

Spring
2014



Newsletter

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Mrs J. Richardson, B.Ed. N.P.Q.H.

Dear parents and friends of BHS

Welcome to our Spring term newsletter. I am a great believer that the more you put into life the more you will get out of it. I am so pleased that the vast majority of our young people are fully engaged in the life of our school and take full advantage of all the fantastic opportunities we provide. Exams are very important but it is the experiences that last! Happy reading! Happy Easter!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Richardson'.

HEADTEACHER



Snow Fun @ Saalbach

Hugs & kisses, a quick wave from our families and we were on our way. We stopped off in Northampton to pick up a group from another school to share our skiing adventure. It wasn't long before we

made some new friends. 30hrs later and we were all amazed at the white view, absolutely beautiful.

On the first night we formed into groups with the different school, and had a quiz night together. We were in the team that won the quiz. After the quiz we went to bed as everyone was shattered from the long bus journey.

It was a slow start on the nursery slopes for the students who were total beginners. It took some 10 minutes just to put their ski boots on! This day went quite slow because we were all learning the basics and how to ski safely; many people fell over, again and again as they learnt how to turn, stop and for some slow down. Emma and Sophie's ski instructor commented how they made their falls look dramatically complicated.

It was pretty hard the second day as we went higher up the mountain. But everyone managed to do it. Throughout the week, whenever we were together as a school, there was constant laughter. We all made each other smile and everything ran smoothly. The evening entertainment was something different every night from bowling to curling & swimming.

We even went to Saalbach on the bus then had something to eat then ski back. It was the best experience so far that we have done. We're so glad we went. We made some good friends that we are still in touch with now and will be for a very long time.

Emma Dibb YR9 & Nicole Nicolson YR10

Parent Governor Vacancies

Exciting opportunities have arisen to play a part in the running of our school.

The **full governing body** normally meets about **5 times per academic year**. The **committees** that support the governing body usually meet once a term, so **3 times per academic year**. Governors spend **an average of 3 hours per school month** on related activities including the meetings and preparatory reading. The governing body is answerable to parents and the community. The core responsibilities can be summarised as:

- providing strategic management
- acting as a critical friend to the school
- ensuring accountability
- promoting high standards of education and achievement
- planning the schools' long term future
- setting the school's aims and values
- appointing senior members of staff including the Headteacher
- budgetary allocation and control

If you are interested in playing a part please contact:

Clerk to the Governors, Mrs M Batchelor at the school on 016973 20509,
mbatchelor@beaconhill.cumbria.sch.uk or by letter.



Next Steps for Beacon Hill Students

Tuesday 28th January saw Beacon Hill's Yr10 and Yr11 students and their parents attend our highly successful Next Steps careers evening. Up to 20 organisations came along to explain their post 16 careers options. Headteacher, Mrs Richardson, and Deputy Headteacher, Mr Millne, welcomed a hall buzzing with enthusiasm. In my role as KS4 Academic Mentor I was on hand to answer questions and guide parents to suitable areas in the hall.

The event gave many students and their parents much to think about. Some Yr10 students organised their work experience and Yr11s confirmed the grades necessary to fulfil their dreams. We look forward to hearing of many positive outcomes from our Next Steps evening and successful placements for those leaving this summer.

Mrs Gigli, KS4 Academic Mentor



BullyingUK
Part of family lives

At Beacon Hill we work hard to keep all of our students safe. Bullying is an area that we are



continually monitoring to stamp it out. We respond to any reports of bullying quickly and work with the students and the parents to resolve the issue. We work closely with the police if the incident requires their intervention and treat every case with the same importance.

We encourage all the students to speak out about bullying and report any incidents to a member of staff or the pastoral team, particularly if they have seen it happening to someone else.

Cyberbullying is an area we all need to be vigilant in, especially as technology advances every day. There are many web sites where students and parents can get information and advice about all areas of bullying and how to use the technology available.

If you have any concerns about your child or have information of a bullying incident involving another child in our school please contact us immediately.

