

THIS WEEK AT ST FAITH'S

12th May 2023

Year 8 Science Workshop with AstraZeneca

On Tuesday, our Year 8 pupils spent a morning with representatives from the pharmaceutical company AstraZeneca, to learn about the stages involved in developing and producing a new vaccine.

The session began with Professor Sir Mene Pangalos giving a truly enlightening and inspiring talk and then answering a wide range of informed and intelligent questions posed by our Year 8 pupils. Listening to this talk and reflecting on the questions and answers which followed, our pupils deepened their understanding of immunology. They also gained further insight into the challenges and time scale (usually 10-15 years) for developing a new drug. The talk concluded by looking forward with consideration about new areas of research and development.

Dr Catherine Priestley took over next, and she skilfully guided pupils through a virtual laboratory explaining natural immunity and how new drugs are developed. We were given an insight into the wide range of career paths within the pharmaceutical industry, from scientists working as virologists, clinical biologists and bioinformaticians, alongside non-science careers such as finance, law and marketing.

Pupils were then challenged to undertake laboratory tests using Gilson pipettes and microplates, to determine which vaccine produced the best antibody response. The pupils engaged extremely well with the investigative task, and they enjoyed learning to handle new equipment and in doing so, acquiring new skills.

AstraZeneca's aim is to push the boundaries of science to deliver life-changing medicines used to treat a range of illnesses – our young scientists at St Faith's were certainly inspired by their visit. We are very grateful to Professor Sir Mene Pangalos, Dr Catherine Priestley and their two colleagues from AstraZeneca's Community Engagement team, for giving us such an informative perspective into the creativity, problem-solving focus and scientific excitement of working in a global pharmaceutical company.

Year 8 'Rebecca' Exhibition

This week in English, lessons have marked the culmination of a full term's work, during which time pupils have been studying Daphne Du Maurier's novel, *Rebecca*. The children were encouraged to complete work that analysed individual characters, such as the infamous Mrs Danvers. They could explore setting, creating their own descriptions and designs of the liminal



space of Manderley, and many pupils chose to compose poetry or prose linked to the novel's gothic genre. Pupils undertook much of their project in their own time, bringing in impressive contributions produced independently at home. I do hope that our families enjoyed visiting the exhibition on Tuesday, showcasing the pupils' work.

Chocolonely Assembly

On Tuesday Year 3 and 4 pupils received a visit from one of our parents, Mrs Jo Lane, who works for the chocolate company, [Tony's Chocolonely](#). Our visitor spoke to the children and explained about how chocolate is made from the raw ingredients of cocoa beans harvested in West Africa and the journey that is made for the final product to reach the shelves in UK shops. The founding principle of Tony's when it established in 2005 in The Netherlands, was to make the production of chocolate 100% free of slavery. The children learned about working directly with the cocoa farmers and cooperatives in Ghana and on the Ivory Coast to source and buy traceable cocoa beans at a price that allows the cocoa farmers to earn a living income and have security over the longer term.

The children listened attentively and had many questions, including 'How do you get the different flavours into the chocolate?' and 'What is your favourite chocolate bar?' I hope that parents also had the chance to taste some of the samples that made it home!

Soap Knapping

Year 3 have also been learning this week about how Stone Age man made tools and weapons out of flint, using a process called flint knapping. The children tried this by using bars of soap, in place of flint, to make their tools.





School Council and Eco Committee Cookie Sale

Members of the School Council and Eco Committee have been busy again this week raising funds for the projects that they run in school. Another of their recent tasks has been to vote for the winning high visibility jacket designs which will be worn during our forthcoming Road Safety Week. The competition to design an eye-catching jacket was open to all pupils in Years 3-8 and some of the winning designs are pictured here.

Year 7 Personal Statements

This week, Year 7 pupils have started to write their personal statements in preparation for applications to senior schools. They have been given guidelines to help them during this reflective process and will be completing their first drafts this week. We are grateful for your support of your son or daughter as they work on this important task.

