

# THIS WEEK AT ST FAITH'S

## 29 November 2019

I had my first sighting of a Christmas themed lesson this week. I called in to Mrs Harmsworth's Year 1 class to deliver a birthday card and the children were busy writing about Mary and Joseph. It might not be December yet, but the Christmas season is almost here at St Faith's and the final two weeks of term will see a flurry of festive events. The Senior Singers (almost 70 in number now, pictured above) were rehearsing with great enthusiasm and joy when I called in to the Hall this morning, so we look forward to hearing them in the upcoming Carol Services.

Today, you should receive a message (using our new communication system!) from Mr Mageean detailing the major forthcoming Christmas events, which we hope you find useful in your planning. It is a very special time of the year in school and we hope that you will be able to join us for one or more of the Christmas events.

Please note that all parents and family members are invited to the Carol Services on the final day of term – 13th December. The Pre Prep Christmas Service will take place in the morning (11:00-11:30) and two School Carol Services in the afternoon (Bentley and Chaucer at 13:30, Latham and Newton at 14:40).

Speaking of Christmas events, next Friday (6th Dec) our catering team will be busy making delicious foods for the German Christmas Market in the Dining Room during breakfast. I am rather partial to Stollen, so will be definitely calling in. And let's not forget the SFPA Christmas Fair, also next Friday, from 15:00 to 18:00 in Ashburton Hall; there will be lots of stalls to buy Christmas presents and plenty of fun and games for the children including, of course, the annual visit from Santa.

## Music and Drama Exams

Speaking of Santa, we thought he had arrived early this year. The school has been buzzing with the nervous excitement of music exams this week, ranging from violin to flute and clarinet to euphonium with some children sitting their first Grade 1 exams and others performing as high as Grade 6. Given the time of year, it was quickly spotted by staff and pupils alike that the examiner bore an uncanny resemblance to Father Christmas. So there you go – proof at last what the man in red gets up to throughout the year – he is a music examiner!

Also this week, 31 pupils took their New Era Academy Speech and Drama exams, ranging from poetry and prose recital to Shakespeare and mime. Judging from the impressive performances at last Friday's Speech and Drama Tea-Time Recital, our pupils are well prepared and should

do very well. We look forward to receiving the results of the Music and Drama exams next term.

## Academic Activities

Pupils in a Year 8 class have been looking at satirical writing from Horace through Jonathan Swift, Jane Austen and political cartoons. The pupils then had a go at writing satirical articles for themselves; three examples – by Ava, Emily and Harriet - are included in the side bar of this newsletter for you to see. They should not be seen as the school's endorsement of any particular political view!

Many congratulations to four of our Year 6 pupils – Ryan, Alexander, Henry and Chenning - who were awarded Gold in the recent National Primary Maths Challenge. The Primary Mathematics Challenge is a set of numerical conundrums aimed at Year 6. Answering the questions does not depend on mathematical knowledge alone, but on the ability to think things through, be logical and find ways to solve problems. This [link](#) will give you a chance to look at past papers as well as the answers.

Yesterday saw the final SuperSTEM Pre Prep after-school activity for the term. With help from Dr Fox, Mrs Kwok and Mrs Bates, the children made 'scribble bots' and had a wonderful time creating the 'scribbles', as you can see from the photos.

## Year 3 Visit Fitzwilliam Museum

On Tuesday Year 3 visited the Fitzwilliam Museum to enrich their term's work on the Ancient Egypt. Following a talk about the exhibition, the children were then allowed to explore the amazing artefacts on display, including jewellery worn by Ancient Egyptians and some of the toys and games played during that period of history.

## Newton Nibbles

This week pupils in Newton House have been raising money through Christmas themed biscuit and cake sales at break times. Nothing seems to inspire our pupils to part with their pocket money more than the opportunity to forgo a healthy break time snack in preference for a sweet treat. Well done to Newton who raised over £70 for their chosen charity, Mathieson Music School in Kolkata.

## Sports Round-up

Last Saturday our gymnasts were once again on form, this time at the national IAPS gymnastics finals at Kent College, Pembury. After a long and busy day our teams left with three national titles - U9 boys, U11 Boys and U13 Girls - as well as three individual titles - Hannah (U11), Max (U11) and Jake (U9). The best news of the day, however, and the one that got Mr North the most excited, was that St Faith's was awarded the Best Combined Points score trophy as a school and therefore was deemed the overall top UK prep school for gymnastics. What a day! Very well done to everyone who took part and thank you, once again, to Mr and Mrs North and Miss Butler for all their excellent work in training our gymnasts.

On Wednesday, the U11 rugby team travelled to Brentwood School for an IAPS rugby tournament. Despite the wet and muddy conditions, the boys played very well and finished in 3rd place overall (out of 10 teams).

This week has seen many of the sports seasons reach a fitting climax on the hockey pitches (girls) and rugby pitches (boys). House matches have also taken place; these create a wonderful level playing field for our pupils who are able to leave behind their places in specific teams and instead represent their house in often highly competitive and exciting games. Thank you to the parents who braved the often unpleasant weather conditions to offer their support - it really does make a difference to our players when they are being cheered on.

## Finally...

The main aim of our sports curriculum is to encourage participation and develop a healthy lifestyle, but I can't let the moment pass without mentioning the remarkable success of our top U13 rugby (boys) and hockey (girls) teams. They played their final regular matches as St Faith's teams this week before they turn their attention to netball (girls) and hockey (boys) next term. Both sides are unbeaten in regular inter-school fixtures for the past two years. The girls won the IAPS National Hockey Championships last year and the boys have won all but two of their fixtures in the past 5 years, including all their matches in the national rugby finals two years ago. Their individual talents and outstanding teamwork, combined with great dedication and determination, have produced performances which our staff will remember for a very long time. I commend the many pupils who have played for these rugby and hockey teams over the years and of course, their talented and dedicated coaches. As one parent emailed Mr Johnson this week, *'It's been a real joy to watch the team flourish and be so keen to do well under your leadership. Your calm creativity and positivity throughout has been a wonderful life lesson for*

*them all. And made for some amazing memories for the team and for the spectators.'*

With all good wishes,

Nigel Helliwell