

A message from the Co-Headteachers

Dear parents, carers, students and staff,

What a busy and eventful autumn term we have had at Heathlands! We have been grateful that the school has returned to normality with no covid tests and children finally enjoying going out of school regularly on trips and learning experiences. Although there has been a high amount of illness this term, the school has now been thrown in to the Christmas spirit with snow, ice, show performances and as we write this, secondary are enjoying the music and games of the Winter disco!

Inside this issue:

Lower School Pages 2, 3 & 4

Upper School Pages 5, 6 & 7

Heath House Pages 8 & 9

BSL Pages 10 & 11

Parent Page Page 12

Term Dates Page 13

This term we have been focused on developing two main projects; the first is our building extension. It has taken a while, but the plans have come together, it was important to ensure we are getting the maximum benefit from our new building. The new space will give us six new teaching spaces benefitting both Upper and Lower school and has been designed by our deaf architect Richard Dougherty. The building is designed with deaf learners in mind, with natural lighting, wider walkways and sound proofing. We are hoping that planning permission will be granted in the next term so that building work can begin in Easter with the aim that our new classrooms will be ready for use before December 2023. Plans are in place to minimise the disruption on site during the building work so that learning will continue as normal. You can see the most up to date plans on display in the school office reception.

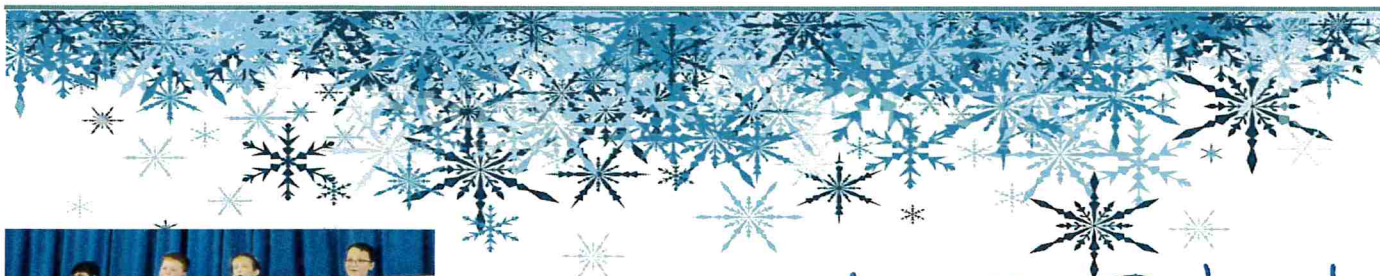
The second project we have been working on is extending the age range from 16 up to 18. A consultation is currently underway with a proposal showing how Heathlands can and will meet the needs of students wishing to study A Levels in KS5. The provision for deaf learners who use a Total Communication approach at this key stage is very limited nationally. Many of our leavers often go to colleges on lower level courses, supported by communication support workers and often isolated amongst peers. Our students deserve to have the same level of access as their hearing peers and Heathlands can meet this need by delivering a range of A Levels taught directly by teachers of the Deaf. Heathlands will join the local schools consortium allowing for some students to attend an A level within one of the local schools if it cannot be delivered at Heathlands and welcoming hearing students to learn BSL at our provision. Please go to our website to take part in the consultation so we have the maximum support in gaining this resource for our deaf learners. The second part of extending our age range will be to lowering the age range to 2 years old, allowing for toddlers to have access to Heathlands earlier in order to gain essential language in the early years. We will keep you updated with progress.

We wish you all a very happy winter break and look forward to welcoming all pupils back on 9th January. We are hoping that 2023 will continue to bring Heathlands lots of positive developments.

With all best wishes,

Ms Aitken and Mrs Reeves Costi





Our **Harvest Festival assembly** was opened by Watermelons class singing "It's Harvest Now"

It was good to see many parents at our Harvest activities and assembly this term.
Thank you for the generous donations for the food bank.

