

# Newsletter

Autumn 2010

2nd edition



## Christmas Message from the Head



Dear parents and friends of Beacon Hill

I am writing this message from home, looking out of the window over my garden. How beautiful it is. The trees laced with snow and ice and the garden covered in a cold, snowy blanket. The birds are huddled up and there is a robin who keeps hopping about the window sill looking for crumbs. All very Christmassy!

For me this has been the strangest lead up to Christmas I have ever experienced. Since I started teaching I have always spent the last few weeks before Christmas in the frantic race to wrap presents, rehearse carol singers, organise Christmas activities and all the other million and one things that have to be squeezed in to make sure everyone in school is ready for the Christmas holiday.

As you all know, I have been away from school since October and have been quite poorly. I want to take the opportunity to thank you all; Governors, parents, pupils and staff for your cards, get well messages and presents. I have been overwhelmed by you all. Thank you.

I am making a good recovery and will start back to school in the New Year. I wish all of you a very happy Christmas and a healthy and peaceful New Year.

HEADTEACHER

**St John Ambulance**



Following the national Alcohol Awareness week in November we arranged for the St John Ambulance to come into school to deliver some first aid advice to our young people. They covered what to do if a young person loses consciousness or gets injured due to a fall, how to dress a wound and putting a casualty into the recovery position. Students engaged in some role play demonstrating how to help a young person who may be having difficulties due to excess alcohol.

The aim of this visit was to address some concerns that were highlighted during the discussions that took place in personal development lessons by the police in making our young people aware of the dangers of drinking alcohol.

Scott Batchelor – *"I thought she taught us some good information that could ultimately save ours or others lives!"*

Annabelle Brown – *"She got most people involved and I learnt some new things that I didn't know before. She didn't talk too much, lots of demonstrations which made it more enjoyable."*

Laura Foster-Devaney – *"I thought the first aid was extremely useful, it showed us in a very realistic way what we could do when it comes down to it to save someone's life ... an essential skill!"*

Daniel James – *"It was useful and fun; we learnt a lot of things about first aid."*

Michael Fisher – *"Interesting, I won't remember it all but maybe I'll remember some of it if I need to."*

Mrs Sanderson

## Librarian in the Making

"In the beginning it was hard and I really didn't think I could do it, but it got better the more I practised. The online task was hard but it was good fun." Sam Wilson

I applied to become a pupil librarian after I saw the posters around the school and Mrs Cruickshank, our Librarian talked to us during our English quiet reading lessons.

After giving Mrs Cruickshank our application form saying why we wanted to be lunchtimes working pupil librarians. We learnt about how all the books in the library are organised, completing a map to show where all the books are shelved. A new element of the training that we all enjoyed was taking part in an online interactive task, to show that we could shelf books in the correct place - fiction by the authors surname and non-fiction by Dewey Decimals. We also learnt how to process new books and were shown how to operate Eclipse on the library computer.

Once we had an idea of how to shelf and how the computer system worked, we moved onto a weekly rota system, where we were each allocated one morning break or lunchtime to work alongside an older pupil librarian to complete the last section of our training – actual work experience in the library. Every time we completed a task it had to be recorded as evidence. Only this week have I finished my training – the first of this training group to pass! I felt a huge sense of achievement and I know it will be useful experience to use on my CV as I now know that I would like to work in a library.

"It was better this year as more people were involved and were able to help each other" Annabelle Brown

"This year was better than ever and brought more trainees with the interactive librarian activities on the computers. Less work for the older librarians. This also displayed another side to being a librarian, that it is not all about books." Laura Foster-Devaney

"I thought it was hard but easy at times, I would like to do it all again" Lucy Shardlow

**Keris Mitchell Year 7**



## K1 Form Charity

In K1 we found out that picking a form charity was going to be more difficult than we first thought, so we decided to research Children in Need as we knew it was close to that date. When we researched the charity we found out that some of the money raised actually comes all the way here to Aspatria to help Aspatria's Dreamscheme. So with our charity picked, on Friday the 19<sup>th</sup> November K1 held an assembly to show the importance of raising money for the charity. We decided to bake some cakes and hold a cake stall in the hall at break time. All the cakes were sold and we also held a non uniform day for everyone in the school. Overall we raised £193.88 for Children in Need. We want to thank everyone who helped us raise this fantastic amount of money and we would like to especially thank everyone who donated cakes for the sale ... they were yummy!

