

THIS WEEK AT ST FAITH'S

14 September 2018

There is a real sense of energy and expectation around the school at this time of the year. The children are fresh and eager, routines are becoming established and even for our seasoned campaigners, it feels like a new start, and with that an opportunity to reflect on previous achievements, take stock and set new aims. As I said to the children in assembly, it is the same for our staff too. Schemes of work have been revised, facilities refurbished and new teaching methods devised to ensure we are continually improving the education we offer. There is no standing still at St Faith's! I feel as excited now as I did when I started teaching thirty three years ago.

Here are some pictures of the children in action when I called in to some lessons yesterday; the Foundation children in their first week at St Faith's, Year 6s in the largest of the two new Science labs in The Hub, and Year 8s enjoying their PE lesson.

Prefects

Year 8 were very excited when Mr Critchley and I presented them with their Prefect badges in assembly last week. We outlined their responsibilities and privileges for the year ahead and emphasised their important role in the life of the school over the next three terms, particularly with regard to role modelling. Unlike many schools, all St Faith's pupils in the top year are appointed as Prefects, as we believe all children at this age should be given the opportunity to develop their leadership skills and build confidence in working with others. I have great confidence that our Prefects will do a fantastic job this year.

Introduction to the Year Evenings

Thank you to everyone who came to the 'Introduction to the Year' evenings and for the most encouraging feedback about these events. There was an impressive turn-out, even from our most experienced parents in Years 7 and 8. Many parents remarked on how useful it was to receive information specific to their child's year group and have the opportunity to touch base with the tutors at the beginning of the academic year. I also received several comments about our outstanding staff team. It has clearly been a very good start to the school year, thanks largely to the work of our talented and dedicated staff, both teaching and support.

Roald Dahl Day

When I popped in to the library yesterday, the room was fizzing with energy as the children were searching for 'Charlie's Golden Ticket', as part of our Roald Dahl Day celebrations. There were crosswords and quizzes too, with questions such as 'What is Miss Trunchball's first name?' and 'Which animal sorts through the walnuts for Willy Wonka in the Nut Rooms?'

Tatler

This year's Tatler Schools Guide has just been published. This is an independent guide which sends its editors to visit and select what they consider to be the best independent schools in the country. We have no control of the editorial content, so naturally, we are pleased with their latest review, shown below:

If your child is destined for Silicon Valley, this is probably a good place to start. It's a trailblazer of a school, where pupils study engineering from Year 3 and spend free time stargazing from the new multi-million-pound STEM hub. Schools from across the country and beyond flock to learn about their innovative use of tech and computing. St Faith's has close links with the university and all the opportunities that comes with it and there's no surprise that it's heavily oversubscribed. There are plenty of academics' offspring here, but others commute up to 25 miles. The scholarship haul is mighty: 29 last year, with a hefty cohort hopping across the road to The Leys (which shares the same Foundation). There's heaps of acreage just minutes away and 14 sