

Heathlands Spring Term Newsletter 2024

March 2024



A message from the Co-Headteachers

This term has flown by too quickly! Heathlands has been a hive of activity and it feels that our feet have not touched the ground since returning from Christmas! This term we have celebrated having over 150 students on our roll, World Book Day, Neurodiversity month, British Science week and Sign Language week to name a few. Students and parents have enjoyed two football clubs, gym club, ballet, underwater hockey, Duke of Edinburgh expeditions, lower school parents twilights and parents consultations after school.

Spring has also seen teachers and students moving into the six new classrooms in the (new) Woodlands building, with Lower school classes downstairs and English secondary classes upstairs.. The builders have left the site which also means we have the lower school playground back, which primary are enjoying the run of again! Over the coming months we are keen to get our green landscape back and will be planting trees and sowing seeds. This process has begun by planting living willow in the shape of a dome and tunnel which will grow and become a wonderful place for children to play and let their imaginations go wild!

The Heath House Ofsted inspection report was published this term, we are proud of Heath House team and how well they did during this tough inspection process. Heath House remains a very busy hub of activity and this term CYPs have been trying out new board games which they can get involved in for hours!

This term conditional offers have been made to some Year 11 students for a place at Heathlands Sixth Form in September 2024 to study A Levels and equivalent qualifications. Students have chosen a range of subjects: maths, biology, chemistry, psychology, BSL, business studies and sports science. Some of the A Levels will be taught at Heathlands whilst others will be taught at a consortium school, Marlborough.

Do enjoy looking through the newsletter as a reminder of all the learning and engagement Heathlands students have been involved in. We remain proud of everyone for making Heathlands what it is, and also thank you as parents for your support too. We wish you a restful Easter break.

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Goodbyes this term to:

At the end of this term we are saying "see you soon" to Ms Harrison who is leaving to have her baby. We wish her all the best of luck in her new venture as a mum and look forward to meeting her new arrival.

We also say goodbye to Mrs Tharby who has worked at Heathlands for nine years in different roles, CSW, LSA and SaLT assistant. We all thank her for her work whilst at Heathlands and wish her all the best.

We are also saying good bye to Mr Stavrou who has been a tutor in the BSL center and as LSA in school. We wish him all the best in his new adventures.

Hello to:

This term we have welcomed three new LSAs, Ms Sanderson, Ms Muir and Mr Kravchenko.



Looking forward to next term.....

We are already excited about next term, thinking on to warmer weather and summer events. The summer fayre returns this year on 13th July, the theme is Around the World. We look forward to welcoming you all at the fayre and welcome all helpers to the Friends of Heathlands to support with this amazing event.

Lower School

This term, Upper and Lower classes have moved in to the **new building** and are enjoying the learning spaces.



We had our **whole school photo** taken. In this digital age everyone gets photographed separately and then Photoshop edited together.



The children and staff in **Astronauts** class were gifted martenitsa bracelets by one of their friends to celebrate Baba Marta Day. Baba Marta is an old lady from Bulgarian folklore stories.



Some people say that the sun will only shine in spring if Baba Marta smiles. The red colour is a symbol of life while the white colour is a symbol of cleansing and newness. Putting these two colours together brings the hope of rebirth and new beginnings. Thank you to our Bulgarian community friends and we wish you all a wonderful spring.

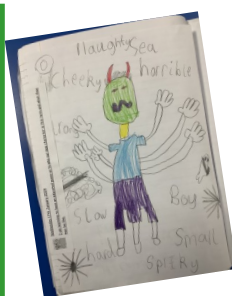
Supernova class found a pile of metal in the classroom and were very shocked as to where it could have come from. They speculated as to who, what and why it had been placed into the classroom. They drew who they believed had dumped the metal in the classroom and wanted to ask questions to whoever it may have been. Fantastic questions were asked, and they left the paper out to see if they would get a response... and guess what... **THEY**



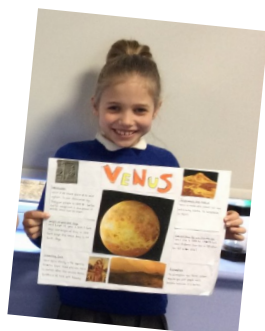
DID! They couldn't believe that the 'character' in question replied and didn't know all the answers.

In the metal heap, they then found a book that the character had left.

