

Spring 2011

edition



BEACON HILL COMMUNITY SCHOOL
TECHNOLOGY COLLEGE AND RURAL ACADEMY

Newsletter

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Head's View

Welcome to the spring edition of Beacon Hill's newsletter, these pages as always reflect the broad experience of our students during a busy term. As we approach the end of this term it is with particular pleasure that I present to you a record of our activities that has once again been described by OFSTED as good.

The recent 2 day visit from an HMI (Inspector) focusing on Economic & Business Understanding across the school was a huge success. We will be officially notified by letter of the detailed judgment, though I can report from feedback that all aspects of the visit such as employability of students, their financial capability as well as our overall effectiveness in preparing students for adult life were reported back very favourably indeed. The Inspection took the form of lesson observations, as well as meetings with students and key staff. Areas of focus included Aim Higher events, careers education, work experience programme and enterprise activities, all in addition to the key aspect of students ability in curriculum subjects to apply learning to the workplace.

The judgment is strong professional affirmation of all the successes staff and students achieve on a daily basis with the support of parents and the community. Enjoy the Easter break and we look forward to further achievements in the summer.

Mr D Millne

Acting Head Teacher

Bike Club

In the last newsletter I told you about the launch of the Bike Club and how we had nearly 40 members who were being put through a 6 week basic skills programme which covered a large range of things from washing a bike to manual front wheel lifts.

With all the maintenance workshops, training and dark nights behind us we managed to have our first ride out last night (Thursday 31st March). Now that we are out and about, the students can really put their skills to the test and we can seriously start looking at the Coast to Coast ride.



We have booked the ride for Sunday 10th July through to Tuesday 12th July. The students have been given details at an assembly and will be signing up to come either as a rider, mechanic or chef. For all these groups training starts now. Riders obviously have to get their fitness up as they are will be expected to be ride 40-50 miles per day for 3 days (138 miles all together), mechanics need to know how to fix bikes on the side of the road and be able to do it quickly and chefs (possibly the most important job if you ask Mr. Gee or me) need to know what the best energy food is and be able to make it...tasty!

The bikes, kindly donated by Centre Parcs, have all been fully stripped down and started to be sanded, the spray paint has been bought so hopefully by the next newsletter I should be able to show pictures of our new fleet of bikes.

Well done to all members of Bike Club for making it the most successful club we have ever had and let's keep up the good work. Here's looking forward to our Coast to Coast grand ride out!

Mr Young

PLEASE NOTE:

- The school will close early at 2.30pm on the last day of the Spring Term, Friday 8th April.
- YR7 & 8 Parents Evening on Tuesday 3rd May 4.15 - 6.15pm



TESCO for Schools & Clubs **FREE** vouchers for schools & clubs
We're collecting vouchers HERE!
Sainsbury's Active Kids

Once again we are collecting both Tesco vouchers for schools & Sainsbury's Active Kids vouchers. In the last few years we redeemed our vouchers for additional resources to support PE, Design Technology, Food & Nutrition and ASDAN horticultural course. Please hand in your tokens either at reception or the school library.

Sports Academy

In February half term Ellie Tinnion, Sophie Holiday & I went on a 4-day Sports Academy at Netherhall Secondary School in Maryport. We were selected by Mr Young our PE teacher as part of the Gifted & Talented scheme. Ellie said that *"it was a fantastic place to meet new people."* My favourite part of the Sports Academy was playing indoor cricket. On the first day we were shown a presentation about athletes in the Olympics and Paralympics and how they are so determined to win a gold, silver or bronze medal. We were offered many different sporting activities including swimming, dodgeball, gymnastics, rugby, football, badminton, tennis and lots more. At one stage we had free time to practice an area that we wanted to improve on. On the last day we were presented with a commemorative t-shirt saying Sports Academy 2011 on the back. I would definitely go again if I was lucky enough to be given the opportunity.

Bradley Thomson YR7



A total of **£35** was raised for RND. Over the next few weeks they will continue with their Car Wash Business Enterprise project.

Mrs Young/Year 9H



MORRISONS

Bag Packing

Many thanks to all parents, staff & students who helped to pack bags at Morrison's on Saturday 12th February

Over £700 was raised towards our Global Partnership Project with Ghana

Aimhigher...

YR7 & 8 Newcastle University Visit

We still have a few places left on the above visit on Tuesday 24th May—interested parents are welcome to join us. Download a copy of the letter & reply slip from our school website under parents/letters home and return ASAP...

Red Nose Day 2011

Friday 18th March was Red Nose Day and after a group discussion Year 9H came up with the idea to do a Staff Picture Quiz and also as part of their Social Enterprise Project to set up a car washing business.