**Rebecca Hodgson YR11**

## Radio Beacon Hill

Radio club was fun, with Mr Gee, Miss Bell, Annabelle Brown, Laura Foster-Devany, Scott Batchelor, Ben Barton, Daniel Bell and ourselves who were all hand-picked by Mr Gee & Miss Bell from a long list of interested students. The club was held each Monday morning at breakfast club. It gave us the brilliant opportunity to experience first hand professional radio equipment which had been borrowed on a temporary loan for 8 weeks from CLEO. Unfortunately in the short time available (4 hours in total over the 8 weeks) we didn't have enough time to make an actual complete radio show – hopefully we will be given a chance in the future to complete the challenge we were given. Annabelle and Scott were our main radio presenters but all of us were able to try the equipment out. We recorded quizzes and questionnaires, music and games.

**Sally Dixon YR8 and Rebecca Beattie YR9**

## Skiddaw House YHA Visit

Recently some of our ASDAN students walked up to Skiddaw House YHA in the Northern Lake District to support our ASDAN studies and as a reward for all their hard work, fund-raising for the outdoor learning area.

The students experienced bunk house accommodation, in a simple hostel set amid the stunning mountains of the northern Lake District. It had comfortable common rooms, bunk beds in small rooms and a fully equipped self catering kitchen which we made excellent use of having prepared our meals in advance. Our banquet included a host of home-made (well school-made really) delicious dishes including garden grown vegetable soup, jalloffi rice, tuna bake and plum crumble and custard. Mr. Gee and Mr. Young were so excited about the prospect of free food that they cycled all the way up to the hostel after school to try out our feast. What did they think? Well Mr. Gee commented **"We arrived hungry, wet and cold but were soon thrilled to have a fantastic and very substantial meal served up for us on arrival – big thanks to Serena and her crew! We were very impressed with the set up at Skiddaw House and the confidence and maturity of the students, good to see them in a different setting to the classroom. High point of the evening though had to be Michael Fisher's virtuoso playing piano – absolute LEGEND! Cheers for a good time."**

Two other teachers, Miss. Pandrich and Miss. Kay also came up to stay; walking up it took 105 minutes of power-walking but was well worth it! Skiddaw House is an excellent base for exploring Skiddaw, Blencathra and the Northern Fells and although the ladies had to wake up and set off to school at 5 in the morning they thought their experience was well worth it.

We planted trees at Skiddaw House on the first day of our visit and the students had planned activities for the following day at Rookin House which included air rifle shooting, an Argo Cat off road experience and a quad bike trek. We had a fantastic day there, quite an impressive set up.

The students have been doing various community activities. As well as fundraising for this trip and had successfully collected all of the money needed to pay for their accommodation, transport, meals and activities. A big thank-you as always for all the remarkable support we get from so many people, not least to Marie-Pierre and Martin, the hostel managers for driving down to Mirk Holme farm to collect the four boxes of food we'd prepared for our fantastic feast. Jordan Best commented **"It was a good time, full of fabulous memories to cherish"** which I think says it all.

**Mrs Skillicorn ASDAN coordinator**



# Personal Development Roundup

From the start of the year I have been working with years 7 – 9 in their Personal Development lessons.

Personal Development at key stages 3 and 4 helps our students to lead confident, healthy and responsible lives as individuals and members of society. Through work in lesson time and a wide range of activities across and beyond the curriculum, students gain practical knowledge, understanding and skills to help them live healthily and deal with spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues they face as they approach adulthood.

