

# THIS WEEK AT ST FAITH'S

## 4th December 2020

Christmas has arrived at St Faith's! Trees have been put up and decorated around the site, classrooms are festooned with tinsel and bunting and rumours circulate that the man in red may be making an appearance next week. The Chamber Choir has been practising feverishly for their recorded Carol Service which we will be sharing with you next week and Head Chef, Kevin, has placed his orders for plenty of roast potatoes and Brussel Sprouts to accompany next week's Christmas lunches. While not our normal run up to the end of the Michaelmas term, excitement levels are high and there is a buzz of anticipation across the school, all helped by the arrival of snow this morning!

## Advent Service

On Monday we marked the beginning of the Christmas season by holding the whole school Advent Service, this time virtually thanks to the magic of *Microsoft Teams*. Reverend Coleman, our Chaplain, told a lovely Advent story, and our two youngest pupils – Célia and Rayan – lit the first candle on the Advent wreath. I am delighted to report that for the first time in many years the lighting of the candle passed without incident. In previous years, much to the amusement of the children and staff, we have experienced matches and candles that refuse to light and even children inadvertently blowing out the candle instead of the match! This year Célia, Rayan and all the equipment worked perfectly and every class across the school was able to enjoy this special moment at the beginning of Advent.

## Pre Prep

This week saw the release of two Pre Prep films, a culmination of several weeks of hard work and creativity by the children and staff in Foundation and Year 2, as well as some very skilful film production by Mr Kucevicius, our Marketing and Admissions Assistant.

On Wednesday we watched the **Foundation Nativity**, 'A Christmas Treasure Hunt'. Filmed in our classrooms and around the school grounds last week, this virtual take on a traditional nativity allowed every child in Foundation to be a part of the re-telling of the Christmas story. As is typical of this type of performance there were a number of delightful, unscripted moments, as well as a cameo role for everyone's favourite sheep dog, Ralph!

[Available to view for current parents](#)

Not to be outdone, **Year 2** put on a most memorable Pantomime, *Pirates versus Mermaids*, which was shared with pupils and families yesterday. Surprise scenes (including some splashing images!), confident acting, lots of great humour, clever use of filming and some lovely singing made for a most entertaining show. This was one occasion when we didn't mind the 'aaaaarr' level being high!

[available to view for current parents](#)

<https://youtu.be/JYK5Gawe12A>

This week, Foundation pupils enjoyed their last PE lesson of 2020 in the Sports Hall on Tuesday by working together with a parachute. They 'made popcorn' as they propelled balls around the parachute, before 'washing their smelly socks' as children were spun round in the middle. Finally they turned the parachute into a giant tent by flapping it up and down. Clearly everyone involved enjoyed the session.

## Engineering

At this point in the term many year groups are testing out the fruits of their labours in the Engineering workshop. There were cheers of joy (and one or two of frustration) as pupils put their various inventions through vigorous testing regimes.

Year 6 were trying out the range of their catapults by firing missiles at a mock castle. In true engineering style, there were frenetic modifications in between each test as pupils tried to improve their weapons. I am sure Year 6 parents will be looking forward to the pupils bringing home their catapults for some entertaining family games over Christmas!

Also on an airborne theme, Year 7 have been studying the principles of flight and have made their own rockets which they tested outside on Tuesday afternoon. Their compressed air propelled projectiles shot off so fast and high it was almost impossible to capture them in flight. The most successful rockets travelled well over 35m into the air, to great cheers from their inventors.

Year 8 have been continuing their 'Make it Move' challenge, designing their own model vehicles which they have then been working out how to power. From balloon powered cars to wind turbine and sail driven cars, there has been no end to the creativity on display. The design, test and refine strategies will continue into next term.

<https://youtu.be/a8yG0MA-sC4>

## Humanities

Year 6 Humanities classes have been measuring pollution levels in Hobson's Brook this week. Using water samples from four different sites along the Brook, each class measured turbidity (how clear the water is), the percentage of dissolved oxygen and the pH of the water. The results suggested that Hobson's Brook is fairly healthy, although the percentage of dissolved oxygen caused the classes some concern. The pupils are now considering what we can do to conserve water and protect our streams and rivers.

Year 7 pupils have been making volcano models of Mount Etna, with the aim of displaying useful and interesting information about this well know natural feature.

## Drama

As the introduction to the carol service film was being recorded, I couldn't help overhear children performing in the Drama Suite so I popped in to have a look. Here is a clip I took as a Year 5 class were rehearsing 'Roal Dahl's Revolting Rhymes'.

<https://youtu.be/7XzEKgNCDtI>

## Finally

As I welcomed pupils to the school this morning, I was struck by how even the slightest snowfall raises the spirits of children. There were even more smiles and chirpy 'good mornings' today, many of whom arrived on bike or on foot and didn't seem at all affected by the wintry weather!

With all best wishes

Nigel Helliwell