David McCune, Thomas Carrick, Rachel Hankin, Connor Abram, Ross Dunn, Jack Dixon, Ryan and Rachel Fincher came up with the company Zip Clean and by the end of their first committee meeting had their business plan complete.

After setting up the car washing area, posters produced and customers booked in they set about their task. By the end of school day they had managed to wash 9 staff cars and those washed and parked again in the car park were gleaming.

YR7 Bug Project

Recently in Science we have been learning about bugs and the environmental impact we have on wildlife and forests. During this project we have been creating our own imaginary animals and listing their adaptations needed to live in their habitat. We also pretended to be Ecologists, (who tell people if they can build in places or not) where we looked at building sites to see if they were ok to be developed upon. There are green field sites which are undeveloped forest or agricultural land and brown field sites which are old building sites, factories or housing estates.

We also looked at bugs under the microscopes. Initially we went outside looking for some bugs, I found a slug and named it Henry. *"It was a fun experience"*, said Nicole Nicholson and Beth Turner thought, *"It was really exciting and I never knew how many animals & insects lived around the school grounds."*

Overall the experience was very fascinating and I can't wait to go to on the Science field trip to Watchtree Nature Reserve at Great Orton.

Jasmine Wilson and Beth Turner Yr7



Maybe students have already told you the canteen have started selling Slushies (an iced fruit drink). Unfortunately this has increased the litter by 20% which may not seem much but it makes Mr Eley's job more difficult. Throwing litter around has attracted a lot of ants to the school and as it's starting to get hot students may want to lie on the grass outside - not very nice if the ants start biting! We are under a warning that if we don't start using the litter bins provided then we will no longer be allowed to take the drinks outside.

Scott Turnbull YR7

Student Librarians

In the autumn term students are invited to apply for the positions of Student Librarians. Successful students then undergo training for several months learning a lot about the organisation behind the scenes. For the first time this year we launched an online interactive library sorting game which as well as being a useful training tool was fun to use.

Student Librarians once fully trained undertake a wide range of activities from issuing & returning resources using the computerised library management system; shelving items; stamping book club magazines; processing new books; helping with displays as well as assisting their peers. They may also contribute suggestions for book purchases or ideas as to services the library could usefully provide.

The student librarians form an important part of the library team (my stars!) and they receive RAP's for helping in line with the school's system of rewards.

This year's willing band of volunteers who fully completed their training were presented with their well-deserved certificates & badges at a recent assembly.

Mrs Cruickshank





Together We Can — Alcohol Awareness

As part of the Together We Can week PCSO Miles and PC Blane came into school during our Personal Development lessons to work with our students and teach us about the affects and issues of drinking alcohol. Most years have since been given the chance to have a go at similar activities.

We did lots of different activities including “Walking the Line” and “Touching your Nose”. I had to try and walk straight on a line wearing beer goggles. When I was wearing the beer goggles it showed me the effects of alcohol on people, it made me feel woozy and things were blurry. I didn’t manage to walk in anything near a straight line; I went sideways and had double vision!

Our next activity was driving a remote control car round the car park. I felt I needed to move it quickly although I wasn’t sure what I was doing and I couldn’t see properly. Without the glasses on I took my time and did much better.

I was asked to do a breath test. This is used by the Police when they think people might be drinking alcohol and driving. I had to blow long and hard into a machine until it made a clicking noise. The machine reads the amount of alcohol you have had to drink. If the light on the machine turned red it meant you had had too much alcohol to drink and shouldn’t be driving. Of course, my light was green. I was able to jump into my sparkly Audi R8 and drive back into school!

The lesson taught me the effects of alcohol on my co-ordination and the importance of not drinking and driving so that I can keep myself and others safe once I am old enough to drive for real.

Mrs Chandler & Connor Abram YR9

DT Torch Project

In D.T. we are making torches, which has been great fun. It was hard to choose what shape you wanted to do because we’d drawn lots of different designs to choose from. We then drew the design we chose on the computer, and are going to cut it out using the laser cutter. Choosing the lens colour was easy either blue or blue! We were able to select from two different colours of L.E.D., blue which stayed the same colour or red which shone through as purple.

Chloe Barron YR7



Chess Mania

From October through to Christmas the library is taken over with chess mania. This annual event is now firmly fixed into the school calendar and amazingly becomes more popular with each passing year. The finals saw two year 11’s battling head-to-head—Daniel Bell & Ronnie Morris. With both playing at the same level I felt sure we would be in for a long game, however Daniel let his guard down and as quick as a flash Ronnie had him caught. So Ronnie in his last year achieved the ultimate accolade of becoming Chess Champ! His claim to fame is that he was a whisker away from gaining that crown when he was in year 7 with a staff member pipping him to the post.