There are helpful organisations which you can access through the school website:
[Students > Internet Safety](#).

Mrs Sanderson, Inclusion Manager



Ghanaian Feast

As part of their International Short Course Award a small group of year 10 and 11 students had the opportunity to plan, prepare and cook a typical Ghanaian meal and serve it up to the whole school as one of their lunch options on Wednesday, 5th February this year.

The canteen staff were very encouraging and provided lots of support. They allowed our students to invade their canteen, helped them to work safely, showed them how to use the catering equipment and found the ingredients they needed and gave instructions on how to prepare each course. Our canteen manager, Mrs Checkley had met with our student a few weeks previous to look through their proposed dishes and finalise the day's menu. She supported the students' ideas and purchased the ingredients our students would need to create their menu.

Mrs Skillicorn



Cooks' comments:

"I got to make much spicier food then we normally have at school. I added four chillies to the beef and spinach curry." Liam Smith

"I enjoyed being in the canteen, using their equipment and making food to a high standard." Thomas Harrington

"I really enjoyed making the Ghanaian food with the canteen staff. They supported us, showing us how to use the equipment safely and we had fun!" Samantha Wilson

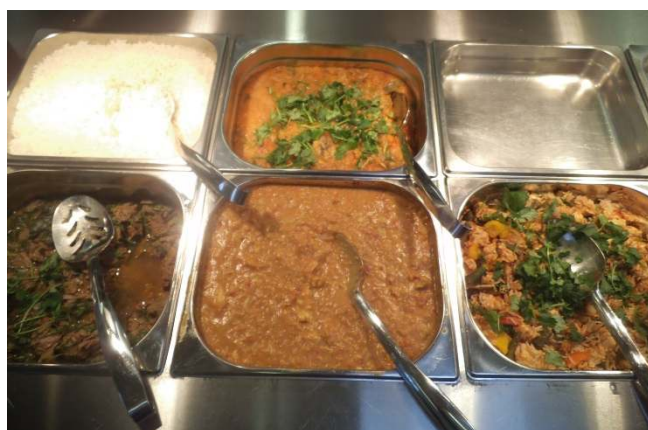
"I liked and enjoyed making the Ghanaian food with my catering team and the canteen staff. A lot of students and staff really enjoyed trying something different. Maybe next time we could make Australian food?" Ellie Watson

And our canteen manager, what did she think?

"I thought that the children came to the kitchen with a very professional attitude. Their kitchen skills were of a very high standard and they all worked extremely well together as a team producing some delightfully flavoured food in which the whole school could enjoy."

The 'cooks' received many complimentary comments. Mrs Richardson thought the food was

"Excellent – first class. I especially like the chicken curry." "Lots of tasty spices, tender meat and flavoursome jollof rice..... the best lunch I've had in ages." said our deputy Head, Mr Millne





A big well done to all the students who took part in the Cumbria Robotics Challenge 2014. We have taken part in this competition for a few years now. As usual there were 2 levels to enter – the juniors (KS3) with wire controlled robots and the seniors (KS4) with radio control.

The event was held at Braithwaite Hall just outside Keswick and was run by Nuclear Graduate Engineers from a variety of disciplines who have all undergone STEM (Science Technology Engineering and Maths) training to work with schools in addition to their “day” job. All Cumbrian schools are invited to take part.



Our KS3 team this year was mostly from Yr8, John Sim, Evan Miller, Jack Richardson and Liam Hetherington, together with Josh Senejko, Ryan Lowrey and Liam Hetherington who formed our second KS3 team. The second team did well to have a robot working as they were asked to take part at the last minute, after another school dropped out of the event freeing up a space for them. Competing at senior level were Yr11 students Shane Warwick and Lucy Nicholson

All teams had been exceptionally good this year at independently designing and building their robots, and the judges passed very favourable comments about them – with John, Jack and Evan winning the Robot of the Event prize for theirs – which was totally reliable all day and looked great! Shane and Lucy were particularly commended by the organisers.

