

THIS WEEK AT ST FAITH'S

15 November 2019

Autumn Concert

After a week of cold and wet weather, last night's concert provided a welcome warm and uplifting experience for all who came to hear our many ensembles perform. We were treated to a feast for the ears! The concert's theme, pop and rock music, with a toe-tapping programme that included numbers by Led Zeppelin, Luis Fonsi, The Clash, Bruno Mars and Abba, reflected the relaxed and joyful attitude of our Music Department. From String Orchestra to Senior Brass, Woodwind Ensemble to Wyvern Voices, the variety of instruments and the quality of the musicianship on display was impressive, particularly given the fact that most of the ensembles have had only 7 or 8 rehearsals since coming together for the first time in September. As a fitting finalé, the Concert Band played a rousing Beatles melody that put many of us in the mood for the forthcoming Music tour to Liverpool in February. Given the talent of our young musicians and the quality of our Music staff, we have much to look forward to this year. My sincere thanks to Mr Gorick (Director of Music) and his colleagues for a fabulous evening.

[Video of the performance for current parents](#)

Remembrance Service

There was a more serene atmosphere on Monday, when our staff and pupils in Years 3 to 8 gathered together for the traditional St Faith's Remembrance Service in Ashburton Hall. This year, staff and pupils were piped into the service by parent, Mr Carnegie (many thanks to him) and we were also joined by Reverend Meharry, our Chaplain, who spoke to the children about the importance of remembering and the why the poppy is used as an emblem. Year 8 Prefects played a prominent role by laying wreaths and leading prayers and readings. Mr Brent read out the names of Old Fidelians who lost their lives in battle. Harriet D played the 'The Last Post' and 'The Reveille' (most skilfully), the Senior Choir performed, Natalie S sang Fauré's 'Pie Jesu' beautifully and we all observed a period of silence. Everyone united for the congregational singing, including a rousing rendition of the National Anthem accompanied by the assembly orchestra. Thank you to everyone who contributed to this memorable and moving occasion, including the four members of The Leys Combined Cadet Force who joined us for the service, dressed immaculately in their military uniforms.

Foundation Visit

This was the week when I welcomed each of three current Foundation classes to my study so that we could get to know each other better now that they have had 9 weeks to settle into the school. Multiple pairs of wide eyes greeted me as I opened my door and welcomed them in. After introductions the children were free to ask questions to me or Jane and, as usual, the children didn't hold back. 'What is your favourite colour?' (St Faith's red of course), 'What is your favourite meal?' (steak and chips) and 'What do you do all day?' (a question many might wonder). They also asked if I sleep in my office all night (not yet), if I have any brothers or sisters (two sisters), what makes me scared (heights) and who is my favourite superhero (I plumped for Spiderman having read a Spiderman book to my grandson recently). It was a delight to spend time with the Foundation children. One of the great pleasures of my job is getting to know our youngest pupils and watching them grow and develop as they progress through the school.

IAPS Engineering Course

On Tuesday Dr Hoyle (Head of Engineering) and I welcomed 32 teachers to the Hub for an IAPS (Independent Association of Prep Schools) course on how to introduce Engineering as a curriculum subject. The fully subscribed course attracted delegates who came from far and wide including Dulwich (London), Cheltenham College, Fettes (Edinburgh), Eagle House (Wellington College Prep, Berkshire), St Olave's (York), Foremarke Hall (Repton, Derbyshire) and The British School of Al Khubairat in Abu Dhabi. The course, now in its second year, focused on how to resource engineering in terms of time, space, materials and expertise and included a series of hands-on sessions for delegates to experience the engineering approach from the pupils' perspective. When we take in to account the delegates who have attended these

courses as well as the many visits from teachers to see our Engineering lessons in action (from the state and independent sector), I reckon that we have now helped and trained over 100 schools. The next IAPS Engineering course will be hosted here at St Faith's in May 2020. Our vision of Engineering becoming a curriculum subject in junior/prep schools is beginning to materialise.

1DH Class Assembly

Class 1DH entertained us on Wednesday morning with a delightful assembly focusing on this term's topic on pirates. As well as singing some hearty pirate songs, sharing facts about pirates and showing us pirate inspired pictures they had made in computing lessons, the children also re-told a delightful swashbuckling story, cleverly using shadow puppets to create mood and movement. Well done 1DH for providing such an entertaining start to the day.

Year 5 Production

Media of last week's Year 5 play is now available!

[PUBLIC GALLERY](#) [CURRENT PARENTS](#)

Book Fair

This week, in collaboration with local book shop, Heffers, the book fair has been held in the library and has been very busy indeed. In fact Miss Johnson, our Head Librarian calculates that over £2600 worth of books were sold by the end of school on Wednesday! The Pre Prep pupils have been very keen to get their hands on the latest Julia Donaldson story, *The Smeds and the Smoods*, while Years 3 and 4 have been most interested in acquiring books of a fantastical/magical nature. Older year groups have shown a particular interest in newly released titles including 'Explorers of Black Ice Bridge' by Alex Bell, a new edition of 'Northern Lights' by Philip Pullman and the second book in the 'Pages and Co' series by Anna James. The profits from the book fair will be put towards the purchase of additional books for our own library as well as those in local maintained primary schools.

Sports Round Up

Our top sports teams were on fine form this week. The U13 A Hockey girls won the County Cup and have qualified for the Eastern Region Championships. The U13 Boys' Rugby team continued their unbeaten season by winning at Bishop's Stortford 45-5.

The chess players also excelled themselves last Saturday in the second round of the Cambridgeshire Chess League matches, held at St Faith's. Not being able to contain his excitement, Mr Mitchell emailed me to inform me that the A Team had won 6-0 against one of main rivals ((I will let you work out who that is!). It is encouraging to know that the spirit of competition at St Faith's extends way beyond the sports pitches.

This coming weekend, 25 gymnasts from Years 4 to 8 will be competing at the ISGA 2-Piece Gymnastics Competition at the Royal Masonic School in Rickmansworth where over 500 gymnasts will be participating. We wish everyone taking part the very best of luck.

And finally...

Several parents commented to me about the beauty of the maple leaf tree that featured in the newsletter last week, and a few mentioned how much they appreciate the splendour of our huge copper beech tree too. So not to leave out our beloved copper beech, here is a picture I took when I was duty on Wednesday morning. It's autumn foliage is certainly a glorious sight; hopefully we will be able to enjoy it for a few more weeks before the great 'fall' which then keeps our groundsman, Sam, busy for more than a few days!

With all good wishes,

Nigel Helliwell