Well done to all who took part although it would be great to see more girls involved in what seems to be a male dominated game.

Mrs Cruickshank

Cumbria Buggy Challenge

Four students from the Young Engineers Club attended a great fun and learning day at Keswick School on the 15 Feb 2011 accompanied by Mr Esslemont. The event we attended was the inaugural Cumbria Buggy Challenge. All the students were a real credit to the school in the attitude and behaviour they showed throughout the day and also with the superb results of all their work.

We had been given a brief earlier in the year to design and build a series of remote controlled buggies to compete against other teams in two events. There was a Football challenge where the robots had to put golf balls down different goals in turn – quite a challenge! The other robot event was an assault course, where there was a maze to navigate through a see-saw and a gravel pit to cross, together with skittles to knock down at various points on the course.

The gravel pit was particularly difficult – and our senior class robot piloted by Dan James was especially stylish in emptying the gravel out with plenty of wheel spin, and even left rubber tyre marks across the bottom of the gravel container. His was also the only radio controlled vehicle to manage across the gravel.

Junior (Y7 Y8 and Y9) Robots were to be controlled by umbilical cord and the Seniors (Y10) used radio control.

Whilst the two robot challenges were ongoing, there were some other activities to try out – a bridge building challenge, using a robotic arm to lift & move building blocks and a free wheel vehicle distance challenge.

All competitors had to give a presentation to STEM ambassadors explaining how they designed and made their robotic buggy – and the environmental impact of the materials used. They interacted throughout the day with students and teachers from other schools and the STEM ambassadors from industry who helped organise the event. We all had a great day and learnt plenty to help us out next year! Eight teams in total from the schools involved took part on the day. The results for our students were:

Michael Mackereth Y7 was 1st in the Bridge Building Challenge and 3rd in the Junior Robots.

Martin Bell Y7 was 2nd in the Junior Robots

Liam Smith Y7 was 4th in the Junior Robots

Dan James Y10 was 4th in the Senior Robots.



Mr Esslemont

Learning Mentor Latest

Student of the Month

Each half term staff nominate students in each Key Stage who are working extremely hard in school – these nominations are then put to the vote at a staff meeting and the students with the most votes become our 'KS3 & KS4 Students of the Month'. The winning students receive a certificate and prize. Those who have achieved this honour to date this academic year are:

KS3: Keris Mitchell, Bradley Thomson, Lucy Shardlow

KS4: Luke Kershaw, Callam Walton, Katie Heaney

Well done and keep up the good work!

Easter School

We will once again be holding an Easter School for Year 11 students during the first week of the Easter holidays. Students have been invited to attend various classes - these sessions are an ideal opportunity for the students to finalise their coursework and prepare for their written exams.



Raw War - L & T

ASDAN, YR10 and 11 Leisure & Tourism students recently visited Raw War in Aspatria. As part of their Leisure & Tourism course students had to investigate the methods an organisation uses to promote itself. The visit started with a talk from the owner who gave an excellent insight into his business and how he advertises.

The students then experienced Raw War's paint balling for themselves.

"Team building", **"Amazing"**, **"Good Fun"** and **"Quality"** are all words used by the students to describe the afternoon. James Holmes commented that, *"It was really relevant to me as it helped me to add much more detail to my coursework."*

Thank you to Mr Gee and Mr Fenwick for accompanying our students.

Mrs Inkester

Beautilicious

Recently four girls in year 10 were lucky enough to be chosen to attend a course on beauty therapy at our local salon "Beautilicious". The 6-week course was aimed at improving our confidence and self esteem. We learnt how to apply make-up, nail & skin care, and generally how to live a healthy lifestyle. We were able to see the beauty industry first hand and it gave us a better understanding of how to run a business.



Danielle Brown, the owner and one of our ex-students, was very helpful and gave us some samples to try at home.

Serena Phillips YR10

Nurture Groups

In November we launched our Nurture group - 8 students from years 7, 8 and 9. We decided that our initial project was to act out and perform WHEN SANTA GOT STUCK UP THE CHIMNEY to the students at Plumbland School.

Our first task was to shop for all our materials after which we spent the next few Friday afternoons busily cutting, gluing and working very hard preparing our finger puppets and scenery ready for our big performance. We practiced hard even giving up some of our breaks as it got nearer to the grand event. Some of the group dressed up for the afternoon, we even had Father Christmas and his Reindeers. A really pleasant afternoon for everyone involved - audience & performers alike. Brianne Creighton YR8 said *"I enjoyed being a reindeer in the performance and performing in front of the children in Plumbland School."* Plumbland students enjoyed the performance so much that they asked us to come back some day to do another one.



