



Dear parents and friends of Beacon Hill

The flavour of this term's newsletter is all about fun while you learn. Learning takes many guises and here at Beacon Hill you cannot fail to be impressed by the many things happening that make our learning fun! From skiing in Austria to learning about robotics at Energus our aim is that students learn best when active and interested. Hence the great range of opportunities and activities that we offer to all our young people. I am extremely excited about the opportunities that may come from our link with Ghana which will help our students to understand the global economy as well as our own.

Finally as I have little space to write – I wish you all a very Happy Easter and hope you all enjoy some spring sunshine!

HEADTEACHER

## Yr7 County Athletics Champions

On Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> February I took a boys and girls mixed team to the Allerdale Sports Hall Athletics event. Sports hall athletics is exactly like it sounds, athletics...in a sports hall, for this the students do the same events as actual athletics but with modified technique or equipment. For example the long jump is completed from standing rather than having a run up, for javelin they use a foam javelin rather than a full metal one. At the Allerdale event were 9 secondary schools from Allerdale, each school entered students in certain events whose scores were added together to form a team total. Beacon Hill came away as Allerdale champions and went through to the Cumbria finals on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> March at Penrith Leisure Centre.



At the Cumbria finals the event was a separate boys and girls event accompanied by Mrs Young this time. During the event I received constant, increasingly more excited, updates from Mrs Young as to how well they were doing. Both the boys and the girls performed brilliantly, proudly representing our school. At the end of the event the girls came second missing first by 3 points and the boys were declared **County Champions**. Thank you to Mrs Young for being such a good luck charm and Yr7's for representing the school so excellently. Well deserved congratulations to everyone that took part.

Mr Young

# Newsletter

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## Note from the Governors'

Well done Beacon Hill! The end of November was a time of extreme trauma for many people in the area, but your well-deserved Ofsted results gave a welcome boost just before Christmas and reflected the continuing commitment of everyone concerned – the Pupils, supported by their Parents, the hard-working Staff and your outstanding Headteacher. The Governors congratulate you all and are proud to be associated with such a successful team.

We are currently looking for a parent to join the governors in this important supportive role. If you are interested please give the school office a call to find out more. Mrs K Brandwood



Would you like to be more involved with school? Are you passionate about your work? Would you like some support and experience in delivering short presentations to groups of children and young people about your career choices? Creative Futures Cumbria is running 2-day Creative Ambassador courses for people who would like to encourage children to consider a creative profession for when they leave school. Visit our website, [www.creativefuturescumbria.org](http://www.creativefuturescumbria.org), or contact 01768 893810 for more information.



### Beacon Hill Community Learning Centre

Do something different:

Italian ★ Spanish ★ French ★ Photography (digital) ★ Easy IT ★ Yoga ★ Watercolours ★ Dog Obedience ★ Beacon Hill Ramblers ★ Silverwork ★ Tai Chi ★ After School Family Learning Events ★ Barbecue Cookery ★ Bridge ★ Web Site Design ★ Art ★ First Aid ★ Family History ★ Digital Photography (using your computer)

Courses in Aspatria, Blennerhasset, Plumbland, Harriston, and Torpenhow

Call our friendly staff for further details:

☎ 016973 20509

✉ [beaconhillcommunity@hotmail.com](mailto:beaconhillcommunity@hotmail.com)



## Welcoming International Students

Would your family enjoy introducing someone from another country to the British way of life?

There are international students from all over the world at universities in the UK, who would love to spend a weekend sharing your family life. You could have fun introducing them to British food, customs, your local community and area. And you would learn about their countries and culture too.

HOST is a national charity, backed by the Foreign Office, which has been linking students with volunteer hosts for many years. See [www.hostuk.org](http://www.hostuk.org) or call Alan Robson, the voluntary organiser in Cumbria, on 01946 822128.

## Workington Hospital ACCESS CENTRE Care closer to home

Extended hours ✓ For minor illness and injuries  
Extended service ✓ 9.30am - 8.00pm, Monday to Friday  
Extended access ✓ 9.30am - 11.30am, Saturday  
Excluding Bank Holidays



Workington Community Hospital | telephone: 01900 705048

## Life on the Slopes

Tired expressions. Half empty food bags. Hauling bigger – than – normal bags into a foreign hotel. Family holiday gone wrong? No, this was the start of Beacon Hill's 2010 ski trip. But don't be fooled by the somewhat negative introduction. It was far from it....