In Year 7 they began by looking at Being British and what it means to be British, working on a project to produce a presentation showing some of the key things that make up each of the four countries of Great Britain.

Later in the term we looked at Firework Safety and the Firework Code - students were tasked with creating an information leaflet showing the Firework Code and how to stay safe. This was judged by the local PCSO Chrisie Miles who awarded Neyve Barton first place, Sophie Holliday 2<sup>nd</sup> and Amy Turner as 3rd. In assembly shortly after they were presented with their well deserved prizes. All the completed leaflets are on display in the school library.

November 15<sup>th</sup> – November 19<sup>th</sup> was Anti Bullying Week and with this in mind we started looking at bullying and in groups they produced a little sketch which was delivered to a small audience including Chris Blain, our local Community Police Officer and Mrs Sanderson. From these we discovered we have a few budding actors in our midst!!

Next topic that they will be looking at is Religious Festivals where they will research the six main religions and look at how they celebrate festivals.



In year 8 the main topic we have been working on is Crime. We began by looking at Rights and Responsibilities producing posters showing the various things we are allowed to legally do and at what age.

We investigated different crimes and with the help of the [www.fearless.org](http://www.fearless.org) website they all produced a booklet giving information about a specific crime such as gun crime. We have displayed these in the classroom. We followed this up with our next topic where we looked at what is Anti Social behaviour and how it affects the community.

For Anti bullying week we had a workshop again with PC Chris Blain, to collaborate on a new school anti bullying policy.

Still with the crime prevention theme we then looked at vandalism and in small groups they produced a "Living Newspaper Tableau".

Finally they are looking at "Most Wanted" in the UK and USA looking at the work of the Crime stoppers UK and FBI.

# Personal Development Roundup

In year 9 we had the topic of Animal Cruelty. They began by looking at the needs and requirements of owning a pet incorporating the Animal Welfare Bill. To conclude this topic we visited local veterinary practice— Beacon Vets where they were given a tour of the premises and an informative talk. Each student had prepared two questions to ask the vet.

Since October half term they have had an outside organisation called “The Know Project” come into school. The project speakers give their own unique stories on how drugs and alcohol misuse has affected their lives and hopefully it will give the students the opportunity to make positive and informed decisions regarding drug and alcohol misuse. Following on from these workshops they have researched celebrities who have suffered from alcoholism and also the different classes of drugs. For the rest of the term they will continue with this topic looking at the effects drug and alcohol misuse has on the wider community.

Mrs Young



## L2L Humanities

Last term Mrs Twentyman was kind enough to come in to tell all of year 7 about Aspatria when she was a little girl. We thought up some questions beforehand and then when she came into school we interviewed her. She told us how a bomb dropped in Silloth and all her friends cycled all the way to see it. Mrs Twentyman had lots of interesting memories to share with us.

Neyve Barton YR7



## GCSE Science Live

On 15th November the Triple Science group went to Manchester to see the GCSE Science Live show. It was a long day as we left school at 8am and didn't get back until 6.30pm. When we got to Bridgewater Hall we were impressed by the venue and the number of other students involved.

During the day we watched several real scientists talk about their research and areas of interest. The ones that stood out were Lord Robert Winston who talked about evolution and how we are related to apes! Jim Al-Khalili told us about space travel and the potential to travel through time!

It was also useful to hear from a leading examiner, who gave the pupils lots on advice on how to prepare for exams and what to do once they are in the exam hall. On the whole it was a good day out and an eye opener into science beyond GCSE.

The visit was funded by the Aim Higher initiative and it is hoped that it will have inspired some of Beacon Hill's most successful students to pursue careers in Science. Throughout the last few years our students have benefited from many Aim Higher funded events; sadly this avenue of funding has been the victim of Government's recent austerity cuts!

