

THIS WEEK AT ST FAITH'S

24 November 2017

Breaking News

This week started with a press conference. Following a suspected meteorite strike on the Head's House on Sunday evening, the Year 4 classes assembled to conduct a full inquiry. There was a gasp of amazement as the photograph of the hole in the roof, the size of a small football, was shown and further shock when the pupils heard that the piece of rock had landed in Mollie's basket. Fortunately, Mollie was chasing squirrels in the garden at the time of the incident and nobody was hurt. As part of the press conference, Jane and I were cross-examined and Mr Brent was called in to be questioned. He confirmed that there was no damage to the rest of the school, including the new glass roof on the STEAM Hub. Relief all-round. The piece of rock has been sent off for examination and in the meantime, the Year 4s have been tasked with writing a newspaper article about this incident. 'Massive Meteorite Maddens Mollie' was one headline I saw, and I am sure every child will want to put their own spin on this 'breaking' (fake) news. A few reports are already in and can be found in the Index of this newsletter.

Foundation Visits

Rather less curious but just as unpredictable, the Foundation classes called in to see me in my office this week. As each class crept in I was met by a sea of wide-eyed faces and a stunned silence. It didn't take long, however, for the interrogation to begin. Surprise questions were fired from all quarters. 'What is my favourite colour?' (St Faith's red of course), 'What is your favourite lunch?' (fish and chips on a Friday) and 'What do you do all day?' (a question many might wonder). Fortunately, I managed to negotiate myself through most of the questions and emerged from the interrogation relatively unscathed. It was a real treat to spend time with the Foundation children and one of the great pleasures of my job will be seeing them develop over the coming years as they move through the school. My all-time favourite question from a Foundation child, a few years ago, is 'what do you play with in the bath?'

Christmas Fair

At this time of the year, I sometimes feel like King Canute, trying to sit tight whilst the tidal wave of Christmas approaches, ensuring that some sense of normality prevails until at least it is time to open the Advent calendars. Well, today the tsunami wave of Christmas arrives. The Ashburton Hall will be opening its doors for the annual SFPA Christmas Fair. A whole host of external retailers, children's games and activities, festive produce to whet the appetite and hopefully, Santa Claus himself, will be there to entertain and get the Christmas festive season off to a flying start. My sincere thanks to Tasha Lygoe and Yolande Dennis, the two main organisers of the Fair, and the industrious group of SFPA Committee members who have worked so hard over the past few weeks to put this event together. It should be great fun, so please do come along and join in the festivities, anytime from 3pm to 5.30pm.

Christmas Events

Despite my King Canute analogy, I must say that I really enjoy the run-up to Christmas. There is a sense of excitement and anticipation as the Christmas trees arrive, finishing touches are applied to the nativity plays and festive music flows around the school in preparation for the end of term carol concerts. On Monday we will be marking the lead-up to Christmas by holding a whole-school Advent assembly during which two of our youngest children in the school will light the first candle on the Advent wreath. Reverend Meharry, our Chaplain, will be with us to lead the service.

Christmas events will come thick and fast over the next three weeks, so please keep a close eye on the calendar and newsletter. Today, you should receive from Mr Mageean, our Director of Communications, details of the end of term events which I hope you find useful. It would be great if you were able to join us for at least one of the events – as always, you would be most welcome.

Switch-Off Fortnight



I have witnessed two excellent assemblies this week; one by Miss Kennerley on 'Switch off Fortnight', a national energy-saving campaign which started on Monday, and another by Class 1WD on flight, which showcased their recent classwork and an enchanting story they learnt about a penguin which tried to fly.

Sport

Behind the scenes our staff continue to ensure that our sports programme is broad and inclusive. This Wednesday was one of those days which we love – every single girl and boy in Years 6, 7 and 8 represented the school in a sports match. This inclusive policy has not gone unnoticed. Following a recent U9 hockey fixture, I received an email from a parent which read, 'Just a note to say thank you that the A-D teams have been included in matches this term, meaning our daughter, who has never played hockey before, had a chance to experience the fun of an away game – everything from the minibus, the game and the snack afterwards!'

Not everyone was playing hockey or rugby on Wednesday afternoon. Many of our Year 7 and 8 pupils competed in an indoor rowing regatta against St John's College and King's College Schools in the gleaming new Leys boat house.



Finally.....

As I included a photo of the big copper beech tree in the newsletter last week, I thought it would be interesting to compare it with this week's picture of the same tree. What a difference a week makes!



With all good wishes,

Nigel Helliwell