Lower School



Dragon fruit class had the opportunity to try Dragon fruit at the start of this term. Some pupils liked the taste more than others!



Cherry and Pears Class had a 'spooktakular' Halloween party at Sign and Play!

Pupils in Tomatoes class created some poems for Harvest.

Sticky and red plums at harvest time.

Juicy and Sugary blackberries at harvest time.

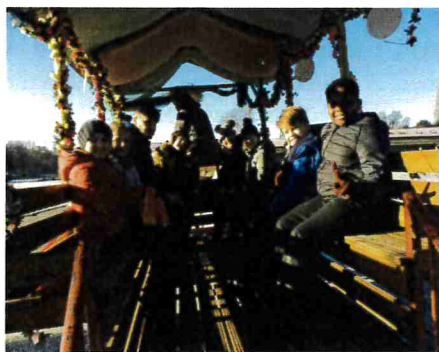
Red green and hard apples at harvest time.

Orange and halloween party pumpkins at harvest time.

Dark red and delicious juicy Cherries at harvest time.



Some of the pupils from Bananas, Dragon fruit and Tomatoes class visited Bhaktivedanta Manor, a Hindu temple, as part of their RE learning about the Hindu faith.



Good news! Heathlands school joins SignVideo, which means parents can contact us in BSL.

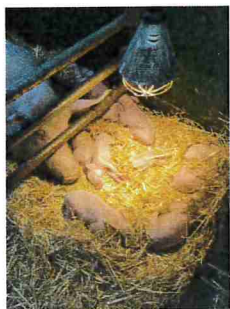


Mangoes Class made chocolate cupcakes for Christmas. This session developed their skills in the kitchen, such as weighing ingredients and washing dishes, in preparation for future cooking lessons.



Cherries class have been busy digging for potatoes at Willows Farm this term. Counting is much more fun when potatoes are involved.

Cherries class were excited to discover a new litter of piglets have been born at the farm! We watched as they slowly opened their eyes and latched on to Mum to feed. The children counted 10 piglets!!



Heathlands School Facebook

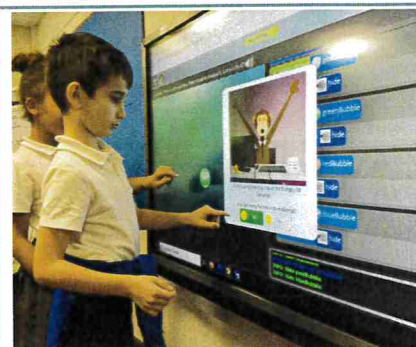
Check out & 'like' the
Heathlands School Facebook
page for fantastic videos,
photos and
news!

facebook



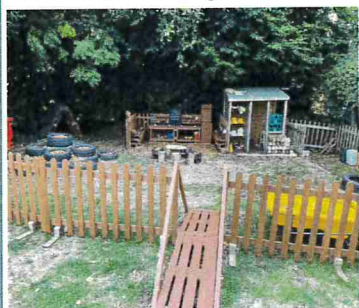
Pupils in Bananas Class have been learning about different festivals and celebrations, and about Navratri.

Cherry and Pears had a lovely trip to the Garden Centre to buy a Christmas tree for EYFS. The children thought about the size of tree that would be suitable - small or tall, fat or thin!

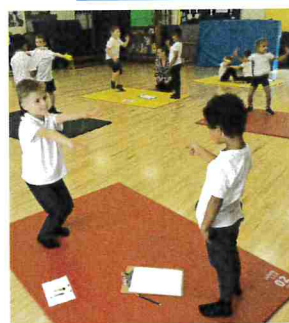


In computing, Bananas Class are learning about coding. They used Purple Mash to create programs using event, object and action code blocks.

EYFS - an enhanced mud kitchen and building site area for them to explore in the Foundation garden.



