).

#### **Volunteer Gardener**

Lower school are looking for people who are keen to get involved with some **gardening** for the nursery. This would involve for example digging over the ground so the children can dig more easily and plant seeds.

There is a list of volunteers to be agreed with class teacher. Cold refreshments available.

This is a great opportunity to increase your skills, meet staff, students and have an insight into the running of the school.

If interested please contact Mrs Brindley at [sarah.brindley@heathlands.herts.sch.uk](mailto:sarah.brindley@heathlands.herts.sch.uk)

