

THIS WEEK AT ST FAITH'S

04 October 2019

This week, I was beaten at table tennis by Ollie, a boy in Year 4. I would like to say I was unlucky or the match was close, but the stark reality is that I was thrashed. Ollie beat me fair and square and there were plenty of his friends there to share in his palpable delight. My only consolation was that I was not the only victim of Ollie's table tennis prowess – many Year 8s couldn't resist the challenge of taking him on. All of them, like me, finished second best.

In true St Faith's spirit, however, there were no hard feelings, just an admiration of Ollie's hidden (until now) talent and a quiet determination to keep practising until the next time we meet him over the ping pong table.

Pupils' talents come to the fore in so many different ways during their time at St Faith's. As a parent once remarked to me, 'It feels like a journey of discovery as my child goes through the school.' Well, this week has been no exception as you can see from the summary of events and achievements in this newsletter.

Hockey

Last Saturday morning U10 teams from St Faith's, New Hall, Felsted and Kimbolton met at Latham Road for an U10 Hockey Tournament. Under sunny skies the girls played with great gusto and impeccable sportsmanship. Thank you to the many parents who came to support and to Mr Welch for organising such a splendid event.

Our U12 Hockey players were on great form on Tuesday at the County Cup where they came a very respectable 2nd and qualified for the Regional Finals in November; well done girls!

The Train to Impossible Places

On Monday, P G Bell kicked off his UK schools tour with a visit to St Faith's. He spoke to the children about the inspiration for his first book 'The Train to Impossible Places' which came from a series of bedtime stories he made up with his son. The children then had lots of fun creating their own imaginary trains, including what the trains would be carrying and where they would be going. Our personal favourite was a train full of books, run by unicorns, travelling to Old Trafford! Year 5 and 6 children were given the chance to ask insightful questions and later in the day had the opportunity to meet Peter in the Library to have their books signed.

Harvest Service

On Monday afternoon, Major Martin Cordner from the Salvation Army led our Harvest Festival. He thanked our pupils for their generous donations that have poured in to school over the past week and are now with the Salvation Army to give to those most in need. The Readers from the service are pictured below with Major Cordner just before the food donations were loaded in to the Salvation Army van. As part of the Harvest Festival service, the newly-formed Assembly Band accompanied the hymns. Comprised of a group of around 10 Year 8 musicians who have achieved around Grade 4/5, the Assembly Band are expected to arrive at assembly and cope with the pressure of performing with little preparation, simulating what life can sometimes be like as a professional musician. The band performed incredibly well at the Harvest service and I very much look forward to hearing them at future assemblies throughout the year.

Early Years Curriculum Presentation

Parents of our Foundation pupils gathered on Monday evening to hear about the Early Years Curriculum and specifically, the world of jolly phonics. The room was full of smiles and laughter as the Foundation teachers and Mrs Smith encouraged parents to act out 'rrrr' (the sound of a dog growling for 'r'), 'a,a,a,' (ants crawling up your arm for the sound of an 'a') and 'peh' (blowing out a candle for the sound of a 'p'). The many practical resources used in the classrooms were also on display for parents to investigate. The evening highlighted that learning is most effective when it is interactive and teachers and parents are working together for the good of the child. Thank you to everyone who took the time to attend.

First Eco Committee Meeting

The newly-elected Eco Committee met for the first time this week. The twelve new members elected a Chair, Deputy, Secretary, Green Team Manager, Pre Prep Co-ordinators and a Communications Director. The committee discussed in great detail their new 'Plastic Pledge' looking at how we can reduce our reliance on plastic both at school and at home. Amongst other things, they will also be working with the catering team to look at further ways to reduce pupil plate waste at lunch time.

Creative Writing

Two Year 6 pupils, Lanna and Saisha, recently attended a Creative Writing workshop at Rugby School having been selected through a national creative writing competition. Lanna and Saisha wrote the following delightful account of their day.

[Read the article](#)

Sailing Regatta

On Wednesday and Thursday members of our sailing squad represented St Faith's at the Independent Schools Inland Regatta at the Watersports Centre in Reading. Racing in RS Zest class boats on Wednesday our U11s, represented by Effie and Imogen, finished in a very respectable 3rd place. On Thursday, two U13 pairs competed in Feva class boats with Sam and Archie finishing 10th and Ewan and Lochie 16th. Very well done to our intrepid sailors and my thanks to Dr Hoyle and Mr Welch for accompanying the children at the event.

Wine Tasting for Makukhanye

Last Friday evening over 70 parents and staff enjoyed the delights of South African wines presented in tasting format by Noel Young Wines. This sociable evening raised over £1100 for Makukhanye, the township school in Jeffrey's Bay, South Africa, we have been supporting since 2003. My sincere thanks to Mr Welch, Karen Jones and Fiona Kidd for taking time out of their busy schedules to organise what was a wonderful event.

Weekend Events

We have another busy weekend ahead. After school today, twenty eight Year 7 pupils will bravely participate in our annual Poetry Recital, organised by the English Department and aptly timed to coincide with National Poetry Day this week. We anticipate a highly varied event with comic, tragic and dramatic poetry all on the line-up.

Tomorrow our U13 boys' football team will be competing in the IAPS Regional Qualifier at Old Malden in Surrey. On Sunday our U11 and U12 boys will be playing in rugby festivals at New Hall and Finborough respectively. I wish everyone taking part a great time.

And finally...

Trying to round up the Year 4 boys before the football fixture this week was not an easy task given their tremendous exuberance; for many this was clearly the highlight of their week. But we did and here is the pre-match photo of all the four teams just before they kicked off against The Perse. It was wonderful to see the boys from both schools clearly enjoying the thrill of playing an inter-school match.

With all good wishes,

Nigel Helliwell