One Year 5 child challenged himself and volunteered to sign a story to nursery children. He did superbly!



Nebula class have researched, planned and written their own information texts about the solar system, which they then compiled into an information book with a contents page and index. They were very proud to have written and published their own book!




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



In February we celebrated **wellbeing week**. Early Years classes Stars and Moons have been learning about how to keep our environment clean. They decided to put theory to practice and litter pick our local park. The hard work paid off and they ended the day with a well earned and enjoyed play at the recently refurbished playground!

In science, **Galaxy** class have been learning about light. They used cardboard boxes and torches to help them investigate.



First, they put two objects inside the box and when they looked inside, they could only see darkness because there was no light. After, they put small holes into the boxes, so they were able to see a

little bit inside because the small holes only let a very small amount of light into the box. It was not enough light to see inside. When they used a torch, some of them were able to see a little more depending on the hole in the box. This is because light only travels in a straight line.



Here are some photos of **EYFS, KS1 and lower KS2** groups this term. The children's focus on their learning is impressive.



Lower School



Pupils enjoyed their 'bring a book to school and wear what you like day' to Celebrate **World Book Day**.

Emotional literacy is important. Within lower school

pupils use the Little Spot books to help them recognise and talk about their feelings. This term, this display has gone up that children can use it to support them talking about feelings.



Pupils in **Earth** class are reading a book about dinosaurs and have been thinking about opposites. They used shape coding to support their writing.

Stars nursery class enjoyed the farm this term. Communication, problem solving, social and physical development

skills were all being developed through play!



Lower School

Feeling Good Week - Heathlands school had some very special visitors this term. Clara Allardyce and Michael Spencer taught the children about how looking after nature could also make you 'feel good'. The children planted seeds and bulbs to look after in class, ready to plant outside in the school grounds in Spring. Then every year they can be reminded of the plants and flowers they took care of, and see their impact on the school environment. Hopefully making them, and all the visitors to our school enjoy looking at the beautiful colours that nature has to offer - bringing a smile to their faces. Thank you Clara and Michael for sharing your gardening and woodworking skills. We now have a new wooden planter by the school entrance with Narcissus bulbs beginning to grow, made by Michael and kindly donated to the school.



Astronauts and Nebula visited St Albans Synagogue as part of their RE learning. They had a tour which included seeing a Torah. They were able to learn about the parts of the Synagogue. After they had a sensory exploration of different Jewish festivals by trying a range of traditional food and drink from some of the Jewish festivals. They also made noise with groggers (for Purim) and listened to the Shofar for Rosh Hashanah (which was very difficult to blow).



'Early years classes **Stars** and **Moon** class have been learning about the story of Red Riding Hood this term. The children were shocked to find the big bad wolf had made

a



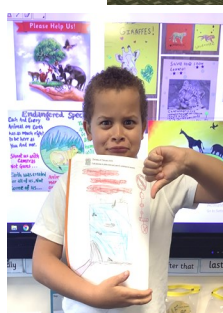
to

surprise visit and stolen the class snack! Together, they discussed the clues left behind and decided try and look for the stolen snack. Their bravery paid off as they located the snack, however, the wolf had long gone!

As part of their learning in RE, pupils in **Comets, Rockets** and **Galaxy** classes visited Luton Central Mosque which has been serving the community since 1980s. Pupils learnt about the building and why it is a special place for Muslims, as well as the five pillars of Islam. Pupils enjoyed learning about the physical prayer ritual and some of the prayer positions.



Supernova class have been learning all about extinct and endangered animals. They have created fantastic posters to deter poaching and deforestation. Their work, understanding and enthusiasm has been fantastic!



Supernova, Sun and **Earth** had an AMAZING time in the sunshine at Hertfordshire Zoo! (now renamed - was Paradise Wildlife Park). The children started off with a talk about dinosaurs. They then went on a Dinosaur Safari. After lunch, the children had a Tiger Talk, and got to see lots more animals up close - including; tigers, lions, meerkats & penguins. As well as getting to watch a bird show.



Nebula Class learned about the phases of the moon. They drew their own diagrams then made their own models using Oreo biscuits.



Our new classrooms



Using the design skills of deaf architect, Richard Dougherty.

Designed & built to be sustainable. With a lift to the first floor and granite flooring on the bridge.



Students and staff are now settled in and enjoying the new classroom spaces at Heathlands.

