



Heathlands Newsletter - Spring Term 2017

Dear Parents / Carers,

I am sure you will enjoy another newsletter sharing all the work and achievements of students this term. It has been a very full term with some significant achievements – well done to everyone concerned.

I want to use this newsletter to explain our new school gate system. For a long time we have been trying to find a way of making the school site more secure. We want to close the gates during the school day for everyone's safety. We also need to make sure that all our visitors, parents, delivery drivers etc. can access the site. At last we think we have a solution!

We have found technology from America which has both voice intercom and a screen for users of sign language so that all visitors can communicate from the gate with the school office. This will be installed during the holidays and will be active soon after. The gates will only be open at the start and end of the school day to drop off or collect children. When the gates are closed visitors can use a key pad and voice/visual connection to the school office. So if you come to school and see the gates shut, please just follow the instructions which I have included below.

As the end of term approaches it is with great sadness that we say goodbye to our friend and colleague Mrs Philpin, one of our secretaries who is to retire to the country! I know she will be missed by many of you.

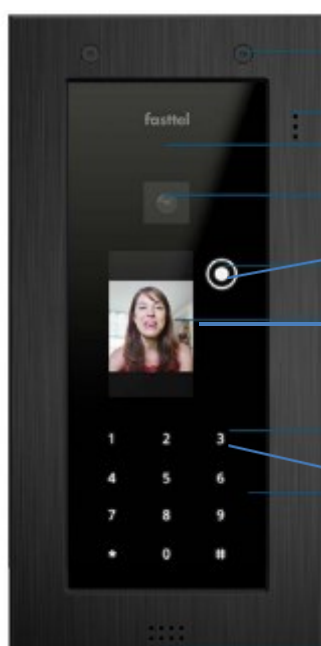
I wish everyone a very relaxing holiday and look forward to seeing you after the break.

Deborah Jones-Stevens
Head Teacher



Heathlands School Gates

On the gate you will see a control panel similar to this picture.



Press this button to connect to the office.

Use the voice intercom or screen to communicate with the office.

Enter your access code in the keypad.

Access Codes

Anyone who has a booked appointment will be given an **access code**. The code will work from 15 minutes before the appointment. Parents and other visitors need to put their access code in the key pad. The gate will open, please remember to shut it after you!

The access code will only be valid for that specific appointment.

If there are special events e.g. sports day or parents evening we will issue all parents with an access code for that event.

Parents and visitors without an access code

Press the button then either speak or sign to the school office. The school office will then let you into school. If there is a problem you can of course text/phone the office!



Lower School Newsletter - Spring Term 2017



It has been another very busy term with a great deal happening throughout the Lower School department including a very enjoyable book week. We had a fancy dress parade, a book 'swap' and each class making their own books which were shared with the other groups.



Fir class enjoyed a pancake race on pancake day. They have also had several visits out, including a trip to a toy museum.



We took delivery of 10 eggs in an incubator towards the middle of March and six of these hatched into beautiful, fluffy chicks. There were two bright yellow boys and four browner girls. Although the chicks are living in the nursery every child in Lower School got the opportunity to learn more about the life cycle of hens and to handle the babies.



Silver Birch class went on an interesting trip to the Roald Dahl museum. They were able to use iPads with the Signly App to access BSL translations of all the signs. A remarkable piece of technology.



As part of RE, several Lower School groups had a Purim party to learn more about this Jewish festival.



On March 11th, Heathlands Harmony choir went up to Nottingham for the first ever National Signing Choirs competition. We are very proud of all the pupils who were not only the only all deaf choir, but also opened the show. They gave a confident performance of "Wonderful World" and "Wonder" which earned them second place. Thank you to Mrs Brinsden and Mrs Reeves-Costi for all the time they put into the choir and to parents and other school staff who helped get the children to Nottingham on the day.



Oak and Silver Birch classes encouraged the whole of Lower school to become involved in a 'Making a Difference' art project. The children created flower pictures which were then taken to a local old people's home.



They were very well received by the elderly residents.