The excitement on the bus was electrifying. Six whole days flying down the side of a mountain, thinking you're in some kind of action movie .....we couldn't wait. We said our goodbyes and left Aspatria for the cold regions of Austria.



Twenty five hours, several films later and our excitement had long since turned into impatience. Having picked up another school in Northampton, who would be sharing the Skiing experience, stopping at multiple foreign service stations, laughing at the strange signs and scoffing at the 50 cents we had to pay for the toilet, we were all, understandably, shattered. But soon enough, the surroundings turned from grey to white, the excitement mounted once more.

After struggling up a certain unruly hill, we reached the hotel in a 'good' time of thirty hours. We were kitted out with our skis and ski boots, talked through the rules, ate our first dinner and got some well – needed sleep. The second day and the fun began.

We all walked down the large hill on the top of which our hotel stood. We tried out our ski boots for the first time, finding them rather hard to walk in, crossed the road (a little unsteadily) and hit the snow. The more able group was split off from us and we played a couple of games before giving the nursery slope a go. Some of us proved to be naturals where others were just flying off in all different directions. By the end of the day we were all full of it, chattering about it while hauling our ski boots up the mercilessly steep hill, which I, rather fittingly named "kill hill" later on. That night our evening activity was a quiz, pairing up with the other school to work out the answers.

The next day, the lower group split up into three main groups and joined with the other school. I was in middle. After two days of the nursery slopes and the lethal hand lift, we advanced onto the mountain, where the hand lift was even more lethal, but the slope was steeper. This is where we learnt to do snowplough turns successfully.

We made visits to Saalbach, another resort with an even steeper slope, where we were horizontal on the slope learning the basic alpine position,. This, thankfully, had a sit down ski lift, resting our tired legs.

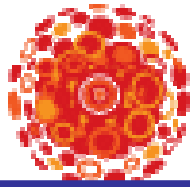
As the days went on, we advanced further and further up the mountains at both the resort where our hotel was, and Saalbach. The cold wind whipped our faces as we hurtled down the mountain at break-neck speed. Our instructor named our group "Team suicide", referring to the fact that we were going far too fast for our ability, taking short-cuts through the woods and racing each other to the end.

While our trip was going on, we had various evening activities, including: swimming, ice skating, tobogganing, quiz and on the last night, the awards.

We all received awards with the other schools for the Slalom race, a competition we had competed in for which we received a medal and a certificate from our instructors and also an award for the 'skier of the week' from both schools. But we also had our own school awards. For example, I received the "Sound of Music" award, as I had grabbed the opportunity of being in Austria, by singing songs from the "Sound of Music", to the amusement of others, it seems. Other humorous awards included: Duracell Bunny award, Little Miss Saalbach award and Panda Eyes award.

By the end of the week, we had all made new friends, earned ourselves a good few bruises and even achieved parallel turns. As we cleaned our rooms and did last checks on our bags, we reflected upon our fantastic week in Austria.....

**Laura Foster-Devaney Yr8**



# The Big Bang



The main aim of the trip to Manchester for 'The Big Bang' was to present an opportunity for our students to have an insight about the real relevance, impact and economic success of science and technology beyond school. Our party included Mrs Cruickshank, Dr Graham and myself together with all of Year 8 and those Year 10 students studying Triple Award Science.

The event included a variety of eye-catching exhibitions, theatre shows and hands-on activities for students with opportunities for them to discuss issues with young scientists and engineers from industry.

In all, at least 5000 students throughout the country were present on the day and our 5 hours at the event seemed not quite long enough!

**Mr Rajput**

We all had to wake up quite early to catch the bus to the Big Bang Fair as we wanted to have as full a day at the centre as possible and Manchester is quite far away. A few hours later arriving at Manchester Central, we split off into groups to have a wander around the exhibition area which was organised into 4 zones: Go Global, Body Talk, The NeXt Factor & Power Up.

There was everything from next generation technology to biology to physics. There were even inventors showing us their ideas, also many businessmen looking to invest in all these innovative ideas.



As you walked around the amount of opportunities to test out the new technology and do experiments was staggering. Lots & lots of opportunities to collect freebies as you walked around; different stands would be giving out pens, rulers, hats, bags, mugs and all other sorts of things.

