



Heathlands Newsletter - Autumn Term 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

Reflecting back on the term it seems a long time since we felt the warmth of the summer, however reflecting back on the term is a joy when you see the activities and projects covered in all departments of the school. Whilst we have been reducing our visits to groups to maintain bubbles, we watch our Facebook page with joy at all the creative learning that occurs and look forward to the days when we can freely walk round the classrooms again. However we all can agree that fantastic learning has taken place and our children and young people are a source of pride.

Whilst we have been working in unusual and unknown times this term we have been very proud of how our school community have adapted to the changes. As always the Heathlands community have pulled together and supported each other through the term, facing all difficulties and changes with strength, calm and understanding.

We look forward to the New Year and wish you all a very happy and healthy Christmas.

From Mrs Reeves Costi and Mrs Shields

Staffing

We are exceptionally sad to announce that three of our long term members of staff are leaving at the end of this term. Mrs Louise Weaver has worked at Heathlands for 18 years and has been a fantastic LSA and an amazing member of the team. She was first a parent and then a staff member and we wish her well in her retirement. Mrs Gloria Giles has worked at Heathlands for 15 years and has been a consistent, positive, hard working member of staff. Always calm with a lovely welcoming smile, Gloria has been a great asset and now looks forward to spending her retirement with her family and grandchildren. Mrs Gloria Welford has been on extended leave for the past year and has decided that she needs to continue looking after her family. She has worked at Heathlands for 14 years as a brilliant member of our team. Staff and students, both past and present, have very fond memories of these staff, they will be greatly missed but will always remain part of our extended Heathlands community.

Ms Round will also become part of our extended Heathlands community as she is relocating and taking up a job nearer to her new home. We wish her and her children the best of luck in their new home and schools.

Our Chair of Governors, Ms Julia Trueman has now retired after 9 years at the helm. Her contribution to the school has been valued and crucial to the outstanding development of the school. Our new chair of Governors is now Ms Oyin Kalejaiye who enthusiastically takes up the role having been our Safeguarding Governor and Chair of Resources.

Spring term is usually when we have most disruption from bad weather. We will try to give early notice by text to parents and taxis if the school is closed. Please make sure the school office have an up to date text number for you. Remember we can only make an assessment about the weather conditions in the St Albans area. Some children have long journeys so parents must decide if travel is safe in your home area.



Lower School - Autumn Term 2020

It has been a busy term in lower school as we have got used to the changes required to keep everyone Covid safe however it hasn't stopped the learning! Topics have included: The South Americas including the Rainforest and the Maya Civilisation in KS2, Celebrations in KS1 and Myself, Senses and Colour in EYFS.

RENAISSANCE
myON

Reading is really important for children and we are pleased to be able to offer on line books for pupils in lower through a subscription to My On reading. Your class teacher will have provided a username and password your child can use to find and read books on a computer or iPad. Children who are on the Accelerated Reader programme can also take AR quizzes where they are available linked to the books.



As a school we have also recently subscribed to an on line learning environment called Purple Mash which provides different learning games, activities and apps. This is particularly to enhance our Computing Curriculum delivery. Pupils who are using this will have their own log ins and password and they can continue learning started in school at home.



Piranhas Class have been learning about the Maya Civilisation and the masks Maya people would wear for a range of occasions. They each designed and created a mask for a specific occasion.



"We have been learning about the Maya Civilisation. We have researched facts about Maya writing and created some of our own. They wrote on books made from the bark of fig trees."



It's nearly Christmas and what better time for a school trip without even having to leave the classroom! Iguanas Class and Tree Frogs Class joined in with BBC Primary Science: Creatures and Colour - Live Lesson this afternoon. The pupils virtually went to Chester Zoo on their special winter trip to investigate why animals are different colours and to learn about how animals have adapted to suit their environments in different ways.

The children in Jaguars class have made pencil cases from felt. They have learnt 3 different stitches, applique and how to attach a button



Sloths have been learning about 'microhabitats' in Science. We went on a minibeast hunt around school and found woodlice, beetles, worms, flies, slugs, a crane fly and even 2 ladybirds!



Monkeys were one of 3 groups that had a wonderful workshop experience with Forest School in our grounds. Outside in the autumn space, they tried new activities using natural objects. A magical morning finished off with toasted marshmallows in biscuits!

As a special Harvest project all the lower school classes have each created a special Harvest themed picture. The pictures were taken as gifts to local old people's homes.