Children from Willow class have written to CBBC Newsround to try and persuade them to subtitle the videos on their website. The children also used green screen technology to make their own Heathlands Newsround programme. We wait to hear back from them.



Several KS2 groups learnt about recycling. Activities included pupils doing a litter pick around school, visiting a recycling centre and making recycled paper. One class also made posters to encourage people not to drop litter.



Oliver Westbury, the deaf adventurer who Westbury house is named after, came to visit the children and answer their questions.



Congratulations to pupils who achieved sporting success in various interschool events. These included gold medals in speed stacking and swimming.





Upper School Newsletter - Spring Term 2017



In gardening club this term, students have been enjoying learning basic gardening skills and are starting to realise how important it is to re-connect with the Earth and be responsible for improving the school environment. In



February we received a Level 1 Gardening Certificate from the Royal Horticultural Society. As some students are raising funds to go away on a school trip, they discussed ways to grow plants from cuttings so they could sell them. A stall has been set up in reception and all the proceeds will be split between the students involved.



Students have had a wide range of visitors this term linked to preparing for adulthood. In January, Richard from 'Voluntears' came to give a talk about volunteering in a range of different countries. Going on these tours allows young people to help other deaf young people in Sri Lanka, Nepal and Ghana whilst having lots of time to experience new cultures and places within a safe, deaf friendly environment. For more details see <http://www.voluntears.info/>



In February, we had a fascinating Visual Effects Presentation from the media company 'Into Film', who explained about the many different jobs involved in the film, television and games industry. The students were shown film clips of actors in real life, and then clips with a Computer Generated Imagery (CGI) background, to simulate the actor hanging from a cliff. They are looking for young, innovative and creative people to help take the industry into the future, which our students found very interesting!

In March, we had a visit from the Herts Young Homeless Charity. They explained how the charity can help young people who find themselves without a home and how students at Heathlands can best prepare themselves for independent living in the future. It was really thought provoking.

Some KS3 students have entered the Young Deaffest Poster Competition 2017 again this year, following our success last year. One of our students came first and another came third. What a fantastic achievement! Deaffest is a Film and Arts deaf-led festival held on 12th to 14th May in Wolverhampton. You can find more information on www.deaffest.co.uk.



In Humanities, the year 11s have been researching key events of the 1960s. They had to find out the date it happened and place it on their timeline.



US3 and US4 art students enjoyed a visit to the Victoria and Albert Museum in London. Once there, they were able to do research on Islamic Art patterns and shapes for their lino printing project.

The students were all amazed by the expanse of the museum and the amount of artwork.



Some students had never been before so were fascinated by what they saw.

They learnt that the museum has 145 rooms and over 2.5 million pieces of art either on display or in storage. They then set to work drawing patterns they found in the Islamic rooms and also explored the colourful glass and jewellery rooms, before heading back on the train to Heathlands.

One student said: "It was great and helped with ideas and to improve my drawing skills." Thanks go to the Hertsmer Decorative & Fine Arts Society for their financial support towards this trip.

On Wednesday 22nd February selected pupils from upper school attended a swimming gala at the London Aquatics Centre. Here are some of the students' accounts of the day.

Molly said: "The centre was massive, we looked around in amazement, the swimming lanes was so blue. We looked at the shiny water, we can't wait to dive in!"

Naomi said: "There were lots of deaf children there. The competition includes 25m race, half of the pool race, ball-pushing race, relay race and collecting treasure race. We had fun there and swam a lot."

Chloe D said: Upper school were given black swimming caps, I came to the pool area, feeling a bit nervous but excited. It was splendid fun. I did the 50m freestyle with Molly and did the fun team race, we came 2nd, not so bad! I was filled with pride what we did today, it was fun and we had a good time."

Olivia said: "It was a long journey but luckily my friends were there to cheer up the journey. There were lots of exciting events. I won all the races I got to race. My favourite was relay with Naomi; it was very challenging to swim with a beach ball because the ball was keeping running away from me, which annoyed me! I learn that it is don't matter if you win or not, the most important thing is you have fun."

On 16th March students had great fun taking part in our Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) Day. There were various activities throughout the day.