In Deaf Studies, Bananas class enjoyed learning about a range of equipment that could help Deaf people. They tried an alarm clock which would shake them to wake them up and looked at lots of old and new equipment before deciding which they might like to try themselves.



Watermelon Class have started learning how to do different exercises around a circuit in PE. They enjoyed learning different movements and were fantastic at supporting each other.



KS2 enjoyed a trip to Hampton Court Palace. Activities included exploring the Tudor Kitchens, role play eating in The Great Hall, acting out a simple debate about the reformation of the English church and visiting the maze and gardens.



Dragon fruit class have been learning about the digestive system. To support their learning they demonstrated how food enters the body and breaks down in the stomach with the help of enzymes, saliva and digestive acids. They also showed how nutrients and water are absorbed into the body from the small intestine where the waste exits our bodies... They enjoyed making poo!!!



In Strawberry class the children learnt about Bonfire Night and why we have fireworks every year. They then used paint and glitter to create a piece of firework art.



In October the Lower School choir performed to Upper School assembly. It was well received.

Mango Class have been learning about the Tudors and made a video, available to see on Facebook, about Henry VIII and his six wives.



The pupils in Mangoes and Bananas Classes paired up for reading time.

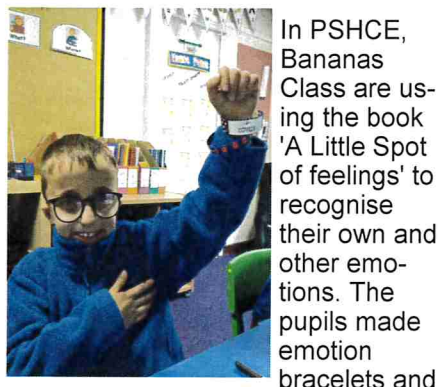


The children in Strawberry class finished their work on the story: "We're Going on a Bear Hunt" – the bear even came and visited the classroom! The children were able to ask him questions and found out that he wasn't scary, he was lonely! The children decided it would be a good idea to invite him to come to their birthday parties this year, so they each wrote him an invitation!

Tomatoes class compared chicken bones with human bones and used Norman as a reference to build and label their own skeleton.



'Zoom, zoom, zoom! We're going to the moon...' Pear Class are counting down their rockets and ready to go into space!

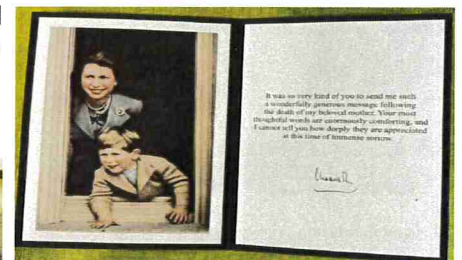


In PSHCE, Bananas Class are using the book 'A Little Spot of feelings' to recognise their own and other emotions. The pupils made emotion bracelets and

explored different ways of describing emotions. Bananas Class are brave, loving, kind, caring, loved and determined!



Christmas performances



Dragon fruit class wrote letters of condolence to **King Charles** and the royal family following the death of Queen Elizabeth. King Charles has sent them a thank you card back.



Strawberry class the children joined LEGO club! The children worked in pairs, one child looked at photos and described how to build their creation and the other child had to

watch carefully and follow the instructions they were given, to make sure they were making the same thing. The children were able to use prepositional language, ask for clarification and problem solve in their pairs!





Upper School



In the summer, the comedian **John Bishop** visited Heathlands to learn more about deafness, BSL and particularly deaf humour and comedy. Some students enjoyed meeting John to tell him their favourite jokes!

'Life After Deaf' is available to watch on ITV Hub.



John and Joe Bishop: Life After Deaf (Signed Version)
Friday 7 Oct

A documentary about John Bishop and his son Joe, who lost most of his hearing by 15.