Our second Nurture group project was cooking and visiting the elderly residents at our local care home, Park Lodge. The residents sampled some of our cookery produce – cakes & biscuits made with the help of our local PCSO Chrissy Miles. Before the visit took place the group researched & discussed what they were going to bake and what ingredients they needed to buy first.

At the moment our new Nurture group are planning a new Story Sack project so once again the sewing needles & glue are back in use during our Friday afternoon sessions.

Mrs Pearce



Site Manager Ramble

As you would all expect my day begins long before any students or other staff arrive and of course I'm the last one to leave! A usual day in the life of a Site Manager involves a thousand & one routine tasks e.g. kick-starting the boilers into life, ensuring the school is clean & tidy, preparing rooms for external events, setting up and clearing away seating in the hall after assemblies & breaks as well as performing daily health & safety checks. A few days a week I work split shifts to enable out of hours activities to take place, FE classes, various sports & clubs use our facilities on a regular basis.

At the moment I have lots of planned projects going on in the school. The revamp of the staff toilets which date back to when the school first opened its doors are now a work in progress. The colours of the walls and new plastic panels were picked for me by those very kind front office staff Anna Ryder Casson, Nick Knowles Hemmingway and not forgetting Lawrence Llewelyn Thornton but as in the TV programmes I am yet to see these interior designers get their hands dirty!! Also we now have bright new stage curtains which look very smart. For some reason students think I look like Louie Spence, from Pineapple Dance Studios and of TV fame therefore I think I should be the first act up on stage!!

As I write this chapter of my novel from my plush designer office I hear birds singing ... no it's not ... the boilers have just started up once again, I think about the next project coming up and wonder if I will ever get that one finished or will I start something else or perhaps I will just go for another coffee in the IT room and think about it more!!!

I have now been employed at Beacon Hill for almost a year, how time flies by when you are having fun! This is a great job, one which I look forward to each & every day, no 2 days are ever the same; the staff and students truly make it a fantastic place to work.

Mr Eley AKA Louie

Sports Hall Athletics Champions

In February, year 7 & 8 (and Becky Beattie from year 9 as Sports Leader) took part in the Allerdale Sports Hall Athletics at Stainburn School, Workington.

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.

We entered a mixed boys & girls team from each year group and fantastically they both won, coming away once again as Allerdale Champions taking us through to the County finals for the second year running!!

At the Cumbria finals the event changed slightly becoming a separate boys and girls team event. On the day of the finals half of our team were away on the French Trip, including one of the team captains. Despite this, YR8 boys once again romped home with the County Trophy as they had done the previous year when in year 7. Congratulations to all those who took part.



24 Hour Sports Marathon



To help fund some of the evening activities for the French trip Mr. Gee asked me to help him organize a 24 hour sports marathon.

As in previous years students needed to continuously perform a sporting act for 24 hours, the usual activities took place, plenty of football, table tennis basketball etc, but this time we decided to add something a little different ... a bike ride to Paris. Using my bike and Mr. Gee's attached to two turbo trainers (indoor bike trainers), students took turns at cycling starting at 9am on Friday 21st January and finishing on Saturday at 7:30am. All in all the students cycled 615 miles, the combined distance from the two bikes, a fantastic achievement.

Also in the evening 4 students from year 10 and 11 made the evening meal for everyone taking part in the sports marathon, a choice of red Thai curry, sausage casserole or pizza and chocolate cake or a chocolate muffin for pudding.

An amazing £1,300 was raised helping to pay for all of the French trip's evening entertainment and the remainder will be donated to charity.

Mr Young

Important Dates for your Diary

Tues 5th April	YR10 Parents Evening
Fri 8th April	End of Spring Term school closes early at 2.30pm
Mon 11th—Fri 15th April	GCSE Easter School
Wed 27th April	Summer Term begins
Fri 29th April	Royal Wedding—School Closed
Mon 2nd May	May Bank Holiday—School Closed
Tues 3rd May	GCSE Exams begin
Tues 3rd May	YR7 & 8 Parents Evening 4.15 - 6.15pm
Thurs 5th May	YR7 Aimhigher Robodance Competition @ Sellafield
Tues 24th May	YR7 & 8 Aimhigher Newcastle University visit leave 8.45am
Mon 30th May—Fri 3rd June	Half-term holidays
Mon 20th—Fri 24th June	YR7 & 8 Exam Week
Mon 4th—Wed 6th July	YR10 Aimhigher Edgehill University Residential
Mon 11th July	YR10 Reports sent out
Mon 18th—Fri 22nd July	YR7—9 Enrichment Week
Mon 18th—Fri 22nd July	YR10 Work Ready Week
Fri 22nd July	End of Summer Term—school closes early