

# THIS WEEK AT ST FAITH'S

17th November 2023

## Richard Dyson – Headmaster of St Faith's 1989-2002

We began this week with the very sad news of the death of Richard Dyson, former Headmaster of St Faith's. During his years of tenure between 1989 and 2002, Richard oversaw significant school developments, including the introduction of co-education in 1995 and the opening of the Ashburton Hall in 1999. Our school today has been shaped by Richard Dyson's great vision and leadership and our community is deeply appreciative of his notable contribution. You can read more about Richard Dyson and his longstanding career in education, in an obituary article placed on our [school website](#). Meanwhile, we offer sincere condolences and deepest sympathies to Richard's wife Margie, their three children, Helen, Clare and Charles and the rest of the Dyson family during this difficult time.

## 'Make a Noise about Bullying'

Turning to school activities, this week has been National Anti-Bullying week, organised by the Anti-Bullying Alliance. This year's theme is entitled 'Make a Noise about Bullying'. Pupils came into school on Monday with odd socks and this was a colourful visual statement reminding us that we should respect one another, appreciate individuality, and show kindness. In assemblies on Monday, Years 3 and 4 focused on what bullying is and the reasons why people may bully others. Pupils then talked about 'making a noise', telling an adult if they feel bullied or witness others on the receiving end of bullying behaviour. Continuing with the theme, Years 5 to 8 considered the topic of 'banter' and when 'banter' crosses the line and becomes bullying. The pupils watched short, age-appropriate video clips put together by the Anti-Bullying Alliance, and valuable follow-up talks in Registration and Tutor times also focused on these topics. The pupils were also reminded about who they can speak to if they feel bullied or witness bullying behaviour.

## World Diabetes Day

On Tuesday, the Foundation children marked [World Diabetes Day](#). The day is held on the 14th November each year and the theme this year was 'Access to Diabetic Care'. The



children talked about why they were wearing blue to raise awareness of diabetes and how support can be given to those people managing diabetes.

## 1CAH Class Assembly

In their class assembly this morning, 1CAH performed 'We're going on a Bear Hunt' as a song. They started this half-term topic with a teddy bears' picnic at school in the Wild Place. The children carefully made their own honey sandwiches in preparation for their very own 'Bear Hunt'.



## Academic Enrichment Day (AcE day)

On Wednesday, children in Years 3 to 8 were involved in our second Academic Enrichment Day of the Michaelmas term. Pupils stepped away from the normal school timetable for the day to take part in a huge variety of activities. For Years 6 and 8, learning about different study skills and exam preparation techniques was the order of the day, with pupils in other years exploring a range of themes from history, fiction, artistic endeavours and motor racing. Aligned to our 'tailored education' approach, these days are also a celebration of the variety of learning styles amongst our children and they provide pupils with opportunities to make choices about how they learn.

Year 3 immersed themselves in Quentin Blake's, 'Mrs Armitage on Wheels', and enjoyed activities linked to this book – writing poetry, designing a picnic lunch for Mrs Armitage, and even her dog – which was recreated with plasticine, and they designed their own bicycles. In the afternoon, there was then a natural progression to an engineering activity when the pupils learnt how gears operate by working through some practical challenges in small groups.

There was a tangible buzz around the school, especially from those in Year 4 who were dressed as Romans for the day, inspiring their learning about how Romans lived and built their empire. They were led in their learning by a special guest speaker, Nigel Amies, who runs his own historical education company.

Meanwhile pupils in Year 5 had their first taste of designing and driving a Goblin electric car,

and as an added bonus, they met 'The Stig' (well at least the St Faith's version!). The pupils experienced the thrills of a drag race and the children were also challenged to think creatively. As well as deciding on a team name, they had to design bodywork which reflected the character of their team and helped the car run efficiently. In the team work session, the children considered what their own strengths were and they discussed the strengths of others in their teams.

Year 7 were involved in a skills sharing day linked to the St Faith's Arts Awards. Year 7 pupils spent the morning learning a new skill and planning a lesson to teach one of their peers, e.g. how to do an oil pastel etching or to give an instrumental lesson to someone who has never played that instrument.

## **In the Classrooms this Week**

It has been a real pleasure to see a range of classes purposefully at work this week. Year 7 have been learning how to draw illuminated letters in Art with some truly excellent examples underway. Meanwhile in English, Year 4 have been practising their use of conjunctions and clauses, while Year 8 were demonstrating their imitative writing skills and writing in the style of Isaac Asimov. In Year 2, our younger pupils have been learning all about currency and exploring the denominations of coins and notes, whilst Year 3 have been preparing their own acrostics, inspired by their recent reading.