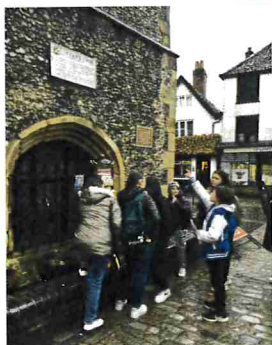
Heathlands students were gripped by futsal fever! One of our staff played in the men's team and one of our students was the youngest player for the England Deaf women's team! There are also two ex students who are in the women's team.



The Deaf England Woman's Futsal team won the European championship gold medal!



Mrs Reeves Costi our CoHead and Richard Weinbaum, our school governor were there to welcome back the Heathlands Deaf Euro Champions!!



Christmas Rewards Trips to Paradise Wildlife Park & a treasure hunt around St. Albans were a success this week!



One of our previous students has knitted a fantastic scarf for our Heathlands deer

It's important **EVERYONE** has uniform!

Year 11 students delivered a lesson to Eta and Gamma as part of their **Community Action Humanities Project**.

All the students (and staff) were interested to learn the ASL alphabet and numbers before playing a game to see if we could recognise the letters. This was really hard! Well done to the year 11s for



A group of upper school students worked with professional Deaf dancer and **choreographer Chris Fonseca** to create their own dance. They performed this "flash-mob" style in St Albans city centre. They had a lot of fun and also raised some money through donations in the process!



As part of their coursework on energy Zeta class interviewed our School Business Manager. They worked out they could use the voice feature on the Chrome-book to voice over their questions as they signed them. They were all shocked to learn about the energy price rises and how much this will cost the school.



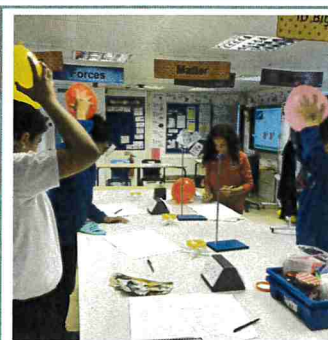
Eta are working on the topic of Forming Good Relationships, in PSHCE, this half of term. They learnt how to work in a team, effectively, by working in teams to make the tallest tower using paper, scissors and cards.



Y10 have been working hard to organise their revision and independent study work for homework.



Beta students investigated moment (moment = force x distance) using the laws of moment.



Alpha students did different activities to help them to understand electrostatic force in science.



Battle of the Books heats have begun. The 'Bison' team of pupils from year 7 competed in heats against three different schools in America. They were observed in one of the competitions by some of the students from

Mangoes class. The heats are all held over zoom. Children have to read these books, without any support from adults, before the competition. Congratulations to Buff and Blue teams who are through to the grand final in Washington DC in 2023!



Upper School Jigsaw Club started this term! Some great team work and communication happening. The progress on the puzzles is amazing.



Delta students have been learning about the history of atom - theories and models.

Thank you to all those that came to the Winter Community Market in November.



This term for Just Talk Week which is a Hertfordshire wide focus week on wellbeing. This year's theme was 'Look beneath the surface' where we were encouraged to not be so quick to judge others and to treat each other with kindness and patience. Peer Champion student leaders wrote, directed, filmed and edited their own mini films to encourage students to think before they judge. They led assemblies with both lower and upper school where they showed the film. Watch the film on Heathlands Facebook Page.



I just transferred the school lots of people bully me because I'm deaf!

Zeta class worked as a team to research and produce a display on the solar system.



Students from Epsilon and Kappa got creative making cards.



Parents or guardians of Heathlands students now can call Heathlands School in BSL via SignDirectory using the school website!