The pupils in Iguanas class learnt about Remembrance Day in History and made poppies to remember those who served in the war.



The children in Treefrogs class had a virtual integration session, online with a local school. They taught the children the alphabet, some signs for colours and animals. They also taught the hearing children how to sing 'The Colours of the Rainbow' song, in BSL.



Alpacas Class had their first time using dictionaries! They found words that their teacher had 'forgotten' how to spell and searched for the meaning of other words.



As part of Anti-Bullying Week, the pupils from Iguanas and Tree Frogs Class discussed different forms of bullying, what we can do to be kind and designed their own pair of odd socks to celebrate what makes us all unique!



We think Monkeys and Toucans are looking expectantly for somebody wearing red with a white beard!



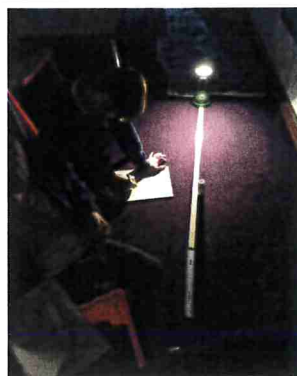
As part of our Topic work on Maya Civilisation, the Tree Frogs class learnt about what Maya people ate. They made some tortillas with guacamole. They learnt that maize was the main diet of Maya people.

Alpacas Class absolutely loved their Forest Schools experience in the school ground.



Sloth class have been learning about Rangoli patterns which are made on the floor of the house to welcome guests at Diwali.

Alpacas Class learnt the story of Hanukkah and told it to Toucans Class. They made menorahs and played a game with Dreidels which they really enjoyed.



Piranhas Class investigated what happens to the length of a shadow when an object is closer or further away from a light source.

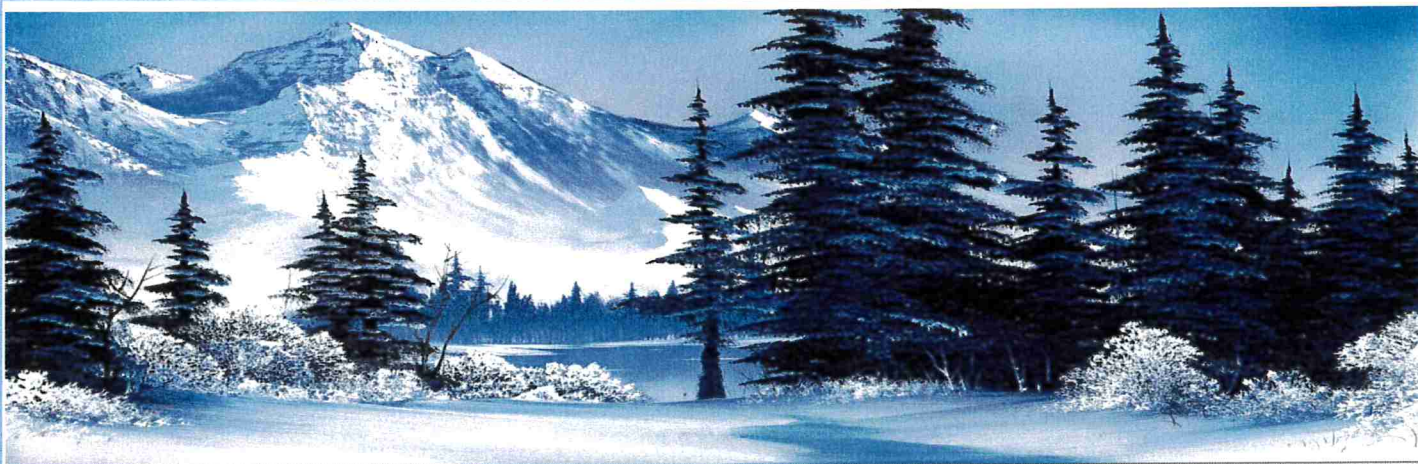


Iguanas Class learnt about the meaning of advent in the Lower School assembly this week. They made their own advent calendars and expanded their vocabulary by adding BSL signs for Christmas and Winter themed words!