## **U13 Girls' East Regional Hockey Final**

On Monday, our Year 8 girls travelled to Rushmere Sports Centre in Ipswich to compete in the East of England Regional Finals. Raring to go, the girls were knocked off their stride with a delayed start due to torrential weather conditions. Despite a sluggish start they won the first three games 2-0 to put themselves into a strong position going into their last two pool matches against Bishop's Stortford College and Framlingham School. As always, this group of girls raised their performance to win 3-1 and 3-0 respectively. A 3-0 win against Queenswood followed by a 3-0 win in the final against Langley School Norwich, meant the players had won the East regionals for the third year in a row. Whatever happens at the IAPS and Intohockey Nationals Finals still to come, this group of girls is a very talented team and Mr Thompson says they are a real pleasure to coach. Roll on the Finals!



## Swimming Gala v King's Ely

We had our first swimming gala of the new academic year on Tuesday. Year 6, 7, and 8 were in action in a very evenly contested match against King's Ely. The lead swapped several times during the course of the contest, and as the teams approached the last race, there were only 2 points in it. The final score was 180 points to King's Ely and 176 to St Faith's, meaning a loss for us by 4 points. What a finish! As we would expect at the beginning of a new year, multiple personal best times were set. Several pupils swam in their first gala, so very well done to them, and we also celebrated a new school record of 16.45 seconds in the 25m Butterfly.

## U13 IAPS National Football Finals

On Wednesday, the U13 Boys' Football Team attended the IAPS National Finals Day at Summer Fields School in Oxford. Having played some incredible football in the regional qualifiers, where the boys finished runners-up, they had already surpassed themselves. To play in a National Finals in a sport that we only play every now and then was a real achievement and this was St Faith's second time in 3 years to have qualified!

Playing schools from around the country, the boys knew the day would be challenging, but that's exactly what is needed, as only then do players develop and truly learn about themselves. And a challenging day it was! There was some superb football on display and the margins for success or failure were extremely small, in 14-minute games. The boys did themselves proud but were not quite able to muster the same style of football they had been previously capable of playing. A narrow loss by 1 goal in all 3 group games meant the plate awaited and another narrow defeat in the quarter finals meant the boys had been knocked out.



Although tough and painful in the short term, Mr Clayton-Smith is sure the boys will use the experience to grow as sportsmen and young men. But what a legacy they leave! For many, this was the last time they will pull on the famous red and black of St Faith's on the football field, and they leave that jersey in a better place than they found it.

We hope the boys' success inspires those in the years below to take on the mantle of high-quality football at St Faith's. All of them were excellent ambassadors for the school, playing hard and fair, demonstrating first-class sportsmanship at all times and respecting the opposition and officials throughout the day.



## **ISGA Two-Piece & IAPS National Gym Competitions**

Last weekend teams of St Faith's gymnasts travelled to Haberdashers' Aske's school in Elstree for the National Two-Piece and the National IAPS finals for boys and girls. The gymnasts had an amazing experience and performed superbly. It was a wonderful outcome when one of our pupils won the U9 National IAPS title – the first time a St Faith's gymnast has won this IAPS trophy. Six Individual National Champions and 5 Team Champions were crowned over both days which is a huge achievement and testimony to the hard work that our pupils and staff put in on a weekly basis. For a full listing of results, please see the sidebar.

[GYM PHOTOS ON My School Portal](#)

## **Staff v Old Fidelian v Parents' Football**

Last Friday, the St Faith's Sports Hall was once again host to the Staff v Old Fidelian v Parents' football match. A great time was had by all, with some incredibly close games, flowing football & some creative and effective goalkeeping tactics from Mrs Shaw! More importantly it was a pleasure for everyone to share some food and drink together after the games, swapping stories about times gone by at and times to come at St Faith's.

Thank you to the members of staff, parents and Old Fidelians who supported the event and made it such an enjoyable occasion. Thank you also to the catering team for providing the delicious and much-needed post-match sustenance!



## Parent Website Focus Groups

As mentioned in previous newsletters this term, one of the projects currently underway by our school Marketing team is planning for the design of a new school website for St Faith's. We very much value parents' input in this process and we are continuing to hold parent focus groups to understand in more detail the ways in which our website can help St Faith's families. If you would like to take part, please register your interest at [marketing@stfaiths.co.uk](mailto:marketing@stfaiths.co.uk) by 22nd November. Each parent focus group session takes around 45 minutes and can be timed to fit in with you (e.g. after drop-off, before pick-up).

## And Finally...

At the time of writing, we wish our Year 8 Girls' Hockey team the very best of luck as they travel



to Haileybury School to compete in the IAPS National Final and we look forward to hearing how they get on at this top level of competition. Next week, the school will be taking part in National Road Safety Week from Monday 20th to Friday 24th November. This year's theme is helping people understand why safe speeds are so vital. We want to help all the members of our community engage with road safety at this particularly challenging time of year, especially as the beginning and end of our school days become increasingly dark and cold. You will see a number of pupils participating each morning next week to help promote this theme of speed awareness and we are very grateful for your support of this important initiative.

Although the weather promises to be a little drizzly this weekend, I hope you are able to get outside and enjoy some of our beautiful and colourful local autumn scenery,

With all best wishes,



Dr Crispin Hyde-Dunn