

Heathlands School Newsletter

Summer Term 2015

Dear Parents and Carers

As the year might be finished for the children we are already forging ahead with new plans for the 2015/2016 school year. When students return in September it is very likely that the builders will be back on site! We have been given planning permission for a first floor extension over some of the lower school classrooms. For some time we have had the problem of a leaky flat roof in this part of the school and despite maintenance we have not been able to properly fix it. Building upwards will make us fully water tight and give us more teaching space which can only be good for the children. At this time we expect to use the extension for improved art and design facilities and especially want to include film and photography which is so valuable for deaf children.

Inevitably there will be some disruption in the short term. This will involve some lower school classes being in temporary classrooms for the Autumn Term. These will be set up over the holiday period so that they will be fully operational for September.

Thank you to all the parents who returned their questionnaires or made contribution the review meetings. We really value your feedback and are interested in your suggestions which include teaching foreign languages and teaching BSL on a more formal basis. A number of lower school parents also gave their views on home learning. We will be considering all these views as part of our school self-evaluation and addressing them in the 2015/2016 School Development Plan.

One aspect of the school we are very keen to develop is post 16 education. Some of you may remember this was successfully piloted here in 2012. We have long wanted to extend our upper age range but it is a complex process and we have to get the agreement of our local authority. Any parental views or letters of support for this proposal would be very helpful.

The children have already told me about the many exciting places they are planning to visit over the summer. We hope all our families have a wonderful holidays. Don't forget holiday diaries and to send in a post card for our 40th birthday travel challenge.

We look forward to welcoming the children back to school on Monday 7 September 2015.

Yours sincerely
Deborah Jones-Stevens

STAFF NEWS

We will be sad to say goodbye to Mrs Goudie and Mrs Waris, Teachers in Lower School, and to Jono Raperport-Smyth and Nicola Kerntiff who are support staff.

We also say goodbye to a member of our Speech and Language Therapy Department, Mrs Crudgington.

We wish them all well.

Joining us in September is Miss Savage as Lower school teacher and Bryony Wall and Rebecca Ash as support staff. We also welcome back Miss Aitken who returns from maternity leave.

Good luck to Miss McGarry who gets married this summer and will return as Mrs McGarry-Quigley!

FREE SCHOOL MEALS

Parents/Carers do not need to re-apply for Free School Meals, because Hertfordshire County Council will automatically renew them over the summer holidays. If you are no longer entitled to Free School Meals your child's name will be removed from the list.

Lower School Summer Term 2015



LS2W also dug and planted a vegetable patch. We are hoping there will be some vegetables to pick in the Autumn term.



The summer term is always one where we enjoy seeing things grow. Helped by some of our parents LS1 cleared a new flower-bed and planted 40 sunflowers to Celebrate our 40th birthday. The children have been carefully looking after the flowers by watering them regularly. Already many of the sunflowers are growing strong and tall.



The children were all very pleased to receive their 40th birthday mugs. There were 3 different mugs, each with a design created by one of the pupils.



Several classes had the chance to go to the Zoo to learn more about animals this term. LS1 visited Paradise Park and got close to some very big cats! LS2 went to Whipsnade Zoo, thanks to the Rotary club who kindly organised and paid for the visit as part of their annual "Kids Out".



Alice in Wonderland sack races!

Summer brings a whole range of sporting activities and events to enable children to develop their skills and fitness. These have ranged from inter-schools events such as Penathlon or the deaf schools football tournament through to tennis coaching for LS 5 and 6 and opportunities for some Year 4 pupils to take part in 'World Games Day'. At the time of writing we are looking forward to our sports day.



We were fortunate to welcome Krazy Kat theatre company recently who came to show us their latest production "Mattress, Mattress". This was enjoyed by all the Lower school pupils.



Right at the start of the summer term we enjoyed our book week. Children dressed up as book characters and we were able to have a special 'book swap' thanks to all those who brought in books they had finished reading. Towards the end of the summer term we were able to dress up again, to

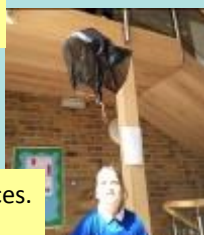
celebrate the 150th anniversary of Alice in Wonderland.



Learning is fun and all the children have learnt a lot this term here are just a few of the things...



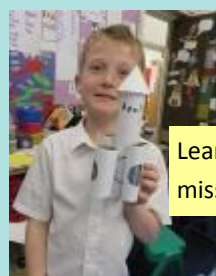
Learning about 2D and 3D shape.



Learning about forces.



Learning to weigh and cook.



Learning about rockets and the Apollo Space mission.

Learning about the Amazon rainforest.