In Food Technology the students had a contest to make and decorate animal themed cakes to win house points.

In Science, students used forensic science techniques to collect evidence to solve a crime.



In Maths they had to build scaffolds at least 50cm tall and strong enough to hold a beaker of water, using only straws and tape.



In Design & Technology the students had to think



how to make something useful out of unwanted wood.





On Tuesday 7th February many students from upper school attended the annual Derby football tournament. One student reflected on this event. He said: "I am Captain of Senior boy football. We went to Derby by use coach. We reach Derby and we did meet lots of people



and make new friends even I been contact them most of time. I been playing match with different deaf schools and one win, one draw and three losses matches. We realised it not about winning, it about being involving and makes new friends, give us more confidence and communicate. I would recommend you that students should going to Derby next year". The girls team had a great success making it to the semi finals of the competition. Well done to everyone who took part!



On 7th March our four GCSE Geography students travelled to Walton on the Naze in Essex to collect data for their controlled assessment. Due to the long journey, they were only able to stay for a short time but took lots of photos, measured the cliffs and beaches and considered how effective the sea defences are at protecting the area. They also practised their communication skills, asking people they met some questions about the new sea defence 'Crag Walk'. All the students have to complete an individual piece of work, some of which will be completed under exam conditions and will make up 50% of their total GCSE grade. They all agreed what a beautiful place it was and that it should be protected.



US5 have been learning about wedding services as part of their Religious Studies coursework. They participated in a role-play of a Jewish wedding. They dressed as important guests, watching as two puppets got married. Then they each had a turn as the puppeteers, performing the Jewish wedding rituals for themselves.



This term students have been busy in science. They have been studying how to make electrical circuits and trying to locate and fix faults. They have been recording their work by drawing electrical circuit diagrams. They have also learnt which materials conduct electricity, which materials are best insulators, as well as learning about how metals react with different concentrations of acid.





Heath House Newsletter - Spring Term 2017

This term has once again been jam packed with fun and activities. Our new member of staff, Lena has been making her mark on Heath House with lots of creative activities and her love of animals. We began the term with a special evening at St. Albans football ground where students were invited to watch a match and go on the pitch at half time to practise their goal scoring techniques. It was a cold night but students loved this experience, we may even have some budding football stars in the making.



For Valentine's day we made window decorations which we hung in Heath House until students took them home for that special person.



Pancake day is always exciting in Heath House. This year we had savoury and sweet pancakes. All the young people enjoyed making their pancakes and were surprised by how much they enjoyed the savoury ones. Staff were pleased to see all the young people trying some new foods!!



St. David's Day was celebrated with a special meal of traditional Welsh food. The students all enjoyed it and again were proud of themselves for trying some new foods.





A large part of the term has been dedicated to everyone's love of animals and in particular thinking about our new pets. We had a big debate about what to choose. Sadly the donkey was ruled out as many parents said it would be hard for them to collect and look after in the holidays! In the end, the vote was for rabbits. Students carefully planned what equipment they would need, prepared the hutch, budgeted for the care of the rabbits and eventually went to choose our new friends. The rabbits have now been named by students, Casper has one ear up and one ear down and Snowflake has two ears that point up. The rabbits are both young and students are learning how to handle and care for them. Owain and Chloe have been responsible and took the rabbits to the vets for their vaccinations and are ensuring the younger students are looking after our new pets.



This term students have been going swimming and the lighter evenings have meant we can incorporate more independent travel training and preparation for free walking. Students are learning how to use the bus and are becoming familiar with where to get on and off the bus.



We want to create a homely environment in Heath House. Students visited The Range to purchase new things to personalise their bedrooms including individual "wall art" in their rooms. Students are welcome to bring photos from home to display in their rooms if they would like to.



The lighter evenings also give students more opportunity to get out and about. The students recently chose to visit a local park to let off some steam.



Good news! Tom is on the road to recovery and is back to work. We are all looking forward to a summer term full of sun and fun and hope to see you all at our family event towards the end of summer.

From all of us, have a very happy Easter break.