Upper School

As part of preparation for their exams Y11 played a timed game where they had a few minutes to start answering a question before passing it to the next pupil to carry on answering the question. This meant that as a group they collectively completed 5 long answer essay questions in one lesson and learnt from each other by reflecting on what their peers had written.



Lambda students have been learning how to insert appropriate images into a document for an intended purpose, understand copyright issues when choosing images, and utilise features of a word processor to format the images to fit with their articles.



Nationwide Bank came in to talk about banking, the risks of fraud and scams, what to do with money. They explained about managing finances in the future for young people, potentially working, doing apprenticeships or securing and paying back university loans/student finance. They also talked about how best to save money or potentially invest it in the future.

British Science Week - Students met deaf pupils from different schools on zoom to share the project ideas they will be doing relating to the 'time' theme. Students also had a Visual Vernacular (VV) workshop with Petre Dobre (a well known actor).



Robin Mobbs from the National Space Academy visited.

What a great show, very informative and hands-on, the students and staff thoroughly enjoyed the session, the rocket practical activity was the best. Thank you for visiting Heathlands.



Eta students completed their **feeling good week** project planting seeds and bulbs - they are keeping their plants inside for 3 weeks to look after - hopefully all the plants will grow well.

Upper School

In **Biology** Y11 have been creating videos in BSL demonstrating the GCSE required practical's to support their revision.

10B students have been learning how to set up series and parallel circuits this week in **Science**.



Year 11 PE Theory group worked out at the gym as part of their **Sports Science BTEC** course.



Alpha students have been exploring how to create a mobile app. Students demonstrated how to create new game and score screens plus how to add a label for each window and gave them appropriate IDs. The learners had to complete these steps to create their app.



Epsilon students attended a art workshop this term. They created art work from drawing, cutting and assembling paper strips. They then tried scratch art. Learning a wide range of artistic skills including drawing, cutting and scratching.



Lambda did a timed cooking challenge as part of Science Week in March, where they had to use only 5 ingredients. Two staff judges were invited to taste and pick the winning team! Well done to the teams managing to finish their dishes on time independently!

We are proud of one of our pupils who got together with her classmates and arranged **THREE** cake sales over three days at Heathlands, raising £211 for **GB deaf women's futsal team!**



Tom Hunt offers fun one to one **guitar lessons** at Heathlands. Take a look at his information video:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1vpUmByQj4HmSyn65ievQFIxa3rOlrdQ/view?usp=sharing>



Upper School

Beta class took part in the Rotary Technology Tournament - the challenge was to carry emergency supplies over a river using pulley motors. There were two teams from Beta taking part and there was lots of strong team work going on. They succeeded making their pulley motor trolleys so that they could carry the emergency supplies over the river in front of judges. One team achieved the runner up spot in the key stage 3 category. Well done to everyone taking part in this fantastic teams challenge.



Eta students have been learning about the reactivity of group 7 elements.

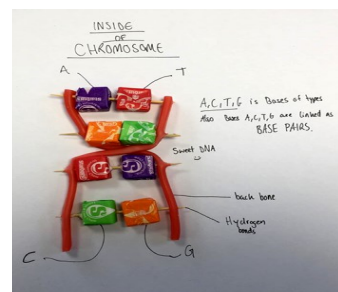


Some secondary pupils went to London Aquatics centre recently to compete in **Panathlon challenge** against other deaf schools. One team from the Heathlands school came third in overall standings. Well done to everyone taking part.



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

In **Biology** GCSE Year 10 learnt about the structure of DNA by making edible models.



The GCSE Art Students have been focused on completing their coursework during the Spring term.



Heathlands School

Check out the Heathlands School website 'Parents page' for current term dates, forms, school uniform, school meals, key documents and news!



Some of the students from **Beta** worked with some of the LOWER SCHOOL students from Astronauts on finding the perimeter of shapes.

Heath House

Welcome back to Spring! This term students have been interacting with others in the Deaf community through St Johns Youth Club, attending events like Oxygen Action trampoline park!

Also developing their confidence in taking public transport into London and being aware of their surroundings!



Sometimes the students want something different than what is being cooked for dinner, so we encouraged them to practice their cooking skills to by making their own food with support from staff!

Utilizing skills such as knife safety and raw food handling.



Travelling to London to explore alternative activities and sports like Axe throwing!

