

# THIS WEEK AT ST FAITH'S

27th January 2023

## Star Dome

This week our Foundation, Year 1 and Year 2 pupils were treated to a visit from the 'StarDome' experience. The 'StarDome' is a 6-metre mobile indoor 'pop-up' planetarium, which was set up for the children here in Ashburton Hall. Andy Green, an astronomy expert and Fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society, talked the pupils through some of the mysteries of outer space. The children were completely enthralled by their 'spin' through the night sky, and were fascinated to learn more about the Solar System. It is clear the pupils were truly inspired, and we certainly have some budding astronomers in our midst.

## Claytime

On Wednesday, children in Pre Prep enjoyed a visit from 'Claytime'. Using modelling clay and their imaginations, the children in each Year group each developed their own story and brought it to life. Foundation children helped create a story about a snake and her friend the ladybird, who whilst playing a game of chase, accidentally flooded a house, only to be saved by a fairy! The heroes of Year 1's story were rainbow fish, with the power to turn people into mermen and mermaids. Meanwhile Year 2 went on a journey to Saturn, where a range of options were considered to make the planet more attractive and habitable – including some beautiful daisies. The children really enjoyed the opportunity to make 3-D creations representing different aspects of their story, and are looking forward to working with clay again.

## The Chinese New Year

The Year 3 and 4 assembly this week explored the festival of Chinese New Year – 2023 is the year of the rabbit. The children learned about how each year in the lunar cycle was named after a different animal and they enjoyed finding out the animal for the year that they were born. Children from St Faith's families who are celebrating Chinese New Year were able to tell everyone about how they prepared, and in particular, how the colour red is significant. We finished by wishing everyone prosperity and good fortune for the year ahead – ????

Do you know the animal that represents the year of your birth?



## The Science of Sound and Microbes

Year 4 have been studying 'Sound' in their Science lessons. Being a practical unit of work, the children have set to work on a variety of tasks. This has included making their own shakers and recording the sound each one made using decibel readers, making ear mufflers, experimenting with a variety of materials and determining whether the effectiveness of string telephones is affected by using different lengths of string. As well as all this, the children have also been experiencing the ways that sound gets quieter the further away you travel from the source of the sound. Various instruments were played, and the children moved away from the source until they couldn't hear it anymore, recording how many metres away from the source they were.



To support their work on microbes, Year 5 pupils went to visit the St Faith's kitchens to see food hygiene in action. It was a fascinating visit to see 'behind the scenes' of such a familiar and popular part of the school. Our Catering Manager explained how foods are preserved in order to stop them spoiling, and to stop microbes degrading them. The children saw at first-hand how our catering team keeps all our food, the utensils and the general kitchen area clean and safe. They also considered carefully how microbes might be able to get into our bodies in other settings, for example through poor food preparation, or handling. It was an excellent practical way for the children to apply and develop their knowledge on this topic.

## Imitative Poetry

Some of the Year 7s have been studying the poem, *To Paint a Portrait of a Bird* by Jacques Prevert (in translation). The children were asked to produce their own 'word portraits' whilst also imitating the style of the original poem. I hope that you enjoy reading a selection of the pupils' poems.

### IMITATIVE POETRY

Meanwhile in Year 5, the children have been studying one of my favourite books – 'The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe' by CS Lewis, where the children famously enter the wonderful land of Narina through the back of a wardrobe. Inspired by this, the children wrote some highly imaginative descriptions of their own fantasy worlds behind a door. Examples of the work can be found in the index of the newsletter.

## Primary Maths Challenge

On Thursday, St Faith's hosted the Year 4 Maths Challenge in Ashburton Hall. We were

delighted to host a total of 26 local schools, with over a hundred pupils in attendance. In pairs, the pupils worked collaboratively to solve puzzles and apply their logical reasoning skills. It was a vibrant atmosphere with pupils moving between desks for different challenges, while being supported by Year 7 and 8 St Faith's pupils who were marking each round, and then collating and entering the scores. Amongst our own Year 4 St Faith's mathematicians, all pairs scored highly, and one pair gained 4<sup>th</sup> place overall and a prize. Congratulations to all pupils involved and thank you to the Year 7 and 8 pupils who assisted.