The 2nd group of year 11 humanities students organised for the year 10 and year 11 groups to go out at lunchtime. Some went to the shop, others to the cafe and all enjoyed some fresh air in the park.

signed culture
supporting BSL services for the deaf

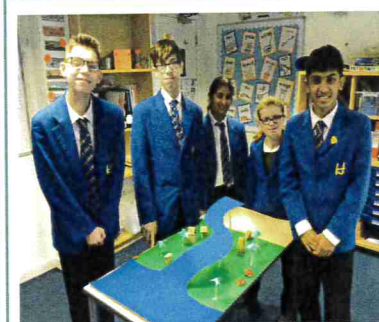
Congratulations to the Year 8 student who won first prize in the Signed Culture Christmas Card Competition! Her beautiful image can be seen on their website.



Epsilon group went to the river at Redbourn as a part of their Geography lesson.



In PSHCE students in Gamma were learning about strategies to combat peer pressure. They did a role play activity to devise their responses to peer pressure.



Epsilon students are learning that a river flows downwards from high ground to the sea/lakes. This was a part of their Geography work.



Gamma students prepared a mind map of the topic 'Electromagnet' to help them with revision for the end of unit test. We are very proud of the students.



Upper School met together to discuss their ideas for the student leader focus groups for this year.



Year 10. students have been preparing for GCSE mock examinations. There will be a series of mock examinations over future months leading up to the final examinations in June 2024.

In GCSE Biology students have been investigating the difference between aerobic and anaerobic respiration.



Upper School media groups were lucky enough to meet Mariella Satow. She is an amazing role model having set up

her own company at the age of 17 providing ASL & BSL translations for Disney films (she is still only 18!). Students have shared the app information to all the students in both Upper and Lower Schools so they can fully access Disney Films.

Heath House

It has been a very busy term in Heath House we have welcomed new members of staff and have welcomed new students throughout the term. There are now 23 students in Heath House, students are enjoying having lots of peers to talk to in the evening.

Over the summer we had had a lot of renovation work carried out. We had a wall knocked down and the main kitchen extended. We also converted part of the building to give us an extra bedroom as well as a secondary independent living area.

A number of young people have continued to attend regular clubs whilst other younger people have tried out new clubs and activities.

In July we had 5 students complete their snorkelling course they joined another older boy in learning to play under water hockey. We now have another student who has taken up snorkelling with the view to join the underwater hockey group. The young people have shown a real talent for this sport and regularly out perform their hearing peers. They have organised their own team discussed their preferred positions and regularly win matches scoring multiple goals. One young person said "I practiced ready for competition against other local teams. We win 6-1".

The younger secondary went to a local trampoline park. They enjoyed jumping around and trying out a number of the obstacles. One young person said "we enjoyed trying out the assault course and climbing walls".



The young people have continued to get involved learning to cook. They have been learning from staff and following recipes. One child said "we been learn make lots different homemade food like meatballs, chicken goujons lots other food".



Some of the young people have been getting involved in baking and making cakes. One young person said "I like make cakes chocolate are my favourite".



A number of young people have been learning free walking skills in the local area. This is in preparation of getting their free walking permission. They have been going into town for cookery ingredients and school equipment.



The young people enjoyed support staff ex pupils and a current Heath House young person who was competing in the Deaf Euro Futsal 2022 tournament which took place in Italy. One young person said "I'm really proud of my friend who won gold medal at only 14 years old". Another said "We make banner for friend to say well done".



The young people enjoyed pizza night. They made their own dough and then created their own pizza choosing from a wide range of toppings. One young person said "I like make pizza I have lots olives". Another child said "I like choose and make own pizza can be creative. Pizza taste delicious".



The primary went to watch Matilda the musical in the theatre. They really enjoyed this movie. They spent time developing their money management skills by learning how to pay for and order their own snacks as well as their own cinema ticket. One young person said "I really enjoy film".



