

# THIS WEEK AT ST FAITH'S

16th February 2024

## Whole School Assembly

On Monday, the school gathered together in Ashburton Hall for our assembly. On arrival, we had the pleasure of listening to the Senior Trumpet Ensemble playing a fanfare. This had been carefully rehearsed and is part of the repertoire being performed on the Liverpool music trip this week.

We began the assembly by looking at some images of plants and trees growing in unusual and challenging places, and thinking about all the conditions that are required for growth. Hands shot up as many of the children wanted to share their answers, which included light, water, space, nutrients and time. This led us to the 'Parable of the Sower', as told in the New Testament. It is the very familiar story of the farmer sowing seeds which land in various places, including amongst rocks and thorns, as well as on good earth. We considered the reasons why only the seeds which fell on the good earth grew and yielded a harvest, and we explored the different ways in which the parable could be interpreted. We also said a prayer recognising the importance and beauty of nature and reminding ourselves of our responsibilities to take care of our planet, and one another.

## AcE Day for Years 3 – 8

At St Faith's our ambitious programme of Academic Enrichment Days (AcE Days) and our Enrichment Week (E-Week) in the Summer term form an important provision of our all-round education. The activities for the children on AcE days often explore environments beyond the classroom. We encourage the pupils to make links between topics learnt in different curriculum areas, as well as developing their inter-personal, communication, teamwork and leadership skills. Aligned to our 'tailored education' approach, these days also recognise the variety of learning styles amongst our children and they provide pupils with opportunities to make choices about how they learn.

Year 3 visited Little St Mary's Church on Trumpington Street, as part of their Humanities topic on Churches. The pupils were greeted by Father Ed and Peter, the Pastoral Assistant, who showed them around the church. They were introduced to many of the the important features, including some of the significant and precious objects, such as the burning thurible of incense. The pupils also enjoyed trying on a range of vestments, such as the alb, stole and green chasuble. The pupils returned to school really excited and many of them were inspired to add

more features to their own shoebox churches in class!

The Year 4 Latino Day was a tremendous success. We were extremely fortunate to welcome Catalina and Nelson from La Latina Bustaurante once again this year. The children loved learning about their amazing bus-restaurant and making real arepas from scratch.

Our pupils not only learnt how to make arepas, they also learnt vocabulary used in cooking, they sang Spanish songs about the importance of eating fruit and vegetables and discovered a world-famous guacamole recipe. The most memorable things were, of course, the plantain crisps they took home and the chefs' hats they decorated – a special reminder of a memorable and very enjoyable AcE day.

As part of a Middle Eastern Day, Year 5 visited the Cambridge Central Mosque on Mill Road and for their art task, they created Islamic art inspired tiles, similar to those that might be found inside a mosque. The children also explored the experience of Hajj in the classroom when they returned to school. Building on our Learning Habit of Reflection, the children spent time considering the ways in which religious beliefs are connected to objects and behaviours and festivals.

Year 6 spent their AcE day immersed in preparations for their forthcoming production of 'Beauty and the Beast'. This included rehearsing on stage and discussing and planning in more detail the costumes that will be needed.

Year 7 enjoyed a study day in Ely, which extended the curriculum across the full range of Humanities subjects. The pupils' visit to Oliver Cromwell's House built on their studies of the English Civil War, and at the Ely Museum they learned more of the local history of this area, as well as the geography of The Fens. Finally, in Ely Cathedral, the children were in awe of the beautiful architecture of this highly significant place of worship, as well as learning about the power and importance of the Medieval church.

During our Year 8 Careers' morning, the pupils heard from a variety of parents about their career paths and what inspired them to follow their chosen careers. The children greatly appreciated the opportunity to ask lots of questions and they recognised the fact that some people make early decisions about their career plans, whilst others prefer to wait before making up their mind, or to experience a range of different careers. From computer chip design, to coaching rowing, from human resources to medicine, from flying planes to working in the film industry, and product placement to setting up a highly successful plumbing business, there was inspiration for everyone. For the second part of the morning, the Year 8 pupils took part in various workshops including a questionnaire to learn more about their own personalities and to consider what types of careers they might like to explore further. The children were also particularly excited to find out more about different roles and sectors that some of their teachers

had worked in previously. Pupils worked in groups in a design task where they had to design and market their ideas. They also learnt about some important practicalities in the world of work, including tax and pay slips. This was followed by a 'top trumps' game relating to futurist careers, encouraging discussions about how the future world of work might be different from today.

After the careers morning, each pupil was asked for their three most valuable lessons or interesting facts from the morning and a selection of anonymised responses are shown below:

"It doesn't matter if you are not sure what job you want now, you can decide in secondary school or even in university; if you run your own business, you have to keep and organise all your earnings as you will have to do a tax return; and also apparently I am a koala (in the personality quiz!)"

"That you don't have to decide what job you want until you are much older (no rush), you don't have to stick to the same job for your whole life and you can achieve anything if you put the work in."

"I learned it is not always that easy to get to the final goal. I learned that if you don't like your job, it is not a problem to change it – many times – if needed. I learned about the different courses you can take for different jobs."

The day concluded with a debating competition, which included some very articulate presentations with two topics being discussed: 'Should you fear AI?' and 'Does money equal success and does success equal money?' The teams were given 50 minutes to prepare their speeches for whichever side of the debate they had been tasked, and afterwards voting took place. Following some lively and interesting discussions, the audience voted for the first proposition, but against the second.

## **Pre Prep Drama4ALL Workshop**

The Pre Prep children galloped off on a Wild West Adventure to find the horse with the golden mane. A visiting Drama teacher from 'Perform' brought the wild theme to life and helped to inspire the children's imaginations. They took part a mix of drama, song, and dance and thoroughly enjoyed the experience.

## **Eco-committee Photography Competition**

Inspired by the Natural History Museum's Wildlife Photographer of the Year competition, the Eco-committee is launching a wildlife photography competition – open to all pupils and staff.

[Eco Committee Video](#)

Please enter the competition by using the link below. You may need to login using your school email and password.

[Enter Competition](#)

## Parent Teacher Meetings

It was a pleasure to welcome our Pre Prep and Year 5 families to their Parent Teacher meetings this week. I hope that parents found this to be a useful touchpoint for their child's progress at this stage, half-way through the academic year. It also provides a valuable opportunity for parents to see a selection of work the children have produced 'in hard copy' at school, as well as digitally via the Seesaw platform for the Pre Prep children.

## Life Education Visit

Over the past two weeks, classes in Foundation to Year 6 have been visiting the Project Deck for our biennial visit from The Life Education Centre to complement our PSHCE curriculum. Who better than some of our pupils themselves to tell you how it went! We have included a selection of quotes from pupils in different Year groups.

Thank you to Louise from the Cambridgeshire PSHCE for her expertise and enthusiasm in delivering such engaging, informative and thought-provoking practical sessions. Thank you as well to the parents who kindly joined our two information sessions and to all the teachers and teaching assistants for helping in the sessions. Finally, a big thank you to the pupils for bringing their best selves to the sessions.

[Pupil Quotes](#)

## In the Classrooms

The pupils have been hard at work in lessons this week, and Foundation have particularly enjoyed their time in Forest School. I also joined some Year 6 children in their Maths lesson in which they were learning to visualise data using graphs. Meanwhile, our younger mathematicians in Year 4, have been learning to add and subtract fractions, whilst in Science, Year 7 have been learning about electricity, currents, power and resistance.

## Year 8 English

This term in English, Year 8 are enjoying a book study with one of their texts being *Private Peaceful* by Michael Morpurgo. During a creative writing exercise this week, the children were asked to take on the role of Mother in this book. As Mother, they wrote heartfelt letters to the villagers thanking them for helping to search for her son, Big Joe. Below are two letters,

expressing empathy and gratitude.

One group of Year 8 are studying *Lord of the Flies* by William Golding and they recently explored symbolism in the book, particularly symbolic items such as Piggy's glasses and the conch. They worked together in discussion groups to explore their symbolic meaning and produced some posters to present their ideas.

[Letter 1](#)

[Letter 2](#)

Our Year 5 pupils have also been expanding their English skills this week, in their study of punctuation in sentences English, with a special focus on the colon, semi-colon and full stop. When I joined them in their lesson, they were using some very memorable "Kung Fu panda" moves to show the shape of different types of punctuation mark!

## Liverpool Music Trip

On Wednesday morning, we wished 45 pupils and 5 staff members well as they set off on the 2024 Music Trip to Liverpool. Amongst the highlights of the trip, the children have visited The Beatles Story Exhibition, had a guided tour of The British Music Experience and played an evening concert at St Peter's Church in Heswall, followed by a reception. Today they are performing in the Lady Chapel of Liverpool Cathedral twice; a lunchtime recital to be followed by Evensong. All of this will be topped off by a visit to the Museum of Liverpool before the journey back to Cambridge after lunch tomorrow. I am sure that families are looking forward to hearing all about the tour!



## Valentine's Day



For Valentine's Day, our Year 7 and 8 pupil Librarians curated a lovely Valentine's Day inspired display of books they love. We hope others will enjoy them too!

## **Year 6 House Table Tennis Competition**

Today after school, the Sports Hall will have been filled with the sound of ping pong balls as the Year 6 children took part in a keenly contested House Table Tennis competition. If break and lunchtimes are indicative of the enthusiasm for this sport at St Faith's, it is likely to be a very energetic and popular event, and one which I am sure the families spectating will thoroughly have enjoyed. We look forward to sharing the results with you after half-term.

## **Foundation 2024 Parents' Breakfast**

This morning, it was our pleasure once again to welcome some of the new St Faith's families who will be joining the school for Foundation 2024. A delicious breakfast was the perfect opportunity to sample St Faith's catering and hospitality, as well as for parents to meet one another, and for members of the SFPA to introduce themselves. This is part of a series of 'Friday Foundation Breakfasts' taking place over the coming weeks – thank you for making the newest members of our community feel welcome.

## **Pre Prep Open Morning**

Our next Open Morning event on Thursday 25th April, will focus on entry to the Pre Prep. Registrations can be made via the home page of the [school website](#). The event is open to prospective St Faith's families as well as those families with children already at St Faith's and who have younger siblings who also wish to join us.

### **And Finally....**

Although today has been the final day of this half term, our gymnastics and chess teams will be competing in the ISGA Championships and the Cambridgeshire Chess League respectively next weekend and we wish them the very best of luck. Looking ahead to the second half of the Lent term, we have some exciting events to anticipate, including World Book Day, the Year 1 and Year 6 productions, and of course the trip to South Africa to visit our partner school, Makukhanye.

I look forward to seeing you all at the start of next half-term and the arrival of Spring, and in the meantime I wish you a peaceful and relaxing break.

With all best wishes,



Dr Crispin Hyde-Dunn