

THIS WEEK AT ST FAITH'S

01 December 2017

Christmas Fair

Much to the joy of hundreds of young children, Santa Claus called in to the Christmas Fair last Friday. When he arrived, he looked weary from his long journey but after a reviving cup of tea and a mince pie, kindly provided by Miss Butler, he was soon back to his cheery self and ready to meet and greet the large gathering of St Faith's pupils, eagerly waiting in the new Hub. According to the bearded man himself, to whom I spoke briefly before he returned to Lapland on Friday evening, the elves are going to be busy this year as the most popular items on the children's Christmas lists this year are Lego and drones! The most surprising request came from a young girl who asked for a Louis Vuitton handbag! The Fair itself was a huge success thanks to the work of our SFPA Committee members, particularly the event coordinators, Tasha Lygoe and Yolande Dennis, who have been planning and organising this event over the past term. It was lovely to see everyone enjoying the festive spirit, whether it was listening to the children's carol singing, buying a few Christmas gifts, taking part in the Christmas activities or, of course, meeting Santa. Many thanks to the SFPA and indeed everyone who came to join in the fun.

Advent Service

On Monday we welcomed Reverend Meharry to St Faith's, to lead the whole school Advent Service. As part of the Service, Reverend Meharry told a lovely Advent story about waiting for Christmas, the Junior Singers and Soul Singers performed and Connie Topel read a prayer very well indeed. As always, the stars of the assembly were the two youngest members of the school, who this year are James and Darcy; their role was to help me light the first Advent candle – a special moment which marks the beginning of the festive period at St Faith's.

Christmas Events

The final two weeks of term will see a flurry of festive events. Next week, the Foundation children and Year 2 will be presenting their Christmas nativity plays (both on Wednesday, 0915 and 1430 respectively) and Years 3 and 4 will be joined by their parents and staff for 'Carols around the Christmas Tree' (Friday 1415-1515). The following week, the Senior Singers will be performing at Great St Mary's Church, in central Cambridge, as part of the Rotary Concert (Monday 11th December 1900). At school, on the last day of term (15th December), there will be the Pre Prep Christmas Service in the morning (1100) and two school Carol Services in the afternoon (Bentley and Chaucer at 1330, Latham and Newton at 1440). In addition, there will be Christmas lunch for the pupils and staff on Monday 11th December, a Pre Prep Christmas party on the afternoon of the 12th, two Christmas discos on the evening of the 13th for the pupils in Years 5 to 8 and the hugely popular 'Last House Standing' event for Years 3 to 8 on the afternoon of the 14th. By the end of the term we should all be very much in the Christmas spirit!

German Christmas Market

Having said that, there was plenty of Christmas spirit when a 'German Christmas Market' appeared in the Dining Hall this morning. Stollen (which I felt obliged to sample for quality control), apple cake and spiced tomato chutney were just some of the delicious produce made by our Head Chef, Kevin Johnson, and his team. All profits will go to Tom's Trust. More news about St Faith's Catering can be found in the Index of this newsletter.

Sport

Last weekend, St Faith's won the overall school award in the National Prep Schools Gymnastics Championships at Kent College. Three of our teams – U9 and U11 boys and U13 girls – won their respective competitions and three pupils - Max, Viraj and Emily - won individual titles. Well done to these champions and indeed, to all the boys and girls who took part. Let's also congratulate their coaches, Mr North, Mrs North and Miss Butler who are responsible for the growth in popularity of gymnastics in the school as well as the rapid rise in standards over the past few years. It speaks volumes for their excellent work that St Faith's was the only school in the national finals with a boys and girls team in every age group.

Speech and Drama

On Tuesday, dozens of our Speech and Drama students took the opportunity to perform in front of their parents at the tea-time recital. I sat and watched in awe as, one by one, our fledgling thespians rose to the challenge of performing to an audience, acting and speaking with so much confidence. What a fantastic life-skill to learn at this tender age. I wish them good luck in their LAMDA assessments over the next few days.

Prefect Breakfasts

The Year 8 Prefects arrived at school bright and earlier this week, to enjoy team-bonding breakfasts with their Tutor and Head of House. Pictured here are the Newton Prefects tucking in to their croissants on Thursday morning. These breakfasts provide an ideal opportunity to review and discuss the Prefects' roles and responsibilities as we reach the end of term. At St Faith's, all Year 8 pupils are Prefects and are expected to carry out important duties and act as role models for the younger children. It is wonderful to see how they rise to the challenge of Prefect status and thrive in their leadership roles.

Finally.....

I think it is about time I introduced you to Pierre the French Partridge, if you haven't met him already. He joined us in the summer holiday, setting up home on the school grounds, and since then has made many friends and become a popular member of the St Faith's community. During the term, the grounds team have got to know Pierre well as he often helps himself to the grass seed in the machinery shed, and, in the mornings, he can often be seen outside our front door waiting to be fed! At this festive time of year, all we need now is a pear tree!

With all good wishes,

Nigel Helliwell