Personally the stands I enjoyed the most were thermal imaging where you rubbed ice across your nose and your nose turned blue on the screen showing the loss of heat; trying out some of the new gaming ideas such as an aeroplane game that is played completely with your hands; and also taking a baby scan of a Toblerone.

At first I was sceptical about going, thinking it would be boring, but I ended up really enjoying it, as I think did everybody who went. We certainly all came away with different experiences as there was so much to see and do.

**Scott Batchelor Yr8**

On Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> March year 7 went to a Robotics Day organised by Aimhigher & Cumbria STEM at Energus in Workington where we had a great time, so much so that we didn't even realise that almost 3 hours had gone by! There were various types of robots including Oscar the Interactive Robot – Oscar moves around and talks to people. Children [and adults] were totally fascinated.

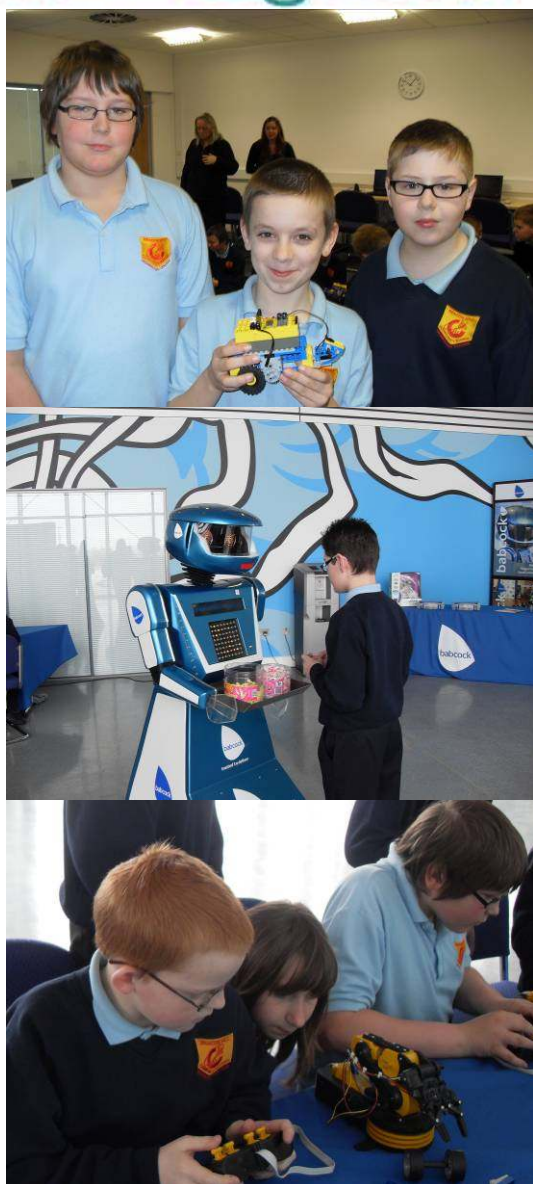
We also had a go at Robolab run by Cumbria STEM; this gave us the chance to programme small robotic Lego buggies using computers and see them carry out those programmed actions remotely. Programming is carried out on screen using specialised icons and these instructions are then transferred to the buggies via infrared.

Our next challenge was Babcock the Remote Manipulator Challenge – where we tested our personal skills by using a remote manipulator to guide a metal loop over a wire 'course' without setting off the buzzer; unfortunately not many of us seem to have very good coordination as all of us set off the buzzer more than once!

The activity which appealed to most of us was the iRobotics talk as it included interactive robots such as Cleo the Dinosaur and AIBO the Sony dog (amazingly worth £6,000 plus). Part of the iRobotics presentation covered the history of robotics which we thought might be boring but our presenter brought all the animations to life and had us speechless!

Overall we had a fantastic time and would love to be able to go do it all again.

Kieran Rowney Yr7



## KS 4 Learning Mentor YR11 Update

This term has been a **very** busy time for all the Year 11 students as their final GCSE coursework deadline is fast approaching and the **GCSE exams** are only weeks away!

A very successful 'mock results afternoon' was held in January; Year 11 students attended interviews with their parents/guardians and were given their mock results in envelopes thus replicating the official GCSE results day in August. Following the interviews the students and their parent/guardians had the opportunity to discuss progress with subject teachers. This event was very well received by all those involved and we hope to repeat it once again next year.