Monkeys class read the story Nelly Paints a Monster and created their own version based on the information in the book...green hands, blue eyes, yellow hair, purple body and red mouth





Upper School - Autumn Term 2020

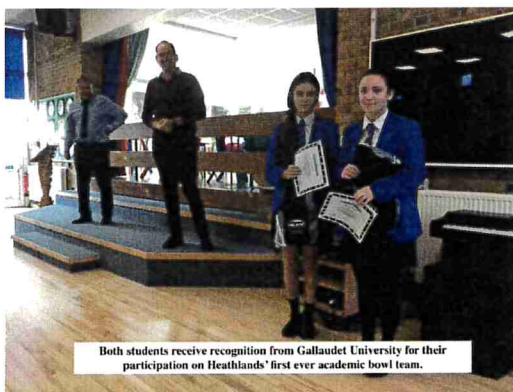


Congratulations to our student who came 2nd in the national Poetry by Heart competition! A fantastic glass award was received as her prize along with a bag filled with poetry books.

We are pleased to announce that we have been given a project grant by the Royal Society of Chemistry to enable our students to be involved in the production of GCSE Chemistry investigation videos. They will make the videos themselves and these will be shown on our science channel website.

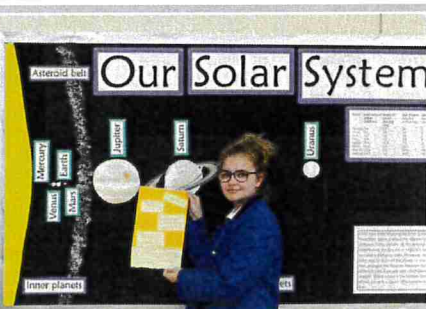


Congratulations to these students who received recognition from Gallaudet University in America for being part of the first Heathlands' team to participate in the University's academic bowl tournament.



Both students receive recognition from Gallaudet University for their participation on Heathlands' first ever academic bowl team.

Students and staff made a chem tree celebrating women, both deaf and hearing, in chemistry.



US10 have worked together to create a display on the Solar System. They have been learning about the relative sizes and distances of the planets. As the distances of the planets from the Sun are so large; it is not possible to make a display entirely to scale. They have drawn all the planets to one scale, and then arranged the distances between them to a different scale.

In Deaf Studies, US4 enjoyed their Zoom interview with Ashley Kendall who works at SignVideo. They found out lots of interesting things about online interpreting.



Student Leaders



We have appointed 15 students to become student leaders. They have been having training, attending focus group meetings and agreeing on plans for this year. They wear this special tie.



Three of the student leaders will be leading the student council group this year. We have student representatives from almost all of the classes. They have a very important role in sharing ideas, interests and concerns with teachers and school leaders. They will raise funds for school-wide activities and charities. They wear this red badge.

Student leaders participated in leadership training. They learnt about what it means to be a good leader and what skills they need to develop. Dr Woolfe was invited to give a talk via zoom on 'what makes a good leader', he listed all the leadership behaviours leaders need to develop. They also participated in a group activity where they had to put good use of their communication and decision making skills.



Some students entered the North London Deaf Children's Society Art Competition, in July and one of our students was the winner! Congratulations to the Heathlands student whose art work won in the Category 4 for Year 7, 8 and 9.



It's beginning to feel a lot like Christmas..... US1 were making Xmas village tea lights in D&T.



US10 and US3 joined up at reading time to share some books. There was great communication happening as they talked about what was happening in the books.



This is our team for the D&T Robotics Challenge 2020-21. Over 500 schools in the UK will be competing against each other to design and programme a robot to complete a series of timed obstacle courses. These competition challenges will be digital events with the finals held in March 2021.



IOP Institute of Physics



We received funds from the Institute of Physics to have Dr Iain Poplett, deaf Physicist, working with us for a couple of weeks. He will be teaching GCSE Science students different aspects of Physics via zoom.

A proud class of yellow for Children in Need.





US8 used scenario cards to complete role plays to consider how to turn negatives into positives as part of work to develop an understanding of a growth-mindset



US5 have been learning about the properties and characteristics of metal. Here they are casting their key fob designs. Next lesson they will be learning about using an enamelling process to decorate the surface of the pewter metal.



US7 demonstrated their learning in deaf studies for homework by creating quizzes to challenge their classmates .

US3 are shown testing their sweet dispensing machine. They made a mechanism to drop a few sweets every time it was turned. Student's designed their front panel using a CAD process and it was then etched and cut out using a laser cutting machine. Their favourite bits were using an electric drill and testing (eating) the sweets at the end!



Forensic Science



US9 students did a short course on forensic science in the autumn term. Students were asked to evaluate what they thought of the course. Here are examples to share with you.