In another collaborative event, 24 of our pupils are taking part in a Cambridgeshire Chess League fixture at Milton Church of England Primary School this weekend. We wish them all luck and look forward to hearing how they get on.

## **Frogs Project**

This week, Year 6 have started their Frogs Project; an independent open-ended project that requires them to work logically and systematically, record their findings and explore patterns. Pupils in Year 6 enjoyed a practical introduction to the project, and then worked through an preliminary problem in pairs, using cubes or chess pieces to represent the frogs!

## **Year 8 Art & Design Group Visit The Castle Fine Art Gallery**



On Tuesday afternoon, the pupils visited the Castle Fine Art Gallery in The Grand Arcade to participate in their 'Young Fine Artist' competition for 2023. The children were given a tour of the gallery and information about the various contemporary artists whose work was on display, such as Robert Oxley, a painter and passionate conservationist. They also saw original 'Mondo Scripto' lyrics and drawings by Bob Dylan, as well as original work by Billy Connelly and the painter Paul Caufield.

The pupils have been set the task of creating their own artwork in response to the work of an artist or theme, which inspired them in the gallery. The children will return to the gallery in February to present their work and to discuss their projects with the gallery manager. The winner of the competition will have their artwork framed and displayed alongside the other artists in the gallery.

## Inter-house Netball

For the girls, this term their focus switches to Netball in their Games lessons. On Tuesday it was the Year 5s who were the first to play their inter-house competition. Both the attacking and defensive play demonstrated great skill, versatility and speed – all very good indicators for the





forthcoming season. Then on Thursday Year 4 enjoyed their first netball matches of the term playing St John's and they showed great team spirit. Through the delivery of the Sports curriculum, the staff are mindful of the opportunities that sport offers to learn about the St Faith's Learning Habits: Ambition, Creativity, Independence, Reflection, Collaboration, Curiosity, Listening, and Resilience. Collaboration and Resilience were certainly on display in abundance.

### [Inter-house Netball](#)

[inter-house netball video](#)

## Swimming Gala v Culford and Town Close



There was an excellent exhibition of swimming on Monday from the Year 6, 7 and 8 teams. This was our final gala before the national qualifiers in early March, and it proved to be an outstanding opportunity for pupils to test their racing skills against two other schools. With an abundance of personal best times achieved, including one Year 7 boy taking 13 seconds off his 50m butterfly time, 11 individual races were won. The Year 7 boys' relay team also won both their relay events and the Year 6 girls were placed 1st and 2nd in their relay races. Overall, St Faith's secured the well-deserved victory with the final scores being:

St Faith's 297  
Culford 255  
Town Close 185

## Inter-house Table Tennis

Our outdoor table tennis tables are hugely popular, whether it is sunny or chilly, as long as the weather is dry, the outdoor tables are rarely seen without a crowd of children around them at breaktimes, taking turns and cheering on their friends. This evening we will host our first inter-house table tennis competition of this year and I look forward to sharing the results in next week's newsletter.

## Independent School Inspectorate (ISI) Inspection Report for The Leys

This week we congratulate The Leys on the publication of their latest [ISI Inspection Report](#), in which the school has been awarded the highest possible rating of 'Excellent'. The Headmaster, Mr Martin Priestley, commented 'Reading this report, I am sure you too will be struck by how impressed the inspection team was with the achievements and progress made by Leysian pupils.'

## And Finally

Pupils in our Eco Committee have dedicated time this week to making and setting up a range of different birdfeeders around the school site and helping other pupils learn to identify common birds. We are now all set for the RSPB Big Garden Birdwatch this weekend! There is still time to sign up to this important citizen science project and all that is required is one hour of your time [Big Garden Birdwatch | The RSPB](#).

Whether or not you are one of the anticipated 700,000 people who will be bird-watching this Saturday or Sunday, I wish you and your families a happy and relaxing weekend.

With all best wishes,



Dr Crispin Hyde-Dunn