In the Classrooms

Elsewhere in lessons, Year 5 have been studying botany and learning about parts of the flower. Pupils in Year 7 have enjoyed some quiet library time, as they have been immersing themselves in different book titles, as part of their 'passport to reading' scheme. Meanwhile in Spanish, pupils have been developing their vocabulary around the topic of food, while in Music, Year 6 have just begun a unit on Rap. Another Year 6 class have been continuing their studies in Art of water colours in the style of the famous Lake District landscape artist, William Heaton Cooper. Pupils in Year 3 were very excited to start their topic on Greek myths, as they discover various heroic characters and extraordinary creatures.

U11 Boys' & U11 Mixed Floor & Vault and U14 Boys' Acro National Finals

We received excellent news on Wednesday from the British Schools Gymnastics National finals, taking place in Stoke on Trent. Two of our boys claimed bronze in the U14 Boys' Pairs Sports Acrobatics final. The standard was extremely high and the boys put in one of their best performances. Later that afternoon our U11 Mixed team came 8th in the Floor and Vault final. Although on this occasion not medal winners, these Year 5 pupils showed great skills and excellent fortitude during their competition. Finishing off the day, the U11 Boys' team produced fantastic performances to win the National title and claim the gold medals in the Floor and Vault competition.

Day two of the competition saw the U14 Boys' Floor and Vault competition and also the U11 Boys' Pairs Sports Acrobatics. It was to prove another successful day at this prestigious event with the boys (who are all virtually two years younger than the age groups) coming 3rd to claim bronze medals. Later in the afternoon our U11 Boys' Pair performed superbly, finishing just outside the medals in 4th position.

Many congratulations to all of our gymnasts. We are now looking forward to the next competition which will be the Midlands Championships on the 20th and 21st May at Stamford Junior School.

St Faith's Mixed Rowing at King's Ely

On Wednesday, eight St Faith's rowers joined the squad at King's Ely to take part in a combined schools' training session. In glorious weather, the rowers were able to train in 2 octuples, and managed 2 short sprint races. The visit gave our pupils the opportunity to experience a much quieter river, and to try out an octuple for the first time (8 scullers in the same boat). The pupils came away with renewed determination to improve their technique, a desire to race, and the ambition to acquire an octuple for St Faith's! We are very grateful to the King's Ely staff and pupils for their warm welcome.

Chamber Choir and Year 7 & 8 Soloists Lunchtime Concert and Evensong

On Thursday, 36 St Faith's pupils travelled to the majestic setting of St Edmundsbury Cathedral in Bury St Edmund's to perform in a well-attended lunchtime concert which forms part of a long-established concert series at the cathedral. Members of String Consort, Chamber Choir, Senior Trumpets and soloists performed music which included pieces by J S Bach, G Perlman, P Gaubert, William Byrd and Orlando Gibbons.

Following an excellent concert, the pupils enjoyed a guided tour of the Cathedral before members of Chamber Choir joined the St Edmundsbury Cathedral Choir, under the direction of Mr Tim Parsons, to sing the anthem at Evensong. The service was live streamed on the St Edmundsbury Cathedral Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/stedscathedral>. Mr Parsons commented on how responsive the Chamber Choir were to his direction and that the blend between the cathedral choristers and the Chamber Choir was excellent. The whole experience was a wonderful opportunity for ensembles, soloists and choir to perform in a building, the acoustics of which really lends itself to musical performance. Bravo to all pupils involved.

We are very grateful to the Dean and staff of St Edmundsbury Cathedral, who hosted us with such generosity. Thank you also to parents, family and friends who were able to join us in the cathedral and to all the staff from the Music department for preparing the pupils for this memorable experience.

Pre Prep Open Morning

Looking slightly further ahead, on Wednesday, 7th June, we are hosting an Open Morning at which we will be welcoming prospective families with children wishing to join the school in Foundation, Year 1 or Year 2. If you have younger children and would like to attend this Summer term Open Morning, please register [here](#) and do let friends and colleagues know if they would like to learn more about what a St Faith's education can offer.

And Finally...

This weekend there are various competitions in which our pupils will be taking part. These include a golf competition for Years 4-8, the U9 – U13 Boys' and Girls' National IAPS Trampolining Finals, and the Cambridgeshire AA Track and Field Championships for Years 6, 7 & 8. To all our pupils involved, we wish them a most enjoyable experience and very best of luck and we look forward to hearing their news on their return to school next week.

With all best wishes,



Dr Crispin Hyde-Dunn