The robot football was good fun and caused much excitement, John, Evan and Jack were first in this event too.

The obstacle course (a timed run with a see-saw, a maze, gravel track, as well as several pins to knock over) was a close race, but our other junior team of Josh, Ryan and Liam managed to post a time much quicker than their closest rivals, winning fastest time of the day at 42 seconds.



Cumbria Robotics Challenge 2014



The challenges this year were a Sinusoidal Road – made up of 2 sine wave surfaces designed to test control and traction just like the Land Rover testing ground. They also had to do a particularly difficult run with 2 people controlling the robot at the same time – a real test of teamwork! There was also a hill climb event – our KS3 team came joint first in this event, proving the advantage of 4 wheel drives in giving traction on the slippery slope. The KS4 team had some balance problems on this, with some fairly impressive rolls from half way up.

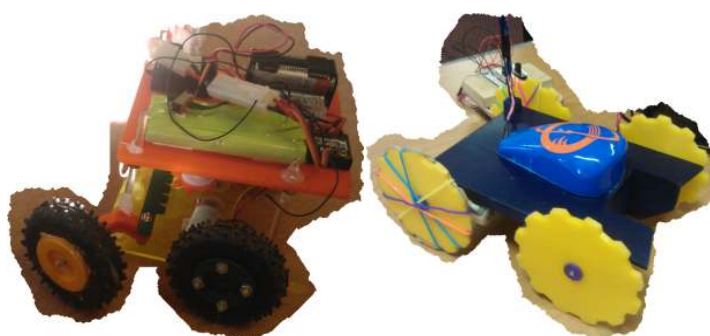


The bridge building challenge also tested engineering abilities, and both teams made excellent bridges. Our KS4 team won this event, leaving the Graduate Engineers trying to find more weights to test the bridge as it was so strong.

There was another challenge in controlling mini robotic arms to move “nuclear waste” and sort it into the correct containers. The aim of this was to simulate decontaminating a nuclear dump pool by removing the contents without getting contaminated. Our juniors were very impressive here, I tried it but they were better!

All in all a great day, it was hard work getting the robots ready for the event but worth it, and especially hard for Shane who was gluing the last parts on the senior robot together whilst on the mini bus on the way there! Hopefully he doesn't do the same with his homework...

Mr Esselmont



Too little? Too much?

There is no legal requirement for schools to provide a set amount of homework for school children but we believe it is a vital means of helping to raise student achievement and for every student to see that school and home are working together in a partnership to provide support and encouragement.

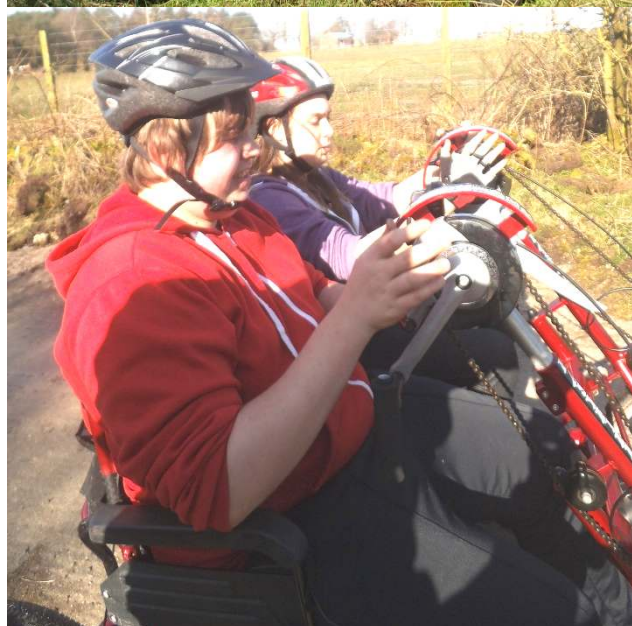
Homework provides a means for students:

- To consolidate and reinforce what is learnt in the classroom;
- To become independent and curious learners;
- To develop good study habits;
- To develop skills in personal organisation and a sense of responsibility;
- To prepare for the next stage of education.

