

THIS WEEK AT ST FAITH'S

13 March 2020

In a week which has been dominated by Coronavirus, I am pleased to be able to report plenty of positive and uplifting news, including a most remarkable achievement in Cheltenham last Friday when our U13 boys' hockey team won the IAPS National Championships. The day itself was thrilling but not without great drama. After drawing with the Scottish champions, Cargilfield, in their first match, the boys went on to finish top of their group and then had two nerve jangling penalty flick deciders in the knock-out stages before narrowly beating Taunton in the final. We think that this team is the first to win both the U13 and U11 (two years' ago) national championships. When I spoke to Mr Thompson afterwards, he was quick to commend the resilience, determination and team spirit of the side. When I chatted to the parents they praised the quality of coaching from Mr and Mrs Thompson and Mr Welch. It is indeed true that to win a national competition such as this requires both highly talented players and coaches working together, so my sincere congratulations to everyone and thank you to our merry band of supporters who travelled all the way to the West Country to cheer on the team. It proved to be day that the boys and their parents and coaches will always remember.

National Maths Challenge Results

This week, the results of the bonus round of the National Mathematics Challenge arrived. You may remember that in November, Year 6 pupils took part in the initial round, along with 66,500 others of the same age in the UK; the top 2,500 scorers were then invited to take part in a bonus round last month. Four of our students had this honour – many congratulations to Ryan, Chenning, Henry and Alexander who all performed very well. Particularly well done to Ryan who was one of only 195 pupils to be awarded a gold medal! Here is the paper just in case you are tempted to have a go yourself! <http://www.primarymathschallenge.org.uk/downloads>

House Music

The finals of House Music Competition took place on Monday evening. The standard of performances from the 38 children who took part was simply amazing. From Grade 1 violin in the Junior Competition to Grade 7 trombone in the Senior contest, the range of repertoires was varied and hugely entertaining. The adjudicator, James Randle, Director of Music at King's College School, was very complimentary about the breadth of talent and the quality of the musicianship on display. My sincere thanks to Mr Gorick and the Music Department for coordinating such a wonderful event and to our Music teachers too, for inspiring and teaching

our musicians so well. While Music was the ultimate winner of the event, there were of course awards in each age category, so I congratulate in particular the three winners: Juniors - Oscar (Violin), Intermediates - Ryan (Piano) and Seniors - Oscar (Trombone).

Princess and the Pea

In the midst of a difficult week for many, Year 1 provided half an hour of pure joy on Thursday afternoon. Bold, confident acting, charming songs and impressive musical performances had the audience enthralled as the children re-told the classic story of Hans Christian Andersen's *The Princess and the Pea*. The slick production oozed enjoyment and vitality, and was a great credit to the Year 1 teaching staff who enabled all the children to create such a memorable performance. It is occasions such as this that staff, parents and grandparents will treasure for a very long time.

Passover Meal

As part of the Year 5 study of Judaism, pupils gained first-hand experience of a Passover meal on Tuesday. We were pleased to welcome Debbie Thain to talk to the children about how she and her family celebrate Passover, and the children were able to make and taste some parts of the meal.

Year 8 Art Trip

Year 8 pupils not participating in rehearsals for the summer production of *High School Musical* were back at the Castle Fine Art gallery on Tuesday to learn the outcomes of their submitted pieces of art. If you recall, the pupils visited the gallery in February to gain inspiration for the pieces on display. Subsequently, they have spent the past few weeks creating their own pieces back at school. All the art submitted was of an impressive standard. The overall winner, whose artwork will be displayed in the gallery, was Louisa, with second and third place being awarded to Elizabeth and Harry.

Sports Round-Up

On Monday our U13 and U12 Girls' netball teams were in action at Felsted School in the IAPS

East Region qualifiers. Thanks to amazing skills and team work the U13 girls won their first group then beat Old Buckenham Hall 21-2 in the Quarter-final, Langley 21-5 in the Semi-final and Felsted 10-6 in the Final. The U13 team will now compete in the National Finals at Bryanston School, Dorset on 21st March. Our U12 girls finished in 5th place, also with some excellent performances. Mrs Melville, Head of Netball was absolutely delighted with the performance of both teams. Very well done everyone!

The U12 boys' hockey team performed very well to finish runners-up in this week's East Region Finals – very well done to them. Meanwhile our triumphant U13 Boys' hockey side were back in action, this time winning the England Hockey In2 Eastern Championships yesterday, a national competition for both independent and state schools. The U13 finals will be played at Beeston Hockey Club in May.

And Finally...

Year 5 pupils are currently studying the Solar System in Science. This week they had the opportunity to be space explorers for the day using our Virtual Reality headsets. When I popped in to see our home-grown astronauts in action I was reliably informed that the views of Earth from one of the space stations are amazing!

With all good wishes

Nigel Helliwell