

Heathlands Newsletter

Summer Term 2017



Dear Parents, Carers and Friends

This week I asked the children what was special for them in the 2016/17 school year. The answers I got will come as no surprise; sports day, Derby 5-a-side football, the choir competition, learning archery, going to Spain, sailing, film awards and learning to ride a bike. School life is all about learning and the really memorable things for children are those special events that enrich their lives. In addition to the day to day classroom learning the activities shown in the newsletter are an important part of children and young people's school experience. They learn valuable skills of team work and independence, develop confidence, self-esteem and are prepared for adult life. Hopefully we might stimulate some life-long interest or even employment options!

The staff also keep a very close eye on how children are progressing with learning. We use the information published by the government (Performance Tables) to compare how we are doing with other special schools and schools for deaf children. We are excited to report that the latest results show Heathlands to be in the top 5 schools nationally of 408 special schools for the progress children make by year 11. This is a fantastic achievement and both staff and pupils should be proud of their efforts. Along with another Outstanding Ofsted inspection of Heath House the end of term felt very positive indeed.

This year we say goodbye to several staff members. Mrs Jordan-Caws, Mr Farooq and Miss Gomez are all leaving to start their teacher training so we wish them well.

I hope all parents, staff and pupils enjoy their summer break. Whilst you are away work will continue in school as we undertake further refurbishment of lower school classrooms and toilets so that everything will be ready for your return in September.

Deborah Jones-Stevens

E-SAFETY

Stay safe over the summer holidays.

Look at our new website for advice on e-safety, social media and internet use.

<https://www.heathlandscomputing.co.uk/esafety>

FREE SCHOOL MEALS

Parents/Carers do not need to re-apply for Free School Meals. Hertfordshire County Council will automatically renew them over the summer holidays. If you are no longer entitled to FSM you will receive an email or letter directly from the Council.

Upper School

Summer Term 2017

US7 and US5 built a Sensory Garden from an old pallet and recycled milk cartons. They looked at plants that they could touch, taste and smell during a visit to Bunnings hardware and garden store and were able to practise their communication and money skills. Back at school they worked together to create the garden, developing team work skills and planting and growing knowledge.



Careers workshops at Whipsnade Zoo

Year 10 and 11 students took part in some useful careers workshops at Whipsnade zoo to gain an understanding of the career options available to them in conservation science. Students learnt about the work of zoos in conserving endangered species through different programmes. They also learnt about the role of a zoo keeper and the skills and personal qualities needed for this job.



Some students took part in a real animal behaviour study, where they collected and analysed data on chimpanzees. This was a really useful activity in helping students to use their communication and numeracy skills. The workshops have helped our students to explore their preferences and interests, which should in turn help them on their career journey.

During the summer holidays, if there are any Open Careers Events in your area, try to encourage your child to attend as these are a great place to go and meet different employers and training providers; they can give your child an insight into different careers, employers, apprenticeships and qualifications and help prepare them for the future.



Sharing the best in Gardening



This year some students have been really involved in gardening; it is recognised that giving student ownership to something often helps to develop self-esteem.

Some students have attended the weekly gardening club to look after our school environment. They enjoyed working as a group to look after plants and vegetables and were involved in a fundraising initiative for the cultural trip to Madrid. The impact on students' confidence, team working and communication skills has been significant. US3 students also submitted evidence of their gardening skills for an AQA Unit Award and they made their own gardening book to help them to remember the skills involved.

The Royal Horticultural Society presented the school with three certificates – Gardening Level 1, 2 and 3 in recognition of the fantastic evidence submitted. The plan for next year is to continue developing students' gardening skills and interest and work towards achieving the RHS Level 4 award.

US1 have been learning about Women's Suffrage - women's right to vote. The students made protest signs and performed a mini protest march. Here are some of the signs made by the students in class.



In June, our year 11 students went on work experience. Staff also visited students to find out what they had been doing.

It was great to see them all trying new things and learning new skills, and to hear the wonderful comments from their supervisors saying how well they had adapted to their new environments and how proactive they had been.

One student has continued to practise his carpentry skills and has finished making a bird box. He has been given a free set of starter tools from T&B which he will hopefully be able to make use of in the future. They have all been a real credit to the school and parents should be really proud!

Preparation for Adulthood First Aid training

'Staying Alive' recently delivered a half day basic first aid training session for year 10 and 11 students as part of the Preparation for Adulthood programme.