Our homework policy is up for renewal and we are going to make some changes. We would like your views about homework particularly the amount of homework set and the frequency. These will then be taken into consideration when we review the policy. If you would like to contribute to this discussion please let the school have your views before the end of May either in writing or by email.

Watchtree is a well known nature reserve that looks after wildlife as well as providing facilities to help teach disadvantaged and disabled children how to ride bikes. At the moment Watchtree is planting trees to get rid of more carbon dioxide and to create more habitats for wildlife to look after lots of species in

Britain that are in danger e.g. the red squirrel but at the same time providing the ideal environment for many that are currently not under threat.




Watchtree


NATURE RESERVE


We could do the same at Beacon Hill School by planting the type of trees that the red squirrel live in and see if we can attract squirrels onto our school grounds.


The ASDAN team visited Watchtree on Wednesday 12th March, 2014 to see this amazing nature reserve, to plant trees (wild cherry, silver birch & oak) and to try out their amazing choice of cycles not just two wheelers but 3, 4 and even 5 or 6 wheelers and walk around their various nature trails.


Tree planting instructions

 Each tree will require a small pit to be dug with a spade (junior spades are easier for children to use).

 The pit needs to be at least several centimetres wider and deeper than the root plug. A spades width and depth should be sufficient. If planting into grass, the turf can be set aside.

 Place the tree in the pit and check the depth, the root plug should be just below ground level. If working as a pair, one person can backfill the soil carefully but firmly around the root plug while the other person holds the tree upright.

 Firm the top layer of soil or turf around the tree by using your heel take care not to scrape the tree.

 Give the tree a gentle tug. It should be firmly in place if not use your heel again to firm the top layer of soil until the tree is firmly in the ground.

For Sam Wilson, who has Cerebral Palsy, the Watchtree site has been inspirational, "Watchtree means a lot to me because it was the first place that I could go and feel normal without anyone saying "Eww look at her legs". It was also the first place that I got to ride a bike and have fun, but most importantly it was the first place where I met Ryan who had the YES she can do it attitude, not the oh I don't know attitude, he wouldn't let me fail he made sure I did it. These are only some of the reasons why I think the place is brilliant and why we should help Watchtree by planting more trees. I could go on for hours about their beautiful views, their friendly staff, and of course their gorgeous nature trail but I think you can agree seeing isn't believing, believing is seeing."



Parent View (<https://parentview.ofsted.gov.uk>)

gives you the chance to tell us and Ofsted what you think about your child's school.

Parent View asks for your opinion on 12 aspects of your

child's school, from the quality of teaching, to dealing with bullying and poor behaviour. Ofsted uses the information you provide when making decisions about which schools to inspect, as well as when to inspect.

By sharing your views, you'll be helping your child's school to improve. You will also be able to see what other parents have said about your child's school. Or, if you want to, view the results for any school in England.

Library Competition Winners

Chess Tournament 2013

Congratulations to Shane Warwick Yr11 who became our chess champion for the 2nd year in a row with Bradley Stoddart Yr8 winning the silver runner-up medal and Nick Cross Yr11 the bronze medals.

12 Words of Winter

Our students participated in a national competition to write a story in just 12 words. Side by side we offered a Nook e-reader as an internal school first prize. From the many witty, poignant and very clever entries Sophie Whitehead Yr9 was chosen as the winner after great deliberation. Scott Wilson Yr8, Robbie Ashworth Yr8 & Matthew Charlton Yr9 were all highly commendable runners-up.

Winner: *Decorations sparkle on the mystical tree with hope, dreams, love and peace.*

Santa signs contract with Prime Minister, that really is a Santa clause!

White snow and icy hail. The worst combination since Marmite and ale.

Snow fell softly along with her tears. Christmas and no soldier daddy.



