

THIS WEEK AT ST FAITH'S

19 April 2024

Welcome Back

We experienced a lovely sunny day to welcome everyone back for the start of the summer term and I very much enjoyed being able to greet pupils and parents as they came into school. We began the term with an assembly around the theme of the rainbow. We considered the way in which all the colours are different, yet equally important, which is why the rainbow is such an important and widely-recognised symbol of diversity and hope.

There were many enthusiastic conversations about activities that had taken place during the holidays. Some of these were close to home, including our on-site holiday clubs encompassing themes such as Art and Design, Cookery School, Code Camp, Multi-Activity, Bikeability and Trampolining for the older children. There was also a dedicated 'Little Wyverns Club' for the Pre Prep children and I am very grateful to all the staff involved in such a variety of engaging and enjoyable activities for our pupils over the Easter holidays.

Turning to activities further afield, we were delighted the visit to our partner school in South Africa, Makukhanye School, was an outstanding success. A trip of such complexity had been a long time in the planning, but this was rewarded by an experience and memories which will remain with our pupils, as well as the accompanying staff and parents. Those of you who followed the trip on 'X', (formerly Twitter), will have seen some truly magical photographs. I am very grateful to all the staff who travelled to South Africa, as well as those who supported the planning and the delivery of the trip. It simply would not have been possible without such excellent teamwork. A report on the trip by those who participated is included below:

South Africa Trip

Thirty-five pupils and six members of staff set off for South Africa on 2nd April, flying first to Port Elizabeth and then travelling to Jeffreys Bay for their first stop. The next few days were spent forging new friendships at Makukhanye School, where our pupils were greeted warmly by their hosts, taken by the hand and accompanied into school. During the time there, our hosts played netball, football and chess matches against the St Faith's teams and our music ensembles performed for their new audiences. Much to the delight of our pupils, this was reciprocated by traditional African dance and music performances.

Further sports fixtures were keenly contested against other primary schools and greatly enjoyed

– Gelvendale, Eastern Province, Curro Durbanville Primary School and Somerset College.

Undoubtedly, one of the many highlights of the time spent at our partner school was the inauguration of the Makukhanye Medical Centre. Contribution to the provision of a medical facility was one of the major commitments that we had made to the school. It was made possible by joint funding from St Faith's and the Georg Ludwig Rexroth Foundation, an initiative instigated by the company of a St Faith's parent. The SFPA had also generously contributed with the money that was raised by their raffle held at the Easter Community Day, with prizes having been kindly donated by many local businesses. The successful Christmas Jumper Sale at this year's SFPA Christmas Fair also helped to provide funding. We are extremely grateful for this generous support, which allowed the facility to be equipped with two brand new assessment tables, as well as other core medical supplies. In addition, the school was also able to buy a new safe to securely store the 22 laptops that our pupils delivered.

The new Makukhanye Medical Centre will serve the school community very well over the coming years. The ribbon-cutting ceremony was a moment of pride and hope, demonstrating our commitment to the Makukhanye school community.

Other highlights of the trip included a zip wire canopy course en route to Knysna, a safari adventure, a visit to the World Heritage Site of Robben Island, including a bus tour of the island and a fact-filled guided tour of the prison (including Nelson Mandela's cell). We also visited the 2Oceans Aquarium in Cape Town and enjoyed a guided tour around the Kayamadi township, where the children dropped off reading books at one of the local school libraries, had lunch, played the drums and enjoyed another set of musical ensembles. The trip to the top of Table Mountain unfortunately couldn't go ahead because of the 'Table Cloth' covering of cloud, which sadly is a relatively common occurrence and prevents the cable car travelling up the mountain. Our pupils displayed admirable resilience in the circumstances, and warmly welcomed an alternative outing to Signal Hill to enjoy the spectacular Cape Town view from above. When the time came, it was difficult for our pupils to say goodbye to their new friends in South Africa. So many happy memories and shared experiences to cherish and we are already looking forward to the next trip in 2026.

The staff team who travelled on this trip would like to extend a special vote of thanks to our travelling parents, for their invaluable support of the school visits, their participation and for helping to transport many of the extra resources that the St Faith's community were donating to Makukhanye School. Thank you.