Dr Graham

## Planting Bulbs – Community Links

Wendy Campbell from the Aspatria Town Council recently asked us if we could plant daffodil bulbs in the raised bed next to the Esso garage. These daffodil bulbs had all been donated by local people to commemorate the life of a late friend, relative, or pet.

Over 4000 has been planted over the years and each one is in memory of someone. Their name goes into the remembrance book in the Church. If you would like to donate any bulbs next year please leave the bulbs at Wendy's house 58 King Street, with a note saying who they are for and where you would like them planted. e.g. Park Rd, West St. etc.

Mrs Skillicorn



## Bag Packing

Help to raise funds to support our Global Partnership project at Morrisons, Workington on Saturday 12th February.

See Mrs Cruickshank or Mrs Skillicorn for more information

We have been fortunate to be given Saturday 12th February next year as a date to bag pack at Morrisons in Workington. We aim to raise funds to help us collaborate in Spell-binding 2011, the Cumbrian School Book Awards. Nearer the time we will be canvassing for student, staff & parent volunteers, so please keep this date in mind if you would like to help.

## Beacon Hill Community Learning Centre Aspatria

Courses from January 2011

016973 20509

### Mondays

Italian - various levels

Silverwork

Belly dancing

Website design

Watercolour painting

Yoga

Art (multi-media)

Spanish – various levels

Tai Chi

Digital photography

### Thursdays

DIY Easter Eggs

French for beginners

### Fridays

Ballroom dancing

### Saturday Workshops

Silverwork

Watercolour painting

Prices start from £1 per hour

For details:

016973 20509    [beaconhillcommunity@hotmail.com](mailto:beaconhillcommunity@hotmail.com)

## Huge Boccia Success

I was one of four players from Beacon Hill School who went to The Active Zone at Lakes College in Workington to represent the school in a Boccia tournament. I went along with Declan Phillips, Thomas Carrick and Declan Csak.

I was a bit scared when we arrived. We were one team from a group of different schools including Mayfield, Whitehaven, Stainburn and Cockermouth and I had never played Boccia before!

My nerves disappeared as the games got underway. We made an excellent team and worked together superbly. We won most of the games we played and felt a huge success.

Our hard work was worth it. We won our group heats and were amazed that we had made it into the semi – final. We couldn't believe it when we had beaten off tough competition from all of the other teams to play in the final!

I was nervous in the final, so much so that I didn't realise when the game had finished or that we had won! I was a member of our schools first Boccia team to ever win a tournament.

Our Boccia team was excellent. I hope we all get to be in more Boccia tournaments together in the future.      **Nathan Devlin YR9**

## Relaxation

On 18<sup>th</sup> October we had a visit from a Buddhist nun called Chenma from Uma Kadampa Buddhist Centre in Carlisle. Chenma is a practising Buddhist nun who came into school to help our year 11 students to give them some techniques on meditation and how to focus on their breathing which will help them relax and stay calm. Chenma gave the students practical advice and relaxation exercises that they could take home and practice.

The aim was to help the students by giving them a strategy to relax and de-stress before their exams.

The session was really therapeutic and some of the students did comment on how relaxing they found the exercises - both myself and Mrs Young found the session really calming and found it did help us to focus on our breathing. Katie Heaney commented that "*it definitely helped and relaxed me, I did feel stressed that day so it got a lot off my chest*".

**Mrs Pearce**



# Yr7 Adventure

At the beginning of November Year 7 went on a residential trip to Castle Head at Grange over Sand. We went on the trip to get to know each other out of school, to work on our teamwork as well as taking part in lots of fun activities.

We were put into three groups:

The A-Team otherwise known as Special K, G-Force (motto - beat that!) and Pearce Warriors. First we were tasked with completing a set of challenges where we had to listen to others and concentrate on what we were doing. Then we set targets for ourselves which would make us better team members throughout our stay: to listen to others; not to be bossy; to try to be a leader; to think of others and not to tell people to shut up. Some of us achieved them - some more than others!

