

THIS WEEK AT ST FAITH'S

27 November 2020

One of the wonderful aspects of working in a school is the unpredictability of every day. On Tuesday, when I used a moment in between meetings to deliver a birthday card, I came across a caravan of camels in Tom's Garden! Not the kind of animal you expect to see in Cambridge but despite the chilly weather and unusual surroundings, our native camels were full of enthusiasm and excitement - as they rehearsed scenes for the forthcoming Pre Prep Nativity!

Yes, Christmas is approaching! Despite the different circumstances in which we find ourselves this year, we are still very much looking forward to celebrating the Festive Season. 'Tis the season to be jolly careful' remarked the Prime Minister this week. Careful, we will continue to be, and we will be doing everything we can to be jolly too. The lead up to Christmas is a very special time in school and I am sure that our children, despite the restrictions, will make the most of their time here over the next two weeks. Film-making is going on apace, so that the whole school and parents will be able to share in the School's Christmas spirit. Details of some of the planned events, including the charities we are supporting this Christmas, are in the side bar of this newsletter. Whilst this is not quite the Christmas we hoped for at the beginning of 2020, there is much to look forward to and, who knows, the slightly different events may present some lovely unpredictable moments and unexpected benefits. I hope so.

Literature

I encountered another unpredictable moment when I passed a Year 7 classroom this week, and was struck by the powerful and moving writing on display. Year 7 have been studying Macbeth in English lessons, reading the play, navigating unfamiliar phrases and learning that if they read what they see, the words become more recognisable to modern ears. The work has involved the exploration of characters, and specifically, how different motivations drive their actions and their weaknesses can be exploited. Themes of ambition, loyalty and deceit have been examined and pupils have re-written Shakespeare's famous soliloquies for the modern world, with often a good pinch of humour as you can read in the Index.

Meanwhile Year 5 have been reading 'The Firework Maker's Daughter' and have used words from the text to generate their own poems about fire, with some beautiful firework illustrations to accompany their poems. Here are some examples.

Watercolour Art

This term in Art lessons, Year 6 have been studying the work of landscape impressionist Heaton Cooper, and learning to apply paint to create depth and atmosphere. This week they have practised painting trees using tonal variation to depict light and shade.

School Council

The new members of the School Council (4 from Year 7 and 4 from Year 8) met virtually recently for the important election of roles and responsibilities. The new committee members maturely put themselves forward, thoughtfully nominated each other and gracefully conceded. Congratulations to Henry (Chair), Matthew (Secretary), Noah (Treasurer) and Danielle (Communications) – I am sure you will do a great job. The new team then thanked the previous Council and confirmed that they intend to proceed with a number of initiatives that were 'put on ice' during lockdown. The Council will meet again next week and in due course, I very much look forward to hearing their ideas for future school improvements.

Sports Update

The lack of inter-school fixtures has provided more time for the pupils to learn other sports. On School Field this week, and clearly relishing every second, girls and boys were charging across the pitches playing lacrosse, not a sport often seen gracing the playing fields of St Faith's! This, and other sports such as badminton, basketball and mixed rugby and the highly popular ultimate frisbee, have been covered in PE lessons for Years 3 to 8 and have proved to be enjoyable and valuable in exposing our pupils to sports they may otherwise not have played.

https://youtu.be/HWGL0_Ny_jA

One parent email, received this week, remarked , *'The sport staff have all been brilliant this term providing such a variety of sporting activities. We are really grateful to you all for going that extra mile to keep the kids occupied in the absence of competitive, inter school fixtures. St Faith's really has been a shining light in globally dark times and the 'can do' attitude of all the staff has been palpable'*.

Cricketer Top 50

I am delighted to announce that for the third consecutive year, and directly as a result of our 'Sports For All' ethos, we have been included in The Cricketer Schools Guide as a 'Top 50 Prep School'. Entries were judged and selected against an extensive set of criteria, including a compelling commitment to cricket for all in the curriculum, facilities, fixture programmes and coaching. The Cricketer magazine editor, Simon Hughes said: *'This year's Schools Guide is particularly important in showcasing our schools who have kept the game alive through a very challenging summer.'*

[You can see the full list of schools here](#)

Finally...

Has lockdown had you craving things you might be missing? Are your taste buds tantalised by the merest thought of certain seasonal delicacies? Has your newly-found spare time led you to explore your inner bard? This certainly seems to be the case for Arthur in Year 7 who, after reading Macbeth in class, wrote a modern day monologue. His muse? A favourite of mine - the Chorizo sausage!

What's this I see before me?

A hot sizzling apparition of BBQ perfection?

The thin skin of the Spanish Chorizo sausage, sizzling from the heat of the charcoal beneath

Spicy paprika melting into the soft oozing flesh as it splits

Meaty, hearty and full of flavour

So tempting, so real

Why are you only a vision in my mind?

What mean tricks you play with me

My hunger pains me to the death

My soul cries out for those Summer days long lost

Is this lockdown madness that cheats my brain?

Have I forgotten the warm sounds of friends and family in the garden?

Was it the Summer of 2019?

The sun breaks through my shutters

Awaking me from this horror

Another cold, grey morning stirs

Fear not, the chorizo is replaced by

The wafting of golden pancakes from the kitchen below!

Whatever food is tempting you for your Friday evening supper, I wish you a pleasant weekend.

With all good wishes,

Nigel Helliwell