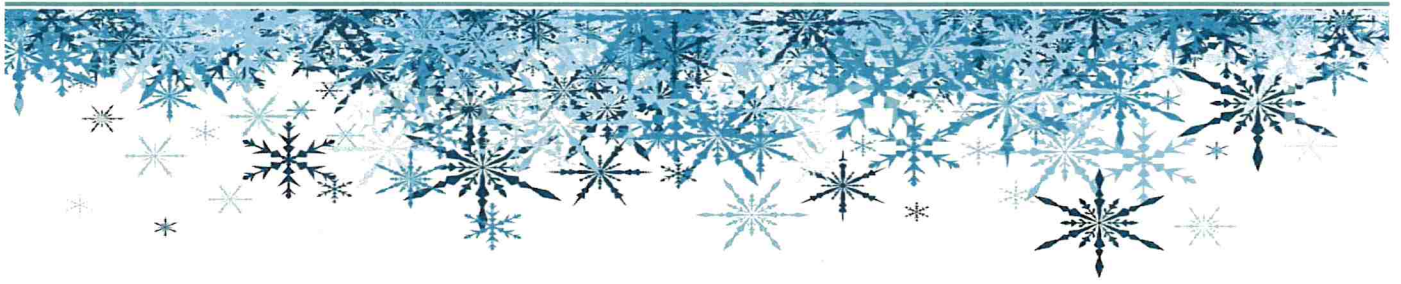
A number of the Heath House young people went to IKEA. They helped choose new furniture for their bedrooms as well as the new secondary independent living area. After shopping they stopped off at McDonalds for a well deserved bite to eat.

The Heath House young people went to rock up in Watford. They enjoyed trying out their climbing skills by trying to climb a number of different walls with varying levels of difficulty. One child said "I like rock up because climbing walls are really different. You need climb them different ways". Another said "Rock up is cool lots different walls really colourful. I like leap of faith but bit nervous and scared".



The older children have enjoyed having their own area that they can go to in the evening. They are able to develop their independence skills further in this area. They can learn to cook, clean and do their own washing. They have been given the responsibility for looking after and keeping clean this area. They have also enjoyed making this area their own and choosing their own furniture and decoration. One child said "I like this area we can relax, chat, do extra study and cook".





The BSL Centre welcomes back our learners who have previously studied with us before and also welcomes new learners. For this year we have courses for Level 1, 2 and 4.

Our fast-track Level 1 course which started in September is now complete with our learners eagerly awaiting their results. Many of them will be progressing to our fast-track Level 2 course which starts in January.

BSL

Our evening Level 1 learners have just taken their 101 assessment and will start the new year developing their productive skills and BSL vocabulary in preparation for the exams in the Spring.

Level 2 are learning about everyday life topics and currently focusing on Food and Drink, expanding the BSL terminology that they learnt on Level 1.

Level 4 learners continue to progress with Zayne. They have been polishing their linguistics knowledge, building their portfolios and practicing their presentation, conversation and receptive skills.

We also welcome new members Robyn and Gemma to the team:

Welcome Gemma



Gemma started learning BSL after moving to Nottingham for University. Alongside her Teacher Training course she attended evening BSL classes for 3 years. She now works at Heathlands School as a Teacher of the Deaf and our Level 1 course on Monday evenings.

“When I was younger I saw a BSL interpreted pantomime and it sparked my interest! When I started learning, I fell in love with the language and it ended up leading me down a completely different career path, exposing me to a whole new community of lovely people. The teaching allows me to meet other people who are also interested in doing similar things through learning BSL”

Welcome Robyn

Robyn started learning BSL at the age of 16 after wanting to communicate with Deaf people she had met. She passed her Level 2 then studied Level 3 to Level 6 here at the BSL Centre. Robyn now teaches our Level 1 and Level 2 courses with ambitions to train as an interpreter.

“I enjoy teaching as I feel I am able to reach out to the learners and understand from their perspective, after all I have been there myself. It is a privileged to be part of the Deaf community and have made some life-long friends”



Family Support Group



Formerly known as the Parents Group, this year we have been able to invite the family support group back to the BSL Centre. This took place every Tuesday 10-11.30am. The group covered all topics related to Deaf issues and have been able to have guest speaker Jen Marris discussing 'Shape-Coding'.