I like forensic science because I found it much more interesting than other topics. This topic had inspired me. I never get tired of learning about new things. I enjoyed learning about fingerprints the most. There are so many different fingerprint types. Fingerprints have specific ridge characteristics which are interesting to examine. There are different surfaces that can affect how the fingerprints look like, for example a fingerprint on a rough surface. Wet surfaces are hard to identify fingerprints. The smooth surface with fingerprints would be the easiest to extract is the smooth surface.



Heather Ansell from the University of Wolverhampton gave a talk about the forensic science course and her PhD research work.

I enjoyed learning about forensic science because I did a lot of activities such as using a microscope to examine different textile materials, types of hairs and fibres and blood groups. I enjoyed listening to professionals on zoom about their work experiences. I learnt more about the role of forensic scientists.



Students interviewed Dr Skinner about his Phd research in police interpreting. They asked questions about what the challenges were for interpreting for deaf people in custody.



Students interviewed Dr Justine Durno, who is deaf, qualified medical doctor and now is training to become a pathologist.



Heath House - Autumn Term 2020

This term: This has been a very different term for the Heath House staff team, children and young people. Due to the current COVID situation we have been unable to continue after school and evening clubs, activities as well as going on outings. Staff have been resourceful when planning activities this term which have been received well by children. The Heath House team have been working with the speech and language team to enhance the communication development delivered in Heath House.

Heath House students: The children and young people wanted to share their news and thoughts on what they have been doing this term.



Hall games: "We have used the hall to play games because weather bad outside. We play lots games table tennis, dodgeball, badminton, bowling, fitness games. We have lots fun".

Bikes: "We enjoy using the bikes. Before we did not know how to cycle now we have learnt and become more confident".



Homework: "We been work hard at homework time. Teachers and staff in Heath House help us in the library. Sometimes we work together to help each other".

Walks: "In Heath House we have been on lots of walks. It is good to stay fit and healthy and go outside. We see lots of beautiful sunsets on our walks".



Halloween: "We celebrated Halloween. We did pumpkin carving, fancy dress competition and had a buffet dinner. We played games in hall. Staff voted for the best outfit and best pumpkin. This really fun night, lots of fun".

Birthday cakes: "This term it has been the birthdays of four friends. We have learnt how to make birthday cakes for them. At first staff helped us make the cake now we can make on our own with no help. I feel more confident to make cakes."

"On my birthday my friends surprise me by showing me homemade cake. I was extremely pleased this was a very legendary surprise".

"My friends make me cake for Birthday this taste lovely".



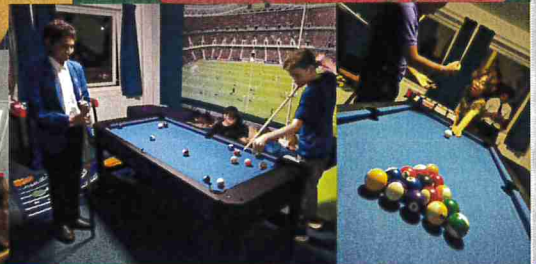
Towel rails: "Me and friends help make eight towel rails for pupil bedrooms. The first one was a bit hard but others easy. This help us keep bedroom clean and tidy."



Scavenger hunt: "Staff made a scavenger hunt. We had clues and worked in teams to find the next clue to see which team finished first"



Heath House quiz: "Staff made a quiz. This was a really fun activity we worked together in teams to try and win. My team won so we got a prize."



Pool competition: "We played a pool competition. We did a knock out game staff won. Next we practiced to and try beat staff. Tom taught me how play better."



Meal: "For my birthday we went for a meal without staff. We learnt to order and pay by ourselves. I feel more grown up and confident".



Washing: "I have learnt how to do own washing. I forget check washing next time need remember to check and dry".



Cooking: "In Heath House we learnt to cook evening meals. Sometimes this is easy sometimes hard work".

"It is very good to learn cooking skills in Heath House I learnt lots of new recipes now I feel more confident".

"I like learn cooking I learn new things and have lots fun".

"I love cook meal for friends I love smell nice food make me hungry and excited try dinner".



Tuck shop: "One friend help run tuck shop. We like this".



Christmas decorations: "We made decorations to sell. We make wreaths and baubles. We are raising money for charity".