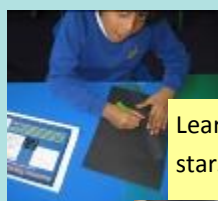
Several classes learnt about Van Gogh and tried art in a similar style. Here are some paintings inspired by his famous pictures "Starry night" and "Sunflowers"



Learning to investigate.



Learning to animate.



Learning about space, stars and the solar system.



Learning to co-operate.



Keep learning through the holidays! We look forward to reading the children's diaries in September.



Before half term the children had a fantastic opportunity to learn about chickens and chicks when we have some 'living eggs' come to school. They arrived as eggs in a special incubator but after a few days started to hatch. We ended up with 10, fluffy baby chicks. The children learnt how to look after them and each class took it in turns to clean them out, feed them, make sure they had enough water and give them some gentle (and very careful) hugs. At the end of their two weeks with us the chicks had doubled in size, were beginning to grow some wing feathers and starting to try to fly. They went back to live on a farm.



Upper School

Summer Term 2015

It's been a busy term for the Upper School with lots of exciting events taking place. We had Oliver Westbury visit the school for a talk about his adventures. There has been success in numerous sports events. External trainers have been in and Year 10 students all passed a 'saving lives' first aid qualification. There was also a theatre production to give guidance about staying safe online.



In April Oliver Westbury visited the school to give an informative chat about his adventures and trek to the North Pole.

Quote from pupil:
"He is fantastic and very inspire. It interesting hear about his adventure".



A theatre group came into school and performed a play about the importance of staying safe online. Franz wrote: "The theatre story is called Chelsea Choice's. This is really good story about abuse we



are amazing watch the theatre act. It makes me want know information. But they really good acting it is about abuse I feeling sad and upset. We're feeling shock about learn bully on the mobile phone and for message on internet. Before boyfriend and girlfriend was loving then later abuse. She blame him because she felt ugly and disgusting. Start grooming making her feeling nobody understand her, feeling lonely and scared him. Stop contact with family and friend. He changes to angry a lot."

Year 10 learnt how to save a life. Specialist trainers called 'Staying Alive' came into school for an afternoon session as part of the PSHCE curriculum. One student said: "This is such an important skill. We learnt how to put someone in the recovery position so that if they were sick they wouldn't swallow it or their tongue. We also learnt how to get someone's heart working again if they had a heart attack (we have to be gentle and only use two fingers on babies). We also learnt how to remove something that was choking a person".



There were some great achievements this term.



Congratulations to the Heathlands senior girls team. They won the Hertfordshire Girls Special Schools football tournament which was held in June on our splendid astro turf pitch.

All received winners medals and a cup

Ms Round completed the London Marathon in April in just over 6 hours. This was a huge personal achievement for her as well as raising money for the NDCS.



This Year 10 student is doing a City & Guilds Construction course at Links academy.



He used a variety of skills including carpentry, design and creating his own templates to make and



Ms Round has been teaching drama in upper school this year. The GCSE drama group recently took part in a project working together with a class of students in Lower school to create animations.



As part of their BTec course in Home Cooking Skills, year 10 students have to instruct others how to prepare ingredients and make a food item.



Here the students can be seen working with year 2b. They are demonstrating how to make cup cakes. The young students enjoyed this and made lovely cakes!



In July, year 10 students held a bring and buy sale at school, to raise money to help deaf schools in Pakistan and The Gambia. Kashmir Deaf Childrens' Trust (Kadect) was founded in 2001 and has a charity shop in Hatfield Road, St Albans. The founder, Mohammed Akhtar whose daughter is deaf, has visited school to talk about his work and this inspired students to help raise money. They sold toys, books, clothes and puzzles to help the charity to achieve their aim to establish an audiology clinic in Kashmir so children can be tested and diagnosed from an early age and have hearing aids fitted.

Year 11 Leavers Prom



Every summer term we have to say a fond farewell to our Year 11s.

After a busy time studying and taking their GCSEs, the leavers prom was held at a posh hotel in Hatfield. Students and staff enjoyed a delicious meal and were even given the opportunity to dress up for the photo booth.

As always, we wish year 11 all the very best for the future and look forward to some fantastic GCSE results.



150th Anniversary of Lewis Carroll's Alice In Wonderland

English teacher, Mrs Payne arranged an educational and fun filled day to celebrate the 150th of anniversary of Lewis Carroll's story about Alice in Wonderland.

Children and staff throughout the school dressed up, bringing characters from the much loved story to life. Alice, The Queen of Hearts, Mad Hatters and even living playing cards, all featured in the local newspaper, but even newspapers make errors in punctuation – see if you can spot the mistake !

School's Wonderland adventures

Heathlands School in St Albans, a specialist school for deaf children, celebrated the 150th anniversary of Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* with their very own Mad Hatter's Tea Party.