Then we had a healthy evening meal (some liked it...others didn't) and got our heads down for a good night's sleep...(DVD and midnight feasts).

The following day we completed another three challenges. For some of us the wobbly pole was the most exciting! For some of us it was a nightmare!

We needed skill, stamina, strength, courage and most of all trust in each other if we were going to succeed – it wasn't easy!

The abseil tree was soooooooooooooo high! Some of us thought it looked easy from the ground – until we got half way up! Coming down was great fun – but we had to really trust our friends at the bottom holding the rope! Bethany didn't trust me (Neyve) when I was holding the rope at the bottom.

The sea level traverse, what can I say? Howling winds, lashing down rain, steep slippery cliffs to climb, tight gaps to squeeze through, tunnels to descend, leaps of faith, quick sand to escape – Great Fun!

The following morning – after some much needed sleep we tried our hands at some bushcraft out in the wild building shelters and starting fires.

All in all we had a great time, got to know each other much better and learnt a lot about working together as a team. Looking forward to the next trip...

**Neyve Barton and Bethany Fowlds YR7**





## Passing on Passion for Cycling



Mr Gee and I, as most people know have a passion for cycling. Eager to enthuse others with this passion we went on a trail cycle leaders course which will allow us to take students cycling both on road and off road.

As the weather at this time of year is unpredictable to say the least we decided to start now but to base it all indoors. We asked all students if anyone was interested which resulted in a fantastic response of nearly 40 students. We split these students into 3 groups and are running sessions for each group for 6 weeks.

Students will learn the basic practical skills needed to control the bike ranging from lifting the front and back wheels to how to brake. The students will also learn the basics of bike maintenance which will allow them to fix their bike at the side of the road/trail and look after it at home. These mechanics include things such as basic bike setup, setting gears and how to clean your bike.

We are now at the stage that if students who are attending bike club want to bring their bike in to carry out maintenance then they can any lunchtime or after school and use the school's equipment and staff expertise. Through funding from the charity shop in Aspatria, we have managed to buy equipment to set up a workshop in school.

Bike club is now coming to the end of its first group and all seem to have had a good time and learnt a lot. Thank you very much to all the pupils and especially the charity shop for making it possible for us to give our pupils this opportunity. Mr Gee has recently been able to secure the offer of 15 ex-hire bikes free from Centre Parcs and we would like to thank them for their generosity.

**Mr Young**

### On Track Diary Dates Correction

**Yr7 & 8 Interim Reports week beginning 7th March not 4th March**

**Aimhigher YR7 & 8 visit to Newcastle University - parents invited  
All Day Tuesday 24th May 2011 ... information to follow next term**

### Important Dates for your Diary

Fri 17th December 2010	Sports Activity day—school closes early @ 2pm
Wed 5th January 2011	Spring Term begins
Thurs 13th January 2011	YR11 Biology Exam
Fri 14th January 2011	YR11 Mock Results student & parents afternoon YR7-10 School closes early @ 1.30pm
Mon 17th January 2011	YR11 Chemistry Exam
Wed 19th January 2011	YR11 Physics Exam
21st—25th February 2011	Half-term
Thurs 10th—Tues 15th February	French Trip (leaving at 12 midnight)
Tues 15th February 2011	YR11 Next Steps Evening 6-7.30pm
Fri 18th February 2011	YR9 Aimhigher Philosophy Workshop
Mon 28th February—Fri 4th March	YR7-9 Key Assessments
Wed 2nd March 2011	Science Module Exams YR10 & some YR11
Tues 8th March 2011	YR9 Parents & Options Evening
Week beginning 7th March 2011	Yr7-9 Interim Reports
Fri 18th March 2011	Aimhigher YR9 Learning Maze
Tues 5th April 2011	YR10 Parents Evening
Fri 8th April 2011	End of Term—Easter holidays