

THIS WEEK AT ST FAITH'S

23 February 2018

International Mother Language Day

'If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in his language, that goes to his heart.' (Nelson Mandela)

This quote was used by Mr Farewell, Head of Modern and Classical Languages, in his assembly on International Mother Language Day, a worldwide annual observance held on 21st February to promote awareness of linguistic and cultural diversity and multilingualism. To the surprise of the audience, one by one, pupils arose and spoke in their mother tongue language, providing facts about worldwide languages with helpful English translations on the big screens. 'Did you know that there are around 7000 languages spoken in the world today', commented Arjun in Konkani. 'Languages help to preserve cultural heritage and history', remarked Chenning in Mandarin. 'Hearing and learning about other languages helps us to appreciate cultural diversity', said Theo in Swedish. And so it continued, one different language after another as the audience listened in amazement. Luciana told us, in Spanish, that there are around 437 million native Spanish speakers in the world. Mrs Switsur made an Afrikaans interjection to inform us that there are over 30 different mother tongue languages at St Faith's. We also heard a lovely sketch in French by Sebastian and Lucas. The assembly, skilfully designed, highlighted once again, what an enriching environment we have now at St Faith's. Thank you to Mr Farewell and his team of speakers, pictured here, for a most entertaining and thought provoking presentation.

2RB Assembly

On International Mother Language Day itself, 2RB presented an enchanting short story from Ghana, 'Anansi the Spider.' The children spoke with great clarity, acted with confidence and even performed a song in Zulu. The whole performance was beautifully constructed by Mrs Brading, Mrs Gaastra, Mrs Whelan and Ms Overman. Not surprisingly there were many proud parents and teachers afterwards. Congratulations to all the pupils of 2RB.

Examination Results

There has been much of which to be proud as the senior school entrance examinations results have landed on my desk over the past few weeks. The performances of our pupils and the feedback from the senior schools has been extremely positive, not just in terms of the results but also the impressive way our pupils conducted themselves in interviews and meetings with key staff. To date, our pupils have gained twenty five scholarships at seven different schools; eight Academic, one All-round, three Art, two Drama, four Music and seven Sport. Once again, a very high proportion of our leavers have gained places at their first choice schools. I will provide further details when the outcomes of all the examinations have been received but in the meantime, I would like to congratulate the pupils on these significant successes.

Book Launch

Many congratulations also, to Mrs White, Deputy Head Academic whose book, [A Good Education](#) was published this week. This book, the first of its kind, explores how a good contemporary education, typically provided by the very best schools in the UK, can be defined and implemented. It has already received widespread acclaim across the educational spectrum, including Sir Anthony Seldon (former Head of Brighton College and of Wellington College, and now Vice-Chancellor of Buckingham University), who comments, 'Margaret White has spent a lifetime in and reflecting upon schools. She has written a wise and fresh book that all those connected with education, as parents, teachers, governors and administrators, and above all politicians, can read with profit and delight.' Further testimonials and details of the book are in the academic section of this newsletter. We are planning a book launch event later this term at which parents will be most welcome; details will be sent to you soon.

Mrs White is in good company, as also this week, Old Fidelian, Sir John Tusa (former Director of the BBC World Service and BBC Newsnight Presenter) has had his memoirs published by Orion. One of the chapters of [Making a Noise](#) covers the war years when Sir John, along with the other St Faith's boarders, were evacuated to Ashburton in Devon.

Chef of the Year

More congratulations, this time to Kevin Johnson, our Head Chef, who finished third in this year's Chartwells Independent Chef of the Year. Below are pictures of the starter and dessert Kevin made for the competition last week, one of today's lunch options (pan-fried mackerel served on a pearl barley and pancetta risotto with crispy rice noodles) and the delicious 'Engineering' cake he made for the staff to celebrate the school's prize for 'Strategic Initiative of the Year' at the 2018 TES awards.

Finally..

One of the highlights of the week for me was receiving a card from Liverpool to say that the staff at Liverpool Cathedral considered our pupils to be the best behaved school group they had ever hosted. Many thanks to all the children on the Music Tour for being such great ambassadors.

I am now off to two contrasting events. Firstly, the funeral of John Cates, who worked at St Faith's for 25 years, mainly as a Housekeeping Supervisor. He was much loved across the school community and will be missed greatly. Later this evening I will then be dusting down my football boots to play in the annual Old Fidelian v staff match; this year a parents' team will be joining us to make it a three-way contest, so there should be no lack of action or entertainment. As usual, the enthusiasm for the post-match refreshments should make up for any deficiencies on the pitch.

To finish I thought you might like to see this photo of the Pre Prep children celebrating Chinese New Year!

With all good wishes,

Nigel Helliwell