

THIS WEEK AT ST FAITH'S

02 February 2018

Coincidentally, two pieces of research landed on my desk this week. The first, conducted by our Modern and Classical Languages Department, identified that collectively, St Faith's pupils speak well over 30 different languages. The second, a national survey, revealed that non-native English speakers, for the first time, now out-perform natives at GCSE English. The increase of overseas families joining St Faith's, and the relocation of Cambridge families to and from other countries, has certainly enriched the school. Children learn a great deal from each other and the current blend of cultures and backgrounds in each class provides an ideal setting for our pupils to be educated and prepared for the modern world. Long may it continue.

2JP Assembly

So 2JP's assembly on Wednesday morning, on the theme of 'Stories around the World' (this term's topic) was a real treat. The children spoke with great clarity and confidence (never easy in the large Ashburton Hall), sang with great gusto and presented a lovely story, based in India, 'Jamil's Clever Cat'. The assembly proved to be a thoroughly entertaining start to the day. Thank you to the pupils of 2JP and their teacher, Mrs Papworth and assistant, Mrs Veduystert.

Yidan Prize

The week's international flavour continued on Thursday when Vicky Colbert visited St Faith's. Vicky is the joint winner of the [Yidan Prize](#), the largest global education prize, in recognition of her 40-year project, setting up an organisation, Fundaci3n Escuela Nueva, which delivers education to the poorest children in Colombia, Brazil and further afield. Her school programme has reached hundreds of thousands of children. This week, Vicky was in Cambridge, attending the Yidan Prize Conference and called in to see St Faith's in action, specifically, to look at our Science and Engineering. In just the few minutes conversation before Mrs White showed her around the school, I found Vicky to be inspirational. Her passion, vision and huge personal commitment has benefitted so many children and communities in South America and beyond.

Year 4 Cambridgeshire Schools Maths Challenge

As a Maths teacher by training, I have, at times, been frustrated by the subject's relatively poor image in the UK, certainly compared to other countries, particularly in the Far East. I appreciate that Maths is not everyone's cup of tea but there is still much work to be done to promote Maths and show how it can be fun and exciting for even the most numerically challenged. So, on Tuesday afternoon, it warmed my heart to see over 100 Year 4 children from 31 schools tackling a range of mathematical puzzles in Ashburton Hall. When I called in, the room was fizzing with energy and excitement. Our pupils did us proud too. Henry and Zac finished equal first in one section and Ryan and Alexander second in the other. Both teams dropped only three marks all afternoon and their combined score made them clear winners of the overall competition. My sincere thanks to Mr Kite, our Head of Maths, and his departmental colleagues, for organising the afternoon, including a delicious post-competition tea in the new Hub.

General Knowledge Quiz

This week, Ashburton Hall was also the venue for the area heat of the National Quiz Club Championship for Years 3 to 6. The well designed questions and engaging format, which enabled pupils to answer questions using remote devices and parents and teachers to see the progress of each team on the big screen, provided a most entertaining hour or so on Thursday afternoon. Both our teams scored well with the St Faith's 1st team (Dillon, Henry, Ryan and Charlie) finishing second overall.

National Hockey Championships

Today we hosted the East of England round of the U13 Boys' National Prep Schools Hockey Championships. I am pleased to say that the rain held off and the eight schools were enjoying the thrill of playing short competitive games when I went over to Latham Road this morning. Many thanks to Mr Welch and his team for all their work in organising this tournament.

Book Week

Next week will see a host of special events as part of Book Week. Children's authors will be visiting St Faith's to talk to the children about their work and the library will be hosting lunchtime literary activities. Further details of Book Week are in the index of this newsletter.

Finally

Here are some photos of the Cambridgeshire Chess League matches hosted at St Faith's last weekend, my meeting with two representatives of the School Council on Tuesday, the Bentley

Bows and Beanies charity event yesterday and the Year 2 and 3 teddy bear hunt this afternoon.

With all good wishes,

Nigel Helliwell