

THIS WEEK AT ST FAITH'S

26th March 2021

As one parent remarked to me at the school gate this week, 'It's been a funny term – in both senses of the word.' It certainly has. Funny, unusual, with such a long period of home learning and funny, amusing, as children, parents and staff have celebrated the full re-opening of school. As we reach the end of a term that I hope will never be repeated, I would like to express my sincere thanks to everyone – children, staff and parents – for your fortitude, resilience and positivity in what has been a challenging time for our community. What the future holds, who knows, but there is certainly a bright light shining at the end of the tunnel – and I do believe that it is not a train coming towards us! There is real hope now that we are through the worst and slowly but surely, restrictions will be lifted and many of the things we used to take for granted will return. With the winter behind us and the weather warming, we have much to look forward to and I know that children and staff are looking forward to enjoying the Summer Term on our green and spacious site.

Oxford University Computing Challenge Champion

Speaking of bright lights, this week, we heard the wonderful news that Ryan, in Year 7, won his age category in the Oxford University Computing Challenge, in which 68,000 pupils from 50 countries took part. Competitors were asked to solve a series of challenging coding tasks against the clock. To finish top of this international competition is a truly outstanding achievement and a great credit to Ryan's talent for coding and Mr Mitchell's teaching and support. Well done Ryan – we are very proud of you.

Off Timetable Day

On Wednesday, children in Years 3 to 8 enjoyed a day free from their usual timetables. In recognition of how hard the term has been for both pupils and teachers, activities were designed to enable the children enjoy the simpler things in life with their friends and to promote wellbeing.

Year 3 and 4 pupils made 'Switch-Off' posters to be displayed around the school to remind everyone to turn off devices for *Switch-off Fortnight*, with the message 'Save Energy, Save the Planet, Save Money!' Mindfulness activities featured prominently too and some classes took the opportunity of creating and writing Easter cards which will be delivered to elderly people living on their own in Cambridge.

The Year 6 Green Goblin team were delighted to spend the day building their latest go-kart, under the experienced eyes of Mrs Oxborough and Mr Hasell; one group was found in Ashburton Courtyard washing one of our older cars in the sunshine.

Meanwhile, the Sports Faculty ensured that physical wellbeing was taken care of as pupils enjoyed playing netball, mini-cricket, rowing, and girls football. Wherever I roamed on Wednesday, I was greeted by the sounds of laughter and joyous faces and there was a lovely, relaxed feel across the site.

House Matches

Staying on the subject of sport, it has been great to hear the excitement created by the House netball and hockey matches and a joy to see competitive sport taking place after such a long break from fixtures.

Maths Easter Egg Hunt

An annual Year 5 Maths Easter Egg Hunt took place yesterday. Applying their mathematical problem solving skills, the children hunted down clues to solve the locations of the hidden treats. In previous years, Mollie, our dog, has found several of the undiscovered eggs as we walked her around the school grounds during the Easter break. This year the children were so successful in their searches that we think there are none left for Mollie – we shall see!

Pre Prep

On Tuesday, Foundation pupils enjoyed making animal habitat boxes after a pupil in Miss Hendry's class asked to have a day focused on animals. The children created the habitats in groups demonstrating good teamwork – the start of their engineering education! They went on to solving mathematical animal problems (e.g. if a leopard has 4 legs, how many would 3 have?) and enjoyed a whole day based on animals, which proved highly popular with the children.

Joining in with the off-timetable theme on Wednesday, Pre Prep enjoyed an eco and wellbeing day. The children made wind socks, visited the Wild Place in Tom's Garden and learnt yoga exercises.

Easter Service

This afternoon we held our traditional whole-school Easter Service, this time of course, virtually. Year 8 pupils, Sam and Ella, provided the readings while James played Cradle Song: No. 3 from Suite of the Zhuang People's Village, Ni Hongjin, and Sofi sang Pie Jesu Faure. Reverend Coleman told a lovely story based on the Easter Christian message. Whilst it is disappointing that we still can't meet, this virtual service provided a good opportunity for the school to reflect on the significance of Easter.

[Current parents can watch the full easter service here](#)

<https://youtu.be/PIPsoBNnbhk>

Summer Term

The arrangements for the beginning of next term will be the same as those for the end of this term, unless Government guidance changes in the meantime, in which case I will be in touch prior to the start of term, to outline any impact on St Faith's. Naturally, we very much hope that the Summer Term will bring a relaxation of Covid restrictions and a resumption of some normal events and activities but this will, of course, depend on the progress of the pandemic and the national directives placed on schools. At St Faith's we will continue to deliver as broad and rigorous education as possible whilst doing everything we can to ensure the safety and wellbeing of our community.

As a reminder, pupils will have the option of wearing summer or winter uniforms on the days that they do not have a PE or Games lesson next term. The [uniform shop](#) remains available for online orders.

Finally ...

To mark the pure joy of pupils and staff being reunited after the school closure this term, Mrs North engaged every member of the St Faith's community to take part in a dance video, to the widely popular *Jerusalem*.

Coincidentally, our partner school in South Africa, Makukhanye, shared their own take on the Jerusalem dance. I think you will be able to draw your own comparisons of dancing skills on display, but there can be no doubting the *joie de vivre* evident on the faces of all participants at both schools. What a lovely way to connect despite the thousands of miles between us.

<https://youtu.be/mCQzEA9tM9E>

[CURRENT PARENTS CAN Watch THE FULL VIDEO HERE](#)

I wish you and your family a happy and restful Easter.

With all good wishes,

Nigel Helliwell