Students learned how to deal with emergency situations and how to put someone into the recovery position and check airway, breathing and pulse. They were also shown how to put on dressings and slings as well as how to administer CPR if required.

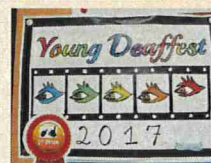




Mrs East, a retired Teacher of the Deaf, visited us to give a talk about her voluntary work in Sri Lanka. She talked about how she supported a school for the deaf, located in Matara on Sri Lanka's southern coast. She also mentioned that she worked with our Science Teacher, Mr Rodger who ten years ago went over to work with her, training staff for three weeks.



Earlier this month Heathlands won in the Best young film category at Clin D'Oeil festival in Reims. Two of our pupils visited to proudly collect the award.



In May we celebrated when



three Heathlands students came 1st and 3rd with their designs in the Young Deafifest poster competition.

Trip to Madrid

In June a number of students went to Madrid for a cultural visit. Here is what one student said: "We learn Spanish in lessons each week and this year we went to real Spain. We can practise some Spanish words and also learn more about this country. It was so fun. It was the bestest time of my life. We went to visit Real Madrid football club and we had lots of time walking around the capital city in Madrid. We also visit a school for deaf children and I made lots of new friends in Madrid which is from Coliego Gaudem school. I recommend you to go to Madrid. The weather is beautiful but very hot."



Heathlands hosted the English Deaf Schools Sports Day. Students from Heathlands and 5 other schools took part in different athletics events at the Westminster Lodge track in St Albans. It was a very enjoyable day for all of the students from both Heathlands and the other deaf schools who attended. Many former Heathlands students also came along to the event to show their support. Heathlands School finished in 3rd place and this years winners were Exeter Deaf Academy. Congratulations to them and



thank you to all of the schools for making the journey to participate in the event.

As always with our summer newsletter we have to say a fond farewell to our year 11 leavers. They had a leaving prom and were treated to a trip in a stretch limo. They then returned to the drama room, which was decorated with a balloon arch and they ate party food. We wish students all the very best for the future.



Lower School

Summer Term 2017

This term has been another busy one. Topics have included Vikings and Anglo Saxons in KS2, KS1 learning about St Albans and EYFS learning about holidays. In addition there were several exciting sporting opportunities for pupils and visits out as well as the daily learning which happens in all subjects and throughout the whole curriculum. Here are just a few of the activities pupils have been involved in.



The Foundation and KS1 children were very excited to have Ashley from CBeebies Magic Hands come as part of research for a new series. The children had lots of ideas.



Children from Lime and Fir class decided to help raise money for Save the Children by making their own dens. Some children in the world don't have proper houses and live in makeshift shelters all the time. The children raised £57.



Children in Fir class love thinking and investigating mathematically. They have learnt you can measure lots of things including people and sunflowers.



They also thought how to record their measurements.



Some of the KS2 students got the opportunity to take part in a Triathlon at Westminster Lodge. They swam, cycled and ran. Although the



students had done all those sports before it was the first time they had done them straight after each other.



Sycamore class took part in the archery competition at the Herts School Games finals. They won the silver medal and two of the pupils got special awards for teamwork and sporting passion.

Thank you to the volunteers from Pitney Bowes who volunteered their time and talents to paint

fences and build new planters to improve the vegetable patch at the back of Lower School. The children have enjoyed learning about different vegetables and planting a vegetable garden which hopefully they will harvest in September.





As part of literacy work on "The Enormous Crocodile" by Roald Dahl, Sycamore class made their own stop frame animation.



Thank you to The Juice Pharm, Nandos and Lush in St Albans who opened their doors to host a very special day of learning for pupils from Sycamore class. They learnt about the history of Nandos and how the restaurant works before ordering a meal there. They got a chance to make and try out healthy smoothies at the Juice Pharm and make their own bath bombs in Lush. The children really enjoyed the day and learnt a great deal as well as getting lots of opportunities to practise their communication skills with the staff.



Fir class visited the lavender fields at Hitchin. They also got the chance to compare the Hitchin sunflowers with the ones growing in the Foundation garden.



It was good to see so many parents at Lower school Sports day.



Every child had the chance to take part in different activities, and races and scored points for their mixed age house teams. Congratulations to the winning house, Matlin.



Pupils from Lime class have been learning about St Albans and visited the Cathedral. They also visited Verulamium park.

