

THIS WEEK AT ST FAITH'S

20 September 2019

For me, no occasion highlights the diversity of our community more than the new pupil lunches. On Monday, Mr Critchley, Jane and I sat down for lunch with this year's joiners in Years 5 to 8 and once again, our attention was drawn to the wide range of backgrounds of our fellow diners. Some came from local primary schools, a few from independent schools in London and the Home Counties and many from overseas, as far away as USA, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore. It made for a fascinating conversation and I came away feeling how fortunate we are to be in such a rich and eclectic environment. Thirty one different first

King's Ely Choral Day

On Tuesday thirty five members of our Senior Choir (in Years 5 and 6) attended the twelfth annual Choral Day at King's Ely. The day involved children from twelve schools who came together to rehearse and perform in the splendour of Ely Cathedral. Following a tour of the Cathedral and some invigorating warm-up exercises, the children rehearsed and performed as a mass choir, voices reverberating around the chambers of the ancient building. This was clearly a wonderfully enriching experience. Mr Gorick, Director of Music, commented, *'I have never heard 170 children sing so beautifully, thanks to the inspirational coaching of Lucy Joy Morris, Director of the boys of the National Youth Choir of Great Britain, who led the day. We are already looking forward to participating in next year's event.'*

languages were spoken in the school when we last surveyed the children two years ago.

School Committees

The newly elected School Council met for the first time on Tuesday. Pupils from Years 7 and 8 who wished to be considered for the Council prepared and delivered short presentations to their peers who then voted for their chosen representatives. During Tuesday's meeting, executive roles were discussed and offered, including Chairman, Treasurer, Secretary and Director of Communications (watch out Mr Mageean!). The first decision was to agree the use of the disaster fund to send aid to victims of hurricane Dorian in the Bahamas. Over the year, we look forward to hearing of the Council's ideas for school improvements and how they can make an impact on the wider community.

The new School Council, Eco Committee (Years 7 and 8) and Green Team (Years 5 and 6) were presented with their badges in assembly this week.

Activities

Activities got underway this week and what a range we have on offer this term - 87 different clubs to be exact, ranging from Astronomy to Yoga. When I walked around the clubs on several days this week, I came across Mr Mitchell explaining the basics of Chess, Miss Smith and a group of pupils making clay coasters, Mrs Oxborough challenging children to build the tallest possible structure out of spaghetti and Blue Tack, Mr and Mrs North teaching the next generation of gymnasts, Mrs Melville training the netballers, Dr Hoyle and a group of star gazers in our new observatory, Ms Allen and pupils working on improvisation in Drama, Senior Strings

and the Concert Band in their first rehearsals, Pre Prep children creating 3D cubes out of straws with Mrs Harmsworth and Miss Hendry teaching Year 2 how to cook (and devour) fruit kebabs. Here are a few photos I took along the way.

Sport

Congratulations to the sports teams that achieved so much success this week and a big thank you to the Sports Department who managed to relocate the rugby matches to The Leys and Shelford Rugby Club as the Latham Road pitches were too hard. On Wednesday afternoon I was at The Leys to see a fabulous, sun-drenched afternoon of rugby, culminating in one of the best prep school matches I have ever seen, when our U13A came from behind to beat an excellent Oakham side, 15-10. Thank you very much to The Leys and Shelford Rugby Club for allowing us to use their pitches.

More OF News

This week we were delighted to hear that OF Henry Robinson has been made School Captain (equivalent of Head Boy) at Uppingham. Henry's mum said of his latest accolade, *'Without a shadow of a doubt St Faith's gave Henry the proper tools, right values and self-belief to help him achieve his new role. St Faith's is a great school and I know Henry is very proud to be an OF - like his brother, father and uncle!'* Impressively, Henry's Chaucer class-mate, Walter Watson, and Joanna Saunderson (with whom Henry delivered the St Faith's Speech Day

address in 2015) have both been made Head Boy and Head Girl at The Leys as I reported at the beginning of term. Indeed, the tally of OFs from that year group who now hold such positions at their senior schools stands at five.

Jeans for Genes Day

Today the school was awash with denim to raise funds to support children with genetic disorders. I am delighted to report that we raised in excess of £461 for this very worthy cause, and of course the children (and staff) enjoyed the novelty of wearing denim with their usual school attire.

Finally..

A number of parents and children have been fortunate enough to spot the latest resident of St Faith's. A Muntjac deer appears to have set up home at the back of Tom's Garden, looking unfazed by the hubbub of our busy school life. It is not uncommon to have Muntjac on the site – Mollie and I often come across one when strolling around the grounds at weekends, but this Muntjac seems to have stayed longer than most. If it stays for much longer we may have to consider naming it! Any ideas?

With all good wishes,

Nigel Helliwell