

THIS WEEK AT ST FAITH'S

25th June 2021

Wednesday this week was *National Thank a Teacher Day*. This may have passed you by as it did for me, but when I learnt about it (in an email from the Department for Education yesterday), it did make me reflect on how thankful I am to our teachers for their work over the past year or so. Teaching is a challenging job at the best of times (as many parents and grandparents discovered this year) but the past eighteen months have required extraordinary efforts and commitment. Our teachers have risen to the unexpected challenges they have faced with a collective determination and thanks their talent, team work and huge efforts, we have been able to deliver a continuous broad and rigorous education throughout the year. I believe that when the dust has settled and we have time to reflect on the Covid pandemic, the accomplishments of our teachers and indeed all our staff this year, will be seen as some of the most impressive in the school's history. In this penultimate newsletter of the year, therefore, I salute each and every member of staff for their amazing work and thank them sincerely for enabling our pupils to make such pleasing progress this year, despite the challenging circumstances.

Young Scientist of the Year

A good example of teachers going the extra mile is the support Mrs Price and Miss Gamble have provided to James B in his recent Science competition entry. You may recall from a previous newsletter that James in Year 8 reached the final of the *Big Bang!* – the competition for the Young Scientist of the Year. Well, this week, the final was held, and I am delighted to tell you that James won! James, together with two friends and Mrs Price (Head of Science), watched the live-streaming of the event on Wednesday afternoon, and when the surprise news that he had won was announced, party poppers, balloons and excited cheering filled the Science lab. This is a significant achievement in a major national science competition – the first time for a St Faith's pupil – and we are thrilled.

James' independent research focused on the anti-microbial properties of a variety of mouthwashes. All five finalists were interviewed by a panel of scientists. The film below, made for the final by the event organisers, provides an insight in to James' research. Our warmest congratulations to James, who is still in shock and working out how he is going to spend his prize money!

<https://youtu.be/z0NvINQPCNo>

National General Knowledge Final

Yesterday our Year 6 General Knowledge Team was in action in the final of the National Quiz Club Championships, having qualified through the regional round earlier this term. The 22 schools in the final were tested with questions such as, '*Which element has the chemical symbol W*' and, '*In Tolkein's The Fellowship of the Ring, how many companions initially made up the fellowship?*' Half way through the hour long quiz, our team was placed first, and after a series of challenging questions in the final round, we finished an impressive 3rd overall. Very well done to Alexander, Navya, Alice and Oliver who represented the school so well throughout this enjoyable competition.

Move-up Morning

The school was abuzz yesterday with the sound of excited children as they discovered their new classes, Tutors and, for Year 2 pupils, Houses from September. This year, the usual format of welcoming external new pupils has not been possible. Nevertheless, our current children were delighted to spend some time getting to know their new Tutors for the forthcoming academic year.

Pre Prep Fun Day

Today, Pre Prep have been training to be spies! Throughout the day the children have enjoyed a number of challenges that have revealed clues to lead them to the identity of the Master Spy. Their activities culminated with a Spy School graduation assembly on Southfield playground, where the Master Spy, Mrs Smith of course, was uncovered. This then gave Pre Prep and other members of staff the opportunity to say a very fond farewell to Mrs Smith, who next week retires after 31 years at St Faith's. I believe I speak for the entire school and the many OFs who Mrs Smith has taught and supported over the years, in thanking her for her dedication, enthusiasm and compassion during her time here. Mrs Smith has worked tirelessly to ensure that Pre Prep pupils have the very best start to their education. We will miss her very much indeed – and we certainly miss her smile! This evening, Jane and I will be holding a small outdoor retirement dinner to celebrate Mrs Smith's career at St Faith's.

<https://youtu.be/wE1u7w1DkBM>

Bedroom Makeovers

Year 5 pupils were recently set a cross-curricular homework of Maths and PSHCE to plan a bedroom 'makeover', on an £80 budget. They were challenged to consider a number of criteria, including the recyclability, colour, and carbon footprint of an item. The project was designed to test creativity as well as managing a budget and data handling. Some pupils even worked out that if they sold additional items they could extend their budgets! The examples below show the planning that this cross-curricular project inspired.

Goblins in Action

This week has seen the final preparations of our Green Goblins teams for their one and only race this coming weekend. Held at the historic Goodwood circuit, 21 Goblin teams from across the country will compete, including 3 cars from St Faith's (Dashing Dolphins, Wagon Wheel Wyverns and the Turbo Turtles). My most sincere thanks in advance to Mrs Oxborough, Mr Brent, Mr Hasell and Mrs Price who have worked so hard to make this possible. I wish the teams the very best of luck and a most enjoyable day of racing.

<https://youtu.be/aMpeti4L2sl>

OF Reception

Last night, I joined members of the Old Fidelian (OF) Committee in welcoming OFs to a drinks reception. The event, held at The Plough, Coton, thanks to the invitation of the owner, OF Pasquale Benedetto, provided an opportunity for a small reunion of alumni who have not been able to meet in person since September 2019. It was a lovely evening and a great opportunity for me to say farewell to some of the OFs who I have enjoyed getting to know over the past 10 years.

Finally

Our Mini Moo, aptly named Faith, has finally been revealed to the world and can now be found proudly watching the passers-by from the window display of famous local bakery and cafe, Fitzbillies on Trumpington Street. The whole school participated in the [Cows about Cambridge](#) art project, which is officially launched on June 28th. Basing design ideas on the 1930's poem, 'On Leaving Cambridge', by former Cambridge University scholar Xu Zhi Mo, our pupils used the principles of Aboriginal dot painting and its associated symbolisms, together with some distinctive school accessories in the form of striped socks and a school tie, to create a unique St Faith's Mini-Moo. Faith may be seen not herd and is cow-moo-flaged amongst the cakes and pastries, but I encourage you to get moo-ving and pay your respects to her in the coming weeks. If nothing else it is a good excuse to indulge in another delicious Fitzbillie Chelsea Bun.

<https://youtu.be/75WnBFq9eBU>

[VIEW THE TRAIL MAP](#)

With all good wishes,

Nigel Helliwell