The children donned an array of brightly coloured costumes to bring characters from the novel to life.

The Mad Hatter, living playing cards, characters inspired by the Queen of Hearts and even Alice herself, were visible around the school site as staff and students embraced the Carroll themed festivities.

The day featured games including



Queen of Hearts croquet, 'I'm late' White Rabbit sack races and pin the tail on the Cheshire cat.



Heath House

Summer Term 2015

It has been another eventful and busy term at Heath House. We have been taking advantage of the warm summer evenings with many events, activities and clubs organised for the young people and of course the odd BBQ. The staff are looking forward to a new academic year with new pupils and more fun!

Cubs: The children attending Cubs have gained several badges this term; for communication, sports, disability awareness and photography. The children have gained independence and have been mixing with their hearing peers; encouraging interaction and communication. They have been involved in several activities. They went on a trip to a nearby park where they had to try and catch insects from the river. The children were also taught about photography and took their own photos whilst at the park. Most recently the children learnt how to make a fire and had an enjoyable time roasting marshmallows.

Youth club: Mr Priestley and Mr Rodgers have been leading Empower which is for pupils aged 11-16 years. The young people have been enjoying the activities such as orienteering and multi-sports. The club is popular and has been a great success; it is available to any pupils wishing to join. The club is



Decoration: This term the children and young people have been making the best use of their newly decorated lounges and play room.



Year 11s: The year 11s have worked hard revising for and completing their GCSE exams. Heath House had a lovely send off for the secondary pupils. The primary pupils made cards, presents and baked some delicious cakes. The Heath House pupils also choose to go out as a group for a farewell meal.

We wish them all the best in the future they will be missed!





Trips and outings: We have been to the local park for a picnic and out to a restaurant for an evening meal. Most recently the children went to Gambardo a soft play centre. The children had a lot of fun running around and going on the dodgems. The children exhausted the staff as well as themselves! We



Footgolf: The children and young people also had a try at playing the new sport footgolf.



Art project: The children and young people from Heath House have teamed up to create an artistic painting to be displayed in the Heath House office. This was an activity that was enjoyed by all who helped and enabled them to express their creativity in their own way.



Money Management and cookery skills: The children and young people have been learning money management skills. With trips to the local shops, they are able to purchase products and encouraged to be independent with learning the value of money. The children are also given the opportunity to assist staff in choosing the menu for the following week and ordering the food for it so it can be delivered on Monday evenings. This enables the children and young people to learn about the process of planning



BSL Centre

Summer Term 2015

Wow what a year it has been for us! We have had 128 learners on courses or taking assessments over this academic year. The Centre has gone from strength to strength providing courses from basic BSL or Deaf Awareness workshops to the new BSL Level 4 course. All learners are now awaiting results and are looking forward to starting their next level in September 2015.

The Parents' group has welcomed some new members. They have enjoyed learning new vocabulary and about story telling using BSL. They have also been learning about the importance of using facial expressions, fingerspelling properly and BSL grammar. Our parents who have been coming for longer have been supporting newer parents with receptive practice and by producing clear handshapes.



BSL Courses

We have had three BSL Level 1 courses; Monday evening class saw a large intake of eager learners who have achieved well and have been developing their knowledge of both BSL and Deaf culture. Tuesday morning Level 1 class was a group of hard working ladies, each attending the class for a variety of reasons. Feedback has been great and shows how much fun learning BSL with us really is. Watching each learner growing with confidence at learning the new skill is very rewarding. Thursday evening saw a fast track level 1 course start in February, quite a large group for a fast track course, they have had the pleasure of being taught by Emma and have done very well in keeping up with the speedy learning pace.

Par-



ents' Group



This was Zayne's first year of teaching BSL Level 2, "I really appreciate the students showing me lots of patience, it has been a learning curve for me and we all ended up really enjoying the course", one student commented, "Thursday evening is my favourite evening!"

All our level 2 learners have worked hard this year, not only to achieve their exams, but in developing their language and learning about Deaf culture and the community too.



BSL Level 3 has had a busy year, they have all worked really hard developing their BSL skills and linguistic knowledge. They have finally completed their last assessments and can have a well earned rest.

They have been involved in debates, presentations, discussions and a lot of receptive practice.



BSL Level 4 started in February, the course will continue into the next academic year. Students have been developing their linguistic knowledge and learning how to self assess their own productive skills.



As well as our teaching of courses we have delivered Deaf Awareness and basic BSL workshops to the wider community.

We are now busy preparing for courses to start again in September. If you or a family member would like information regarding BSL courses, please contact us by email- bsl@heathlands.herts.sch.uk and we will be able to answer any enquiries you have.

Have a great Summer from all at the BSL Centre!