Heathlands Harmony have had another busy term. Following their success at the National Signing Choirs festival they have been involved in some filming (watch this space to find out what for) and have performed at the STAGS in Colours festival.



Oak class have been taking part in an exciting and innovative inclusion project at Fonthill Care Home. The children became teachers and have been teaching the residents sign language each week. As part of the lessons they have done different activities with the people who live there, proving you are never too old to learn or too young to teach others.



Learning about history is fun. While finding out about what

the Anglo Saxons ate, Willow class tried a recipe for Anglo Saxon honey short bread.



Heath House

Summer Term 2017

The summer term of 2017 has been a busy, but active one for the children and young people in Heath House. The children have been taking part in a whole range of activities whilst continuing with various after school clubs such as football, gym, golf and recently some of the children have been learning to sail. They have also continued to attend Cubs, Scouts and Guides.

Cycling

This term six of the children and young people from Heath House have taken part in cycling proficiency training. Three of the children could not ride a bike before the initial training. However after three sessions they were able to cycle independently and all have developed their skills and knowledge. Two of our older students have achieved their level 1 cycling award. We look forward to this activity returning in the Autumn term.



Staff

It has also been a very busy term for staff, not only have we welcomed Thomas back after a long period of absence but Mrs Shields has gone on maternity leave. We had our annual Ofsted inspection and are again graded Outstanding.

Goodbyes

Unfortunately we will be saying goodbye to Neal as he will be leaving Heath House. Neal will be missed a great deal by the children and young people as well as staff but we all wish him the best for the future!



Heath House pets

Heath House children and young people have spent time this term helping to tame the new rabbits Snow Ball and Casper. They have learnt how to care and look after them.



We said our goodbyes to the year 11 young people by having a lovely meal at 'The Real China' restaurant. We wish them the best of luck in the future. They will of course be greatly missed.

'Come dine with me'

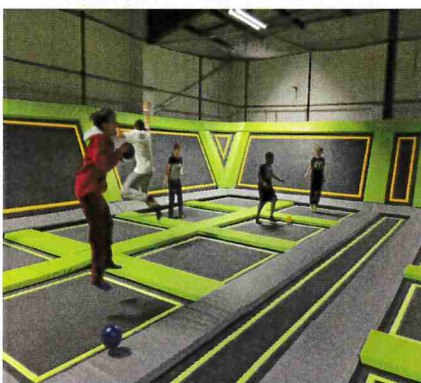
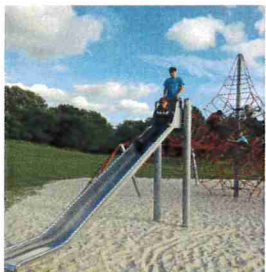
Heath House children and young people participated in a 'Come dine with me' event where by they learnt how to plan, prepare and cook a three course meal for the other children and staff in Heath House. Staff were impressed with the range of dishes made and the independent skills displayed.



Activities

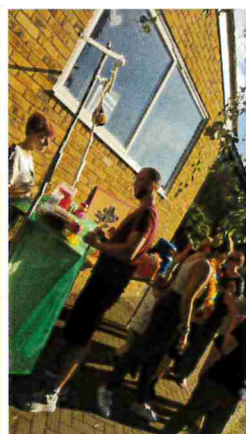
The children and young people have been going to a local tennis club where they have been taught by a tennis instructor the techniques and skills used in tennis.

Other activities involve bowling, trips to the local park, a trampoline park, youth club, swimming, shopping and Heath House Quizzes.



Family BBQ

We recently celebrated our annual family BBQ. The children and young people spent time creating and making decorations for this event. They also helped to prepare and make food and drink for the evening. They made a fruit salad, fruit kebabs oranges with jelly in as well as 'mocktails' for the 'mocktail bar' we made. We would like to thank all the parents/carers and staff for joining us for this annual get together and for making the long journey, it proved to be a successful event.



We look forward to our Christmas get together and the coming year ahead. We hope everyone has an enjoyable summer and a restful break!

BSL Centre

Summer Term 2017

The summer term is one of the busiest times for us in the BSL Centre, with exams daily. Learners begin to realise the end of their course is nearing and they start to think about the next step. Some are looking forward to returning in September to continue developing their BSL skills, others are thinking about how to utilise their skills. Whichever direction our learners choose we have enjoyed teaching them and wish them well for their future.