Valentine's Day Lonely Hearts

The aim of this competition was to name the 15 book characters from the lonely heart advertisements. See if you can recognise these characters? Answers on at end of article.

1 White wizard (formerly grey), been there and back again, now ready to settle down. Make

my next fellowship a twosome! Civil partnership only, though – no rings!

2 Young, red-headed, investigative journalist WLTM someone to share adventurous trips around the world to explore with. Must like dogs and put up with company of vulgar, hard-drinking sea captain.

3 Amphibious character with more money than sense, in need of wife to assist country friends in keeping me out of trouble. Be my get-out-of-jail free card. Meet me at my country manor. Toot toot!

Very worthy winners were Annabel Gold & Aimee Salisbury Yr11 who had joined forces with their entry and the family effort of Brandon Potter Yr10 & Rowanne Potter Yr8 who came in second place. All received lots of sweet treats none other than Love Hearts.



World Book Day - Who is Coming to Dinner?

For our annual celebration of reading a different table was set for dinner with lots of props to provide clues as to which book character guest had been invited to dinner each day.

Characters included: Joe Spud from Billionaire Boy; Bruno from Boy in Striped Pyjamas; Katniss Everdeen from the Hunger Games; Bilbo Baggins from the Hobbit and the infamous Sherlock Holmes.

The winning students were Baillie Folden & Kerri-Ann Tremayne from Yr7 who each received a £5 National Book token.

Mrs Cruickshank

1. Gandalf 2. Tin Tin 3. Toad of Toad Hall



Bassenthwaite Trip

We arrived in the minibus at Dodd Wood where we looked at the different walking trails. We all chose the green trail which was the longest but we only walked part of it. After walking up some steep hills we came across a picturesque view. So here was the ideal opportunity for a group photo.

After the photo shoot we continued on our upward climb and saw a wire leading up to a shed set up as a trap specifically to catch grey squirrels which are classed as vermin unlike our natural red squirrels.

Later when we were walking around Bassenthwaite Lake (which we have been

learning about in class), Jordan actually spotted a grey squirrel and further along the way we came across a man who told us a lot about them. He said the red and grey squirrels don't always fight and that he once saw them playing together! We also saw the oak & conifer trees which we discovered take up to 30 years to grow fully.

Courtney Hayhoe & Sophie Whitehead YR9

Year 9 prior to this visit had been studying environmental issues around Bassenthwaite within Geography lessons. Students gave a presentation on the impact of tourism and farming on the water quality of the lake as well as visiting the lake on a field trip to see for themselves the woods, wildlife and lake that make up the ecosystem of Bassenthwaite.

Mr Millne

New School Website Launched

A few weeks ago saw the launch of our new school website, replacing the rather dated appearance of our old site with we hope you will agree a more modern and user friendly one. Initially we experienced issues with it being slow to load which hopefully we have now overcome.

Important Dates for your Diary	Monday 7 April	Yr8 L2L Humanities visit to Samye Ling monastery
	Wednesday 9 April	Spring Term ends
	Mon 7 - Wed 9 April	Work Life Balance week no after school clubs or detentions
	Wed 9 April	Yr7 - 10 Assessments and Interim reports posted home
	Wed 23 April	Summer Term starts
	Wed 23 April	Yr8 Razamataz Workshop
	Sat 26 - Sun 27 April	Survival Weekend
	Tuesday 29 April	Yr7 & 8 Parents Evening 4.15 - 6.30pm
	Mon 5 May	Bank Holiday school closed
	Mon 12 May	YR9 L2L Humanities Loweswater trip
	15 - 20 May	French Trip
	W/B Mon 19 May	Work Life Balance week no after school clubs or detentions
	Mon 19 May	GCSE exams begin
	Wed 21 - Fri 23 May	Yr10 Work Readiness
	Wed 21 - Fri 23 May	YR9 Core Exams
	Fri 23 May	School newsletter distributed
	Mon 26 - Fri 30 May	Half term holidays