

# THIS WEEK AT ST FAITH'S

29 June 2018

## The Final Straight

I can't believe that I am writing the final newsletter of the school year. Where have the past three terms gone? The weeks and months have flown by and here we are, just a few days from the end of the academic year.

Each week, when I sit down to start writing my weekly message to you I am never short of reportable news. The breadth of our curriculum and the incredible achievements of our pupils in such areas as Drama, Music and Sport, means that there is always plenty to celebrate. It is more difficult to convey the equally valuable accomplishments behind the classroom door. When I visit lessons, as I do most days to deliver birthday cards or show prospective parents around the school, I am always struck by the vibrant and purposeful atmosphere in the classes. Happy, focused children being taught by passionate teachers who go the extra mile to ensure that lessons are dynamic and challenging. This was also the overwhelming impression gained by the Year 4 parents who joined me on tours of the school this term. I am always taken aback by how surprised the Year 4 parents are on these tours, as I see this every day and, to a certain extent, take it for granted. By seeing lessons at first hand, the parents were clearly bowled over by the calm, rigorous and happy nature of the teaching and learning - very different from the hustle and bustle at drop-off and collection times!

I hope that at the end of another school year, you can look back and see how well your child has progressed, in terms of both their learning and personal development. Over the past week I have had the pleasure of reading the end of year reports and it is clear to me how well our pupils are doing, and just as importantly, how much they enjoy school. Long may this continue.

## Enrichment Week

Enrichment week is a unique opportunity for us to extend the children's learning away from the restrictions of the normal timetable. With two year groups on residential trips to Salamanca and the Ardèche and an incredible variety of trips and internal activities, here is just a flavour of what has been going on this week:

**Year 3** enjoyed a highly varied week with a trip to BeWilderwood in Norfolk, performing a full production of The Little Mermaid in their 'play in a day' and becoming Greek for a day as they extended their Humanities lessons into 'Greek Day'. The Sports Hall was turned into an

Ancient Greek market place and saw the children learning how to make perfume and mosaic tiles amongst other activities.

**Year 4** were treated to a day of Alice in Wonderland where they learnt to write newspaper headlines using puns and riddles, had a game of croquet and chess and attended the famous 'Hatter's Tea Party' where they learnt about etiquette. The children made and decorated their own hats to wear. A trip to Whipsnade Zoo allowed them to study the habitats of a variety of animals and wildlife. Their activities culminated in a Viking battle re-enactment on School House field on Thursday as they brought their Humanities lessons to life.

**Year 5** enjoyed a day of computer programming on Monday as they explored new coding skills and used new apps. A maths roadshow and an exploration of funky foods on Tuesday had the children competing to make the best salad – look out for the winning salad in the servery next week! On Wednesday they set off early to Kew Gardens to further their knowledge of rainforests, and on Thursday they enjoyed a day of outdoor activities and swimming at The Leys.

**Year 6** Over 30 children from Year 6 set off for Salamanca in Spain for a week of Spanish lessons and cultural experiences, as well as the occasional ice cream! The children spent their mornings enjoying intensive Spanish lessons and their afternoons putting their lessons into practice as they explored the beautiful city, purchased goodies to bring home and talked to locals.

Back in Cambridge the remaining Year 6 children cooked up some amazing dishes during their cooking day on Monday as well as participating in a number of sporting activities in the sunshine. They were caught practising their sword fighting skills on their trip to Warwick Castle on Tuesday and spent a day immersed in STEM and Art activities on Wednesday which included the creation of a giant wire mesh fish with the inspirational assistance of artist William Ashley-Norman of 'Chickenwired'. They wrapped their week up with a genteel day of punting, picnicking and touring King's College on Thursday.

**Year 7** put the school's computer labs to excellent use on Tuesday as they designed, built, coded and raced Lego Minestorms in the annual Robot Olympics, huge congratulations to William, Sam, Lucy and Lucie for their winning robot. The children rounded off a week of activities and personal statement writing with a trip to The Globe Theatre on Thursday.

**Year 8** 46 Year 8s have been enjoying a week of outdoor adventure and thrills in the Ardèche including a canoe safari down the Ardèche river with an overnight camp out. Other activities have included climbing and mountain biking.

