

THIS WEEK AT ST FAITH'S

21st May 2021

'Life's not about waiting for the storm to pass...It's about learning to dance in the rain', remarked the British writer Vivian Greene. Despite the frequent downpours this week, the St Faith's positive spirit has enabled school activities to continue unabated and I have sensed a tangible increase in the pace of life as the gradual transition to 'normality' continues. As several of our international families have pointed out to me as they collected their children in the middle of a storm, coping with the weather is all part of living here and well, we just have to get on with it! Or as another parent commented to me this week, recalling that well known quote, *'There's no such thing as bad weather, only unsuitable clothing'*.

I was reminded of the stoic nature of British life in bad weather, when, as is the norm at the moment, the heavens opened just as I was about to begin my traffic duty at 3.15pm on Monday. I donned my winter overcoat and hat and armed with the largest umbrella I could find, began to direct the patiently waiting cars around the corner of Newton Road. As the sky turned black, thunder bellowed overhead and monsoon rain fell, a parent cycled past me, wading through the puddles, wearing just a t-shirt and jeans, looking absolutely drenched. She turned to looked at me, raised one hand in the air in exasperation and we both laughed – a lovely exchange in a week when many of us were caught out by the unpredictable and changeable weather.

Nature

Gardeners and farmers have, of course, been dancing in the rain this week. Our Eco Committee were also delighted to see the significant growth of the 50 tree saplings that were planted earlier this term, when they checked them this week. Over the next two years, our pupils will act as carers for the mini Oaks, Maples, Hornbeams and Wild Cherry trees, before they are moved as more substantial trees in to the local community.

Speaking of caring, Year 2 have been studying life cycles and food chains and during their minibeasts topic work, have had the pleasure of nursing tiny caterpillars through metamorphosis. This process has been extraordinary for the children to watch and ponder, and the excitement when the butterflies emerged could be heard throughout Southfield. The beautiful butterflies were released and although shy to begin with and not wanting to leave in a hurry, they bravely flew away to enjoy the splendours of our school grounds.

Green Flag

Staying on the eco theme, this week, we heard that for the sixth successive year, St Faith's has been awarded the Eco Schools Green Flag. The judge who assessed the school's application wrote to Miss Gamble (Eco Coordinator) to say, *'I would also like to take this opportunity to say thank you for continuing to work on your Eco-Schools Green Flag during these unprecedented times - it is a true reflection of your school's determination to make a real difference. Please*

pass on my thanks to your Eco-Committee'. Indeed, I congratulate Miss Gamble and her Eco Committee on this great achievement.

Engineering

Since the start of the term, Year 8 have been studying film storyboards, specifically commercials and how engineering methods are used in the filming of product adverts. Pupils were tasked with choosing a product, drawing up a storyboard that focused on its unique selling point, and then recording their advert on video. As editing was not allowed, the key challenge was capturing everything in one take – requiring a great deal of problem solving. I was blown away by the effort put in by the children; one group built a camera trolley to capture a smooth film angle of their lemon sweet, while another group used string to rotate their half pizza, half cake product on a spinning platform – an idea that would be difficult to get approval from our Head Chef, Kevin. This short film demonstrates Year 8 going to great lengths to capture their 'perfect shot'!

<https://youtu.be/44dcyoyWHOI>

Inuit Art

This week, Year 5 have been sewing on the finishing touches to their art boutiques. After studying the work of Kenojuak Ashevak, a leading figure of Inuit art who was inspired by her environment and dreams to create beautiful art. The children then designed their own image based on her work. They used batik, a process where hot wax is applied to cloth in order to create a border which prevents the ink from 'bleeding'. The children then embellished their cloth with needlework using simple stitches such as running, back, blanket and chain. The results are fantastic and have given the children a real insight into Inuit culture and artwork.

<https://youtu.be/gIP0rMIEjI0>

Finally...

What are your memories of school? Bunsen burners? Egg and spoon races? Or perhaps making and throwing paper aeroplanes?! Well, this week, Year 1 have been creating life-long memories by learning about flight, making their own paper planes (and helicopters) and of course, the best bit - testing them in their classrooms. As part of their topic on aviation, they have learnt about hot air balloons, modern aircraft and satellites. They also enjoyed a virtual meeting with Felicity's Grandad who spoke to the children about his role in the world of aviation and answered their many questions.

Wishing you an enjoyable and relaxing weekend.

Nigel Helliwell