

# THIS WEEK AT ST FAITH'S

01 November 2019

## Science and Technology Awards

On Wednesday evening, Dr Hoyle (Head of Engineering) and I had the pleasure of representing St Faith's at the 2019 *Cambridge Independent* Science and Technology Awards. It was one of those occasions when the City's high-tech beacon shone brightly and one couldn't help but be hugely impressed by the quantity and quality of people in Cambridge who are having a real impact on science and technology world-wide. St Faith's had been selected as finalists in the STEM Initiative of the Year category for our recent work in Science, Computing and Engineering. We didn't win an award (The Cambridge Science Festival and AstraZeneca claimed top prizes in this category) but it was an honour to be included in this prestigious event. It was uplifting to hear about the innovative and inspirational initiatives and meeting many of the people responsible for them. The whole evening highlighted the immeasurable benefits to the school of being situated in this forward-thinking city.

## AcE Day

Looking back a little further, Academic Extension Day provided a fitting end to the first half of the Michaelmas Term. Pupils in Years 3 to 8 enjoyed a rich and diverse range of activities designed to extend their recent classwork.

Dressed in an amazing array of costumes and jewellery, Year 3 immersed themselves in the world of Ancient Egypt.

Meanwhile the Year 4 Ancient Romans were in full glory thanks to imaginative costumes and well-designed activities. Pupils enjoyed a Roman banquet, learnt about the roles of slaves and masters, and practised Roman army battle formations, including spear throwing techniques!

In collaboration with Cambridge Science Centre, Year 5 spent the morning learning about what

it takes to be an astronaut. They tested Newton's laws of motion, experimented with ways to prevent liquids floating away in space and learnt how to control robotic arms. With a total switch of curriculum they spent the afternoon at the recently opened Cambridge Central Mosque. This unique prayer space fuses traditional and modern architecture, and has green credentials that reflect Islam's ideas of earth, soul and community care. Not only were Year 5 able to develop their understanding of Islam, they also gained an appreciation of sustainable architecture and design.

Rivers has been the topic for Year 6 geographers during the first half of term, so it was only fitting that this year group were to be found knee-deep in Hobson's Brook as they conducted a series of field-based surveys on the flow rate and depth changes of our local waterway.

Fast cars and dynamite was the theme of the day for Year 7 as they built and tested rocket cars in collaboration with Bloodhound Education. Working in pairs the children made small cars, focusing on symmetry and aero-dynamics, before testing these dynamite-fuelled vehicles on the tennis courts. The fastest cars reached almost 60mph and covered the length of the tennis courts in around three seconds!

Meanwhile Year 8 learnt essential first-aid skills with the school nurses, covering topics such as anaphylaxis, asthma, choking, burns, minor injuries and head injuries. For the remaining part of the day they had a presentation from a sports psychologist and began the process of producing their Yearbook.

## **Year 5 Science Sleepover**

As if Extension Day wasn't exciting enough, Year 5 had the additional adventure of returning to school on Thursday evening for the highly anticipated annual Science Sleepover. After arrival at school and the important ritual of setting out camp beds and sleeping bags in Ashburton Hall, the children spent their evening conducting flame tests in the science laboratories, participating in bat hunts and orienteering sessions outside in the dark and having a trampolining session in the Sports Hall. Everyone then convened in the dining room for a pizza supper (and birthday cake for Charlie and George!) before donning their pyjamas and settling down to watch a movie in the Drama Studio, happily snuggled in their sleeping bags.

After lights out the children then spent the night in the hall under the watchful eye of Mrs Price, Mrs Oxborough and Miss Butler; several other staff camped out in various classrooms in the Ashburton building. The following morning, the bleary-eyed Year 5s devoured a delicious

breakfast and then enjoyed further activities including making cheese in the science labs and meeting a range of exotic animals, including a python and a meerkat. At lunch time they headed home exhausted but clearly thrilled with their experience. My sincere thanks go to all the staff, particularly the event leader, Mrs Price, who so kindly gave up their evening, night and first morning of the school holiday to ensure that Year 5 had such a wonderful time.

## **Class Concerts**

This week, 'class concerts' were held during regular Music lessons in Years 3 to 8. These provide the opportunity for pupils to perform in a small, friendly setting. I called in to 4N's class concert this morning and heard a clarinettist, a percussionist, a violinist and several pianists. It was lovely to see the children clearly enjoying their music making and having the confidence to perform in front of their peers.

## **Halloween Lunch**

There was some spooky food on offer in the dining room yesterday as our catering team once again went Halloween crazy with the menu. Ghoulish dishes on offer included a Witches Broth soup (ham and pea); a brain dip (carved out pumpkin filled with hummus with fresh tortilla chips); and charcoal (of the edible variety) cupcakes with ghostly toppings. As always, thank you to Peter, Kevin and the Chartwells team for going the extra mile in delivering this delicious themed lunch.

## Finally...

I look forward to seeing you at this evening's SFPA Fireworks Display which, once again, is a sell-out with 900 people coming along to enjoy the biggest family event of the year. The evening should get the weekend off to a great start and hopefully there will even more to celebrate by the time the Rugby World Cup Final is over on Saturday morning.

With all good wishes,

Nigel Helliwell