Meanwhile other Year 8s spent Monday exploring the Imperial War Museum at Duxford, the Centre for Computing History on Wednesday and the National Space Centre on Thursday.

## Joint House Charity Event

The much anticipated Mukuhanye Day on Friday brought the whole of the Prep school together. The theme of the day was to encourage the children to be grateful for what they have by looking after their surroundings and to say thank you to people who help them or do the tasks that the children take for granted. Activities included Years 3 and 4 picking up litter around Newton and Bentley Roads while Year 5 helped the kitchen staff with chores, sorted lost property and carried out a survey of water fountains around the site.

The highlight of the day was the afternoon fund raising event with stalls of all varieties vying with each other to raise money for our partner school, Makukhanye, in South Africa.

## Pre Prep Concert

Inspired by the multiple nationalities and backgrounds of our Pre Prep children, this year's Pre Prep Summer Concert featured music from around the world. We have children representing six of the seven continents in Pre Prep and they bravely sung a hello welcome, in various mother tongue languages. Each class performed music that they had prepared in their class music lessons, with a plethora of instruments used to good effect. Mr Gorick's favourite item was the Boomwacker Gospel Melody! Year 1 played hand bells brilliantly and djembe drums were expertly played by Year 2. Pre Prep strings (violins and 'cellos), together with the recorder group, displayed their talents. The children's singing was most melodious throughout the concert with the Treble Voices singing particularly well. We all enjoyed a wonderful concert celebrating the musical experiences of the year, many thanks to the Music and Pre Prep staff for organising such a wonderful event.

## Art Awards

In Creative Arts in Year 7, we have been working towards the Trinity College London Bronze Arts Award. This is a nationally recognised qualification for a project which requires around 40 hours work from participants. Each pupil has produced a portfolio of work covering four sections: a) Participating in an art form; b) Being an audience member; c) Arts Inspiration - research an artist; d) Skills Share – teach an arts skill

All portfolios were assessed in school by Miss Kennerley and the top 30 were selected to go forward for the external moderation. The moderator visited the school last week and was delighted with the standard of the children's work. All 30 have been awarded the Bronze Arts Award, with the moderator commenting, "These are thirty first-class Bronze Arts Award portfolios. Creatively presented with high levels of evidence in all sections".

## End of Term

Despite the end of term being less than a week away, we still have a few major events to look forward to, particularly Speech Day next Friday morning, when Professor Leszek Borysiewicz, Vice-Chancellor Emeritus, Cambridge University, will be our Guest of Honour. The Speech Day ceremony begins at 10.30am and ends at approximately 12 noon, and is the main event of the year when current and former pupils, staff, parents, governors and friends meet together to celebrate the success of the school. On this morning, Pre Prep pupils should wear summer uniform and children in Years 3 to 8 should come to school in winter uniform. All parents are welcome to attend the ceremony in the marquee.

Also next week, we have our final rowing regatta of the year, a theatre trip to 'School of Rock' in London, the national athletics finals in Birmingham (in which 21 of our athletes are competing) and the final races of the season for our Green Goblin Racing Team at the legendary Top Gear race track. And let's not forget the U11 boys' cricket team who will be competing in the national finals at Oakham on 11th July. We wish them all every success.

## The Hub

As usual, St Faith's will be a hive of activity during the holidays with a programme of computing, arts, sports, and cookery courses, and an extensive schedule of building and maintenance, including the second and final phase of the new Hub construction, situated between Ashburton and Keynes buildings. Last summer, the outdoor 'corridor' between the buildings was converted in to a large indoor space with a glass roof. This summer we will be completing the Hub by enlarging and re-fitting the Science Laboratories, finishing the interior of the Hub itself and creating a first floor project room and roof top observatory. The Hub will link the Science, Engineering, Computing, Art and Design and Maths Departments and create a large indoor space for inter-disciplinary project work. To remind you of what it will look like when it is completed, here is the link to the ['walk-through' film](#).

## And finally ...

Thank you for your valuable support this year. In so many ways, it has been a fantastic year for the school and I am delighted with how well our community has worked together for the good of the children.

Whether you are flying to distant shores or just taking it easy in Cambridge, I wish you and your family an enjoyable and relaxing summer holiday when it arrives.

With all good wishes,

Nigel Helliwell