For 2023 we are looking to host online sessions and details will be available in the new year. Our group is free to join and open to all Heathlands pupils family members or Hertfordshire families with Deaf children. If you are interested, please email BSL@heathlands.herts.sch.uk

Next year 2023

As mentioned previously, we have our fast-track Level 2 course starting in January. Also due to demand, we have two fast-track Level 1 courses starting on Monday 9th January. The daytime class will be 10am-1pm and the evening class 6pm-9pm. Our teacher for this will be Bethany who joins us in the new year after gaining her qualifications here at the BSL Centre.

If you know anyone interested in enrolling, please email BSL@heathlands.herts.sch.uk or visit our website via Heathlands School.



Signature's Hall of Fame



Signature are the leading awarding body for deaf communication qualifications in the UK and on Friday 18th November 2022 the Signature Hall of Fame took place at the National Football Museum in Manchester.

The evening brought together members of the deaf community to celebrate their achievements and although we were not inducted, Heathlands were honoured to be shortlisted as a centre of excellence in the teaching of BSL within the UK. .



Parent Page

This term we had Friends of Heathlands had our first Winter Market. There was everything from books to dog leads! Fun was had by all!



FoH are also organising a trip to Bayfordbury Observatory. Come along and learn about the stars and planets on Thursday 26th January at 5pm.



We are also inviting parents to come and visit the NDCS Roadshow bus after school on Thursday 2nd February. Come along!



Our next Friends of Heathlands meeting will be in school and on zoom on Tuesday 17th January at 3.45pm.

Many thanks to all of our FoH volunteers who work very hard to support the school.

Just for Fun!

5 days of Christmas Wellbeing

TAKE NOTICE

1st day of Christmas my true love asked me to look at all the twinkly lights on our street!

CONNECT

On the 2nd day of Christmas my true love said to me shall we all go and buy a Christmas tree!

BE ACTIVE

On the 3rd day of Christmas my true love woke me to go for a swim in the sea.

GIVE

On the 4th day of Christmas my true love suggested we donate all our old clothes to charity.

KEEP LEARNING

On the 5th day of Christmas my true love told me to learn the 9 reindeer names!

Look after your wellbeing this holiday, the staff will too!





HEATHLANDS

Heathlands Drive, St Albans, Hertfordshire, AL3 5AY
 Tel: 01727 807807 or E-mail: admin@heathlands.herts.sch.uk
 Nursery, Primary & Secondary Provision, Day & Residential, BSL Training & Resource Centre

Updated 7.11.22



HOLIDAY DATES FOR ACADEMIC YEAR 2022 - 2023

Autumn Term 2022

Inset Days	Thurs 1 September 2022 – Fri 2 September 2022 (no pupils in school)
Term Starts	Mon 5 September 2022
Bank Holiday for State Funeral	Mon 19 September 2022 (no pupils in school)
Half Term Holiday	Mon 24 October 2022 – Fri 28 October 2022
Occasional Day	Fri 25 November 2022 (no pupils in school)
Term Ends	Wed 21 December 2022 @ 12.30pm

Spring Term 2023

Inset Days	Thurs 5 January 2023 – Fri 6 January 2023
Term Starts	Mon 9 January 2023
Half Term Holiday	Mon 13 February 2023 – Fri 17 February 2023
Term Ends	Fri 31 March 2023 @ 12.30pm

Summer Term 2023

Term Starts	Mon 17 April 2023
Bank Holiday	Mon 1 May 2023
Inset Day	Tues 2 May 2023 (no pupils in school)
Bank Holiday for King Charles III Coronation	Mon 8 May 2023
Half Term Holiday	Mon 29 May 2023 – Fri 2 June 2023
Term Ends	Fri 21 July 2023 @ 12.30pm

Any changes or amendments will be announced on our website
www.heathlands.herts.sch.uk