The Year 11s currently have the opportunity to attend a variety of after school coursework clinics and GCSE revision classes to help them work towards gaining the best GCSE results possible. They have also been invited to attend **Easter School** sessions which will take place on various days throughout the Easter holidays - these sessions are an ideal opportunity for the students to finalise their coursework and prepare for their exams. The 'Non-teaching Mentor Programme' continues in school with Year 11 students seeing their Mentor at least once each half term to provide support as required.

All Year 11s should be aware of their progress towards their GCSE target grades as every few weeks they are receiving a colour code for each subject area; **red = well off target**, **amber = close to target**, **green = on target** & **blue = above target**. This intensive tracking has only been in operation for a few weeks but it already appears to be having a very positive effect as reds are already changing to ambers and greens! **If you have a child in Year 11 please ask them to show you their latest printout.**

Mrs Moore

## Conservation Work Party



**Cumbria's Wildlife Trust Countryside Officer, Morag Angus with ASDAN students at Drumburgh Moss National**

Our students worked very hard recently at Drumburgh Moss developing conservation skills, working alongside Cumbria Wildlife Trust Rangers. Drumburgh Moss, on the south side of the Solway estuary, is one of four peat bogs which together are considered the best in England. Owing to drainage of the moss and the surrounding farmland, Drumburgh Moss is much drier than it would naturally be, so major work has been undertaken to slow the flow of rainwater off the bog and sustain the rare habitat.

It is an amazing moss-land and on the day we were there it was a winter wonderland of ice; the reserve is lovely to see at any time of the year. The nature reserve is very peaceful with open vistas, a little piece of wilderness, well worth a visit; wellington boots are recommended at this time of year as the site is very wet.

The purpose of the visit was to complement ASDAN students' studies about the environment. The practical work involved helping to restore the wet heathland, cutting down and burning gorse and scrub and checking up on the Exmoor ponies. Countryside officer for Cumbria Wildlife Trust, Morag Angus was delighted with our students, "They are fantastic," she said, "they have worked very hard and made a difference. We really appreciate all their efforts."

**Mrs Skillicorn**

## International Links Ghana UK School Exchange

We have teamed up with Cocker-mouth schools to establish links with schools in Ghana and are planning a visit of Ghanaian teachers to Cumbria in September 2010. Part of the cluster of schools we will be linking with is LEFISCO (Learning Field International) Junior High in the Eastern region. It is a privately owned school set up by a businessman (a qualified teacher) over 10 years ago to respond to the demand for better quality education. Pupils have a background of parents who are local shopkeepers, public servants etc.

Each Ghanaian teacher is to partner one of the schools for the first day meeting heads, observing lessons, meeting staff and generally settling in and observing whole school routines.

The 4 teachers will visit all 4 schools on rotational basis to observe, meet and place each school in context of the others.

Useful Ghanaian (**Twi – language**) words and phrases:

- **Akwaaba** (spoken; aquarba) – "Welcome"
- **Ete Sen?** ( spoken; eight –e – sein? ) " How's it gaan? "
- **Wo fre me...**( spoken; war frey mi.... ) " I am called..."
- **Wo frey wo den?** ( spoke; war frey wo den?) "You are called?"



**Mrs Skillicorn**



## Garden Club

The Friday gardening club has been busy this term, despite the challenges faced by snow and icy conditions.

So far this term students have created their

own ice sculptures, capturing natural objects in frozen blocks of ice used to decorate our winter wonderland.

We have potted up silver birch trees, a by product of a day spent doing conservation work for Cumbria Wildlife Trust at Drumburgh Moss as part of the ASDAN students environmental challenges. The trees will be available for purchase at our next plant sale together with herbs, veg. plants, bird boxes and seed sowing starter kits.

The school woods are beginning to burst into life, with snowdrops in profusion and bluebells coming through.

We have started feeding the birds and wood pigeons, blackbirds, robins and tits are now frequent visitors.

**Mrs Skillicorn**

## Sport Relief Beat the Teacher

As we all know Sports Relief happens every other year and each time we try to do something that all our students can get involved with. In 2008 we ran a mile, this year the theme was challenging the teachers. Every lunchtime for the week of Sport Relief staff volunteered for challenges for students to try to beat them at - all for 20p per go attempting to "get one over" on the teachers by beating them at their own game ... balancing longer than Mrs. Inkester, skipping more time in 1 minute than Mr Rajput, running a mile faster than Miss Laithwaite, Hula Hoop for longer than Miss Bell, save a penalty from Mr 'Torres' Millne and the grand finale of putting a team together to beat the elite staff Benchball team.