Our parents group has welcomed new faces and supported the regular family members this year. Some have been taking their BSL level 1 assessments, they will continue in the new academic year. Those who are regular have enjoyed developing their knowledge of BSL linguistics and story telling skills.



St Luke's School

LEARNING AND GROWING TOWARDS INDEPENDENCE

This year we have seen the delivery of five BSL level 1 courses. Two of these have been at two local schools, St Luke's and Batchwood, where the pupils have enjoyed learning BSL level 1 for young people.

The other three courses have gone well at the centre; two adult courses and one young persons'. They all await assessment results to see how they have done.

Our fast track course was delivered by Louise, a new BSL tutor who joined our team in January. Louise has enjoyed the group and hopes to be back next year with us.



BSL level 2 has again been delivered over three courses this year. Learners have been sitting exams over the last few weeks and so far results have been great! Our Thursday evening and Friday day classes were very popular this year. The majority of learners will be returning in September to study BSL Level 3.



BSL Level 3 was delivered over two courses, learners have all taken their final assessments and await results. Level 3 feels like a huge jump from level 2 for learners but as teachers we can really see skills mature and become embedded. The development is lovely to see. September 2017 will see the delivery of three level 3 courses here at the BSL Centre.

Zayne taught his first Level 3 class this year and is looking forward to teaching it again in September. He taught a great group on Friday's and they have all done really well.



BSL level 4 this year consisted of one course with 6 learners. Learners have developed their linguistic knowledge and learnt how to self-analyse, marking their own film clips. They have completed their portfolios and are awaiting their exam results.

All our courses are interactive, learning through activities, debates, discussions, research, from each other and from the teachers. Level 1 is mostly teacher led, level 2 has this element but also introduces debates and discussions with some research. On levels 3 and 4 the learner is expected to be actively involved within the deaf community to enable development and use of BSL in real scenarios. The most important part in a learner's journey is to use skills by meeting other BSL users in the Deaf community.

If you would like more information regarding courses at the BSL centre, please look on Heathlands website.

www.heathlands.herts.sch.uk

Or email us at bsl@heathlands.herts.sch.uk

You can also scan the QR Code – this will take you direct to the BSL Courses on the Heathlands Website.

We have a variety of courses available from September 2017.



Parents' Page

Summer Term 2017

Welcoming Parents into Assemblies

Lower School Parents have had the opportunity to come to their child's class assemblies. Speaking with parents they have enjoyed the opportunity to see their child's learning up close. We have learnt about the Vikings, Hearing Dogs, Special Books and of course had Den day!

At the end of May we invited parents to join us to say goodbye to the year 11 children. Then the Staff had the opportunity to say goodbye to some of the families that we have known and supported in some cases for 13 years! It was nice to hear and share stories with them and also receive their thanks. We wish you and them all the best for the future.



Summer is coming!

The six weeks of summer can be a challenge for families to keep children (and themselves) healthy both in mind and body!

Here are some ideas that might help...



- ⚙ Join in with events run by Deaf organisations:
- ⚙ http://www.ndcs.org.uk/whats_on/events/ have multi activity weeks and visits to Cromer to explore the outdoors
- ⚙ Remark play schemes contact info@remark.uk.com
- ⚙ Phoenix have a huge range of events you can join in with – climbing, trampolining, surfing, visits to the seaside, Watford FC, Buckingham Palace and the London Transport Museum <http://www.phoenixgroup.org.uk>

Sports Day

It was lovely to welcome parents to both our Upper and Lower School Sports day. Thank you to FoH who sold much needed water!



Summer BBQ

We are hoping to have a Summer BBQ in September. This will be held on the afternoon of Friday 22nd September at 3.30. We want this to be an opportunity for parents to meet with each other and with the staff team. We want to give you plenty of notice so you can book it in your diary. If you would like to help in any way, please contact friends@heathlands.herts.sch.uk

Heathlands Newsletter

Summer Term 2017

Autumn Term Dates 2017

Inset Days	Monday 4th September—Tuesday 5th September (No pupils in school)
Term Starts	Wednesday 6th September
Half Term Holiday	Monday 23rd October - Friday 27th October
Occasional Day	Friday 24th November (No pupils in School)
Summer Term Ends	Tuesday 19th December @12.30pm

We wish everyone a relaxing summer break and look forward to seeing the students back on
Wednesday 6th September.