Listening to instructions to stay safe and enjoying friendly competition between peers!

While not able to get it straight away, students were proud of themselves for learning how to hit the target.



Upgraded!

New shelves for books and storage, built by the students. Learning how to use tools and follow diagrams, students enjoyed sitting down and focusing on building it together!

Heath House

It's still cold and wet outside so we brought activities in-side!

Indoor hockey, Badminton and group games of table tennis to keep all the students running around.

Older students have shown great responsibility supporting younger students when they have been playing in teams.



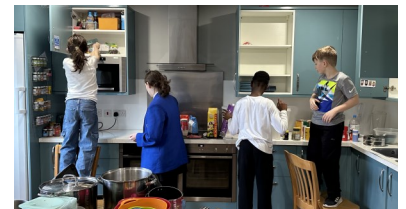
Bernard's Heath Park was refurbished and the students enjoyed going to try the new sets of swings and climbing frames.

Spinning as fast as they can, sharing with other kids in the park and having fun kicking a football about.



Heath House end of half term clean up - All the students helped to make sure the kitchen was spotless and the living rooms ready for the new shelves.

After doing a fantastic job they were rewarded with a pizza night and movies!



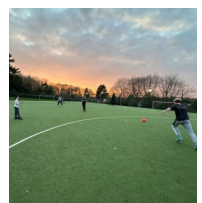
Our year 11's are slowly approaching exams and needed extra time to study and do their media work, using Photoshop.

Showing good self-discipline and working hard for their GCSE's, in-between having fun!



As we get to the lighter season and it starts to get warmer we can head back outside more often for activities such as football and rounders in the park!

Have a wonderful Easter holiday!





Can't believe we are at the end of another term, and 2024 has been great so far. We are teaching several classes of BSL Levels 1, 2 & 3. All our learners are progressing well, and will soon be fully focusing on the upcoming assessments which start next month.



The "Family sign group" is back and running again on a weekly basis. Here is the opportunity to learn BSL to support home learning and is free for family members who have a child a Heathlands school or live in the Hertfordshire area. The sessions are via Zoom and an interpreter is also available. If you are interested in joining a session please email bsl@heathlands.herts.sch.uk



We are in the process of planning our timetable for 2024/25 which will be finalised soon. Our courses will be advertised on the Heathlands School website. If you are interested in learning BSL or know someone who is, please email bsl@heathlands.herts.sch.uk



We are sad to say good-bye to Stefano Stavrou who has decided to pursue other opportunities. We thank him for his support and wish him all the best for the future.



I found him to be a highly professional and committed teacher, who worked hard to ensure the lessons were both enjoyable and also informative. Nothing was too much trouble.
- From a Level 3 learner.



Summer Fete 2024

The Summer Fete is shaping up for Saturday 13th July, 12-4pm.

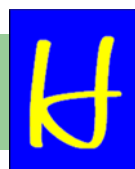
We will have 7 continents of activities and games, like Sumo wrestling for Asia or Gladiators for Europe.

If you know a company who would like to sponsor the fete, then please ask for the template letter.

friends@heathlands.herts.sch.uk



We will also be having a World Hat competition too on the day! Any country or city shown in a hat. See pictures, as an example, the winner gets a prize.



HOLIDAY DATES FOR ACADEMIC YEAR 2023 - 2024

Summer Term 2024

Term Starts	Mon 15 April 2024
Bank Holiday	Mon 6 May 2024
Half Term Holiday	Mon 27 May 2024 – Fri 31 May 2024
Term Ends	Fri 19 July 2024 @ 12.30pm
Inset Days	Mon 22 July 2024 - Tues 23 July 2024 (no pupils in school)

HOLIDAY DATES FOR ACADEMIC YEAR 2024 - 2025

Autumn Term 2024

Inset Day	Mon 2 September 2024 (no pupils in school)
Term Starts	Tues 3 September 2024
Half Term Holiday	Mon 28 October 2024 – Fri 1 November 2024
Occasional Day	Friday 29 November 2024 (no pupils in school)
Term Ends	Fri 20 December 2024 @ 12.30pm

Spring Term 2025

Inset Days	Mon 6 January 2025 (no pupils in school)
Term Starts	Tues 7 January 2025
Half Term Holiday	Mon 17 February 2025– Fri 21 February 2025
Term Ends	Fri 4 April 2025 @ 12.30pm

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