All the proceeds will go to Sport Relief and if the students win they will be able to show off to the teachers for the rest of the year!

**Mr Young**



## Family Learning Workshops



ASDAN students spent one of the colder winter days working indoors with willow. A series of family learning workshops are being planned for the Summer term where mums, dads, aunties, uncles, grannies and granddads can learn new skills alongside their relations at Beacon Hill School like creating willow sculptures with Phil Bradley. Phil is a basket maker, willow sculptor and willow grower living and working at Deanscales in West Cumbria. He uses over 20 different varieties of willow in his work which he grows locally. The sculptures he makes are simple, robust, tactile and made to last.

For more information about the family learning programme please contact **Gill Skillicorn, ASDAN coordinator at the school on 016973 20509.**



# SPORTS DESK

## Sports Clubs

Every term we try to vary the extra curricular clubs that we run. This term is no exception and we have tried to give a wide choice of clubs. On offer this half term we have Football, Inter Cricket, FUNdamentals, Cross Country, Fitness, Climbing, Cheer-leading, Basketball, Crazy Catch and Boxing (non contact amateur Boxing). Clubs seem to be well attended so far this half term especially boxing; at boxing club students have the choice of working towards a nationally recognised award. Thank you to all students attending clubs and to those who aren't ... come and give some a try, you might like them. Also if there is a club you would like to see organised please ask.

## 24 Hour Sports Marathon

For the ski trip we needed to raise approximately £200 to cover the cost of evening entertainment; we thought it would be beneficial for the students if they had some input towards the organisation of **their** entertainment. We decided to do a 24 hour sports marathon to which everyone on the ski trip was invited along with a friend - meaning that one Friday for a full 24 hours myself and 5 other staff had the company of 34 students. Initially the students were set the target of raising £50 each; this was only a target as every little would count.

We soon discovered that we were easily going to raise £200; in fact by the time we knew we had exceeded our expectations we were actually closer to

an amazing **£600**. We decided that we would utilise what we needed for the evening entertainment and donate the rest (**£425**) to the Cockermouth Flood Appeal which has affected so many people that we know.

The marathon was a great success as was the ski trip. Thanks so much to all the students for working so hard especially Lynsey Rumney Yr7 who literally participated in sport for 24 hours! We also appreciated the time staff devoted to helping raise money for the ski trip and in the end also supporting a very worthwhile cause.

## Young Leader's Cricket Course

As SSCO last year Miss Trussell managed to find funding to pay for some coaching awards for our students, so this year we paid for Jon Gibson, a cricket coach, to come in and deliver a nationally recognised award to a group of year 10 students. The award gives students the skills to lead a group safely and effectively through any activity whilst providing them with good cricket knowledge. The students worked admirably over many weeks and have come away as experienced leaders; all they need to do now is take the plunge and start leading groups in our after school cricket clubs. One student who has started this is Ronnie Morris; he has already led two sessions and is working really well as a leader. Well done to all the leaders, especially Ronnie for putting his new skills into practice.

**Mr Young**

## Important Dates for your Diary

29th March –1st April 2010	YR11 Easter School
6th & 7th April 2010	YR11 Easter School
12th April 2010	Summer Term begins
13th April 2010	Aimhigher Yr9 Philosophy Workshop
19th April 2010	YR7 & 8 Enterprise Day
20th April 2010	YR7 & 8 Parents Evening 16.30—18.00
21st April 2010	YR10 Girls in Aerospace @ Southfield
5th May 2010	GCSE Media Studies Controlled Exam (lessons3-6)
5th May 2010	GCSE Music Assessment (lesson 1)
6th & 7th May 2010	GCSE French Orals (all day)
10th—13th May 2010	Art & Graphics Exam
24th—28th May 2010	Work Life Balance Week no after school clubs or detentions
17th May 2010	GCSE Leisure & Tourism Exam (pm)
18th May 2010	GCSE Home Economics Exam (am)
20th May 2010	GCSE Business Studies Exam (am)
21st May 2010	GCSE Biology Exam (am)
25th May 2010	GCSE English Listening Exam (am)
26th May 2010	GCSE Chemistry (am), & Design Technology (pm) Exam
28th May 2010	GCSE Physics (am) & Business Studies (pm) Exam
31st May—4th June 2010	Half-term