BSL Centre Newsletter - Spring Term 2017

This term has been really eventful for us in the BSL Centre. Zayne and Emma attended the Signature awards evening in January. They had both been nominated for an award, Zayne for Emerging Teacher and Emma for Leadership in Education. Emma was runner up to another teacher from Ireland and Zayne WON! Congratulations to Zayne for achieving this award.



The awards were lovely, it was great to meet BSL teachers from all over the country, we enjoyed a three course meal too!

Our Parents group has been working on story telling in BSL, they have been translating traditional tales and even created their own. They have also been developing their vocabulary and working on timelines and placement.

BSL Level 1 classes have all completed their first assessments and are developing their BSL grammar and vocabulary working towards their second assessments.

Our BSL Level 1 young persons group are doing well and have already taken their second assessment, they are eagerly waiting for results.

January saw the start of our BSL level 1 fast track course, learners have already taken their first assessment and are now working towards the next one.

BSL Level 2 classes have been learning new vocabulary and developing their 202 stories filming them ready for their assessments. They have also been watching filmed clips of signers to broaden their receptive skills. They've practiced conversations linked to food and drink.



BSL Level 3 students have been developing their linguistic knowledge ready for their assessment soon. They have also been researching and creating mini presentations on Home life, Employment, Consumer Issues, Social and recreational activities, Education and Training, as well as Deaf History and Culture. These topics enable the learners to develop their understanding of deaf culture and barriers Deaf people face on a daily basis.



The Level 4 group has also been researching topics for discussions and filming for their portfolios. Level 4 topics include Jobs, Medicine, Education, Law, Science and Technology as well as Culture. They have found these topics interesting and have had some great debates and discussions.



They have also been translating information from BSL to English and English to BSL. As well as developing their linguistic knowledge and learning how to self analyse their own filmed clips.



If you would like more information on BSL Courses please email us at:
bsl@heathlands.herts.sch.uk



Parents' Page - Spring Term 2017



Engagement with Education

All parents have been asked to sign the new Home/School agreement, 'Engagement with Education' this term; alongside a member of staff. It follows new standards and thinking and the importance of putting the child at the centre. If you have not signed this document please sign and return to the school office please contact us if you need another copy.

Sausage Sizzler!

The FoH held their first Bunnings Sausage Sizzler on Sunday March 5th. We raised nearly £500 for the school, We were very lucky to have some new faces on the team. One parent's child only joined the school a week earlier and was happy to roll up his sleeves and get involved. Thanks to all that helped on the day or bought a sausage!



Home/LearningSupport

We know it can be difficult sometimes to motivate the children at home. We invited in parents from US5 and EYFS/KS1 to learn more about how to support their child at home. The parents were even given their own work to do!



E-Safety Day

Parents were invited into school for our E-Safety day. Some parents brought in their own gadgets from home to have help on how to set up 'Parental settings' in order to keep the children safe online. They also looked at websites that your child may be using and need monitoring. On the school webpage we have added 'Past school events' under 'Parents pages' this allows you to see special events, talks etc that you may have missed.



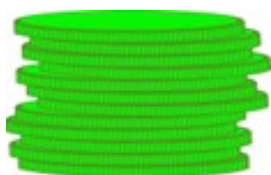
Recruitment and keeping updated!

We are always looking for new members for our FoH, if you would like to join the committee, please contact friends@heathlands.herts.sch.uk for further information to help with our Summer fair. We are also looking for volunteers see 'Parents pages' then 'Get involved' on the Heathlands website www.heathlands.herts.sch.uk. You can also check out Facebook or the App for ongoing news and events!





Heathlands Newsletter - Spring Term 2017



Waitrose Community Matters Programme

A big thank you to every one who collected green tokens at Waitrose for their Community Matters programme during January.

The tokens raised a grand total of £429 which was used to purchase books for the school.

Summer Term Dates 2017

Summer Term Starts	Tuesday 18th April 2017
Half Term Holiday	Monday 29th May - Friday 2nd June 2017
Summer Term Ends	Friday 21st July @ 12.30pm