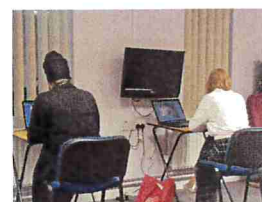


BSL Centre - Autumn Term 2020

The new academic year started well, with a return to face to face learning although we returned on online learning again during the second lockdown. Learning BSL online is difficult, but our learners have coped well and we are now happily back in the classroom again.

This year we have 74 learners on courses with more joining new courses after Christmas. The BSL Centre team wishes all it's learner a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Parents group moved online during lockdown and we have had a good response from parents. Some parents have been learning story telling, developing topic vocabulary and signing skills.



BSL Level 1 courses are all doing well, with learners expecting to sit their first exams before Christmas. They have learnt a lot this term, including deaf awareness and some cultural points.

BSL Level 2 classes have been working hard developing vocabulary and grammar. They are happy to be back in the BSL Centre face to face learning.

BSL Level 3's have started the new curriculum this term, this will enable them to develop their productive and receptive skills further and use the linguistic knowledge they are learning.

BSL Level 4 and Level 6 from last year continued to develop their skills and have been sitting exams since October. They will be pleased to finish these in time for Christmas break.

Our **new BSL Level 4** class have started the new curriculum, and so far are enjoying the debates, presentations and conversations we are having to develop language and knowledge.

NEW COURSES- JANUARY 2021

BSL Level 1- 3.30pm-5.30pm Thursdays

**Pre-interpreting language development
Level 6+- 5pm-9pm Mondays**

**Language development Level 4+-
5pm-9pm Tuesdays**

BSL Level 4- 5pm-9pm Thursdays



Parents Page - Autumn Term 2020

We are looking for parents to support a Taxi Escort Campaign

Mr Rafeeq would like your help. Interested parents and carers can email:

friends@heathlands.herts.sch.uk



I am looking to launch a campaign to improve the transport provision by local authorities for deaf children. Just by way of background, my son will travel more than 12,000 miles a year commuting to Heathlands School from Buckinghamshire and spend approximately 400 hours in the car. There are other children who will travel more than this to Heathlands. There are two main issues:

Firstly safeguarding concerns regarding transport for vulnerable deaf children. If drivers and their assistants are unable to communicate with the children how will they know if something is wrong, or conversely how can they communicate with the children to let them know what to do if an unforeseen situation presents itself?

Secondly, there are concerns about how robust the performance management arrangements are given that a contractor is not even keeping a record of exactly which children are being transported on a particular day.

I'm keen to have other parents on board so that we can together present a strong case and advocate for improving this important service by local authorities.

We have been selected to take part in the Co-op Local Community Fund. You will find our cause at <https://membership.coop.co.uk/causes/52677>

The kind Co-op have chosen us as one of their charities of the year!

If you become a Co-op Member you can select us as your cause. We will get 2p from every £1 you spend.

You can join online at coop.co.uk/membership or by downloading the [Co-op app](#) on your phone.

Heathlands School for deaf children

Our Wellbeing Walk would create a sensory path, leading to an outdoor classroom to be used for learning, contemplation and focus groups to nurture mental health.

Raised so far:
£38.06

Sign up or become a Co-op member to support this cause



Please share far and wide!

Our new Committee for Friends of Heathlands (FoH)



Neal Jordan-Caws

Chairperson



Lacie Hale

Treasurer



Saurabh Mittal

Secretary

We have plenty of other jobs you can help with and have a wider committee who get involved helping with admin and events. Get in touch if you would like to join.

Unfortunately we cannot run any events this year.

You can still help us raise money by buying at Amazon, just click

<https://smile.amazon.co.uk/ch/1176087-0>

Get in touch with us should you need any help or have any ideas you want to share within our community at:

friends@heathlands.herts.sch.uk





Term Dates for the Academic Year 2020-2021

Spring Term 2021

Term Starts	Mon 4 January 2021
Half Term Holiday	Mon 15 February 2021– Fri 19 February 2021
Term Ends	Fri 26 March 2021 @ 12.30pm

Summer Term 2021

Term Starts	Mon 12 April 2021
Inset Day	Fri 30 April 2021 (no pupils in school)
Bank Holiday	Mon 3 May 2021
Half Term Holiday	Mon 31 May 2021 – Friday 4 June 2021
Term Ends	Wed 21 July 2021 @ 12.30pm
Inset Days	Thurs 22 July 2021 (no pupils in school)