Tommy Dann Memorial Match

On the first day of the Easter holidays, the St Faith's U12 boys' rugby team attended the Tommy Dann Memorial Rugby match at Cambridge University Rugby Club. This was the third memorial match played in honour of Tommy Dann, a dear friend, St Faith's parent and former colleague at The Leys School. The event was extremely well supported and funds were raised for the Jonny Wilkinson Charitable Foundation, NSPiRED, a programme to raise the profile of mental well-being in young people in a positive and engaging way.

Our U12 boys played in a 'curtain raiser' fixture against Shelford Rugby club U12s. This was a very keenly and tightly fought encounter, expertly refereed by James Clarke, Head of Rugby at The Leys School, and where the players from both teams performed brilliantly and rose to the occasion.

One of the highlights was without doubt, having Olly Dann, Old Fidelian, join the St Faith's U12 team for this special occasion to play alongside his former classmates. It was an absolute pleasure to have him on the team!

Albeit a rather chilly affair with a hailstorm briefly interrupting play, the players were delighted to meet Jonny Wilkinson at the end of the game! It was then the turn of the Old Leysian and Old Persean Men's XV to play their fixture. OFs featured in both teams and were cheered in the stand by a great many supporters. It was a pleasure to see so many St Faith's families, both current and former.

Thank you to all those who organised, supported and participated in this fantastic event.

Year 7 Art & Design visit to The University Botanic Garden

The Year 7 pupils visited The Cambridge University Botanic Garden on Thursday afternoon. The trip provided an opportunity for the pupils to view the 'International Garden Photographer of the Year Exhibition', and this inspired them to explore shared themes, experimenting with digital photography. The pupils enjoyed touring the garden in small groups and used their iPads to work on a digital drawing whilst settled on the main lawn, surrounded by an assortment of trees. In Art, in their follow-up lessons, Year 7 will use their photos and digital drawings as a stimulus for a collaborative tree sculpture project. Later in the term, the pupils will be inspired to develop their digital drawings whilst learning about how David Hockney experiments with his iPad and uses digital tools to enhance his art.

Year 7 Buddies

Being a 'buddy' and mentor to the younger pupils is a role of responsibility that all our pupils in Year 7 and 8 have the opportunity to embrace. We hold several 'buddy sessions' throughout the year, giving the older pupils the chance to design and deliver activities to the younger pupils, which are both stimulating and fun to take part in. This week the Years 7s visited the Year 2s.

Years 4 – 8 Boys' and Girls' Table Tennis v Stephen Perse

Table Tennis is a sport that has surged in popularity amongst St Faith's pupils in recent years, so much so that our boys and girls play at a national level in IAPS competitions. However, they

also really enjoy local fixtures, such as this week's matches against The Stephen Perse. Speed, agility and hand eye coordination are all in demand in this lightning-fast game!

St Faith's Parents' Association Coffee Mornings



The warmer weather and lighter mornings of the summer term give us the opportunity to welcome parents to our SFPA coffee mornings once again. Today it was the turn of Foundation parents to enjoy a coffee and pastry together after drop-off. I am most grateful to the SFPA for arranging these valuable opportunities for parents within Year groups to meet informally with one another. Next Monday, we invite parents from Years 7 & 8 to join us for an early morning coffee and on Wednesday, it will be the turn of Years 3 & 4 parents.

Future Schools Meeting



On Wednesday evening, Year 5 parents attended a talk about future schools and how we work in partnership between home and school, to support applications to senior schools. We were delighted to welcome Mr Martin Priestley, Headmaster of The Leys, who outlined the process

for applications to The Leys, including an explanation about The Leys Preliminary Assessment (PA) and the different categories of places that are available at the school. We also heard from Mrs Davies and Mrs Rainsford about how we prepare St Faith's pupils for senior school assessments.

Open Morning 25th April

Next week we are holding our Pre Prep Open Morning on the morning of 25th April with a particular focus on entry to Foundation 2024 and 2025. The event is now full, but if you would like to be added to the waiting list, please do contact admissions@stfaiths.co.uk.

And Finally

It has been a very happy and purposeful start to the Summer term and there is much to look forward to over the coming weeks, including the Year 8 production, Sports Day events, the Summer term Music concert, and our school enrichment week. More immediately this weekend a group of pupils are travelling to Stoke on Trent to compete in regional and national gymnastics competitions and we wish them every success.

With the prospect of some Spring sunshine bursting through the April showers, perhaps there might be the appearance of a rainbow, with all the hope this brings. May I wish you all a very happy weekend.

With all best wishes,



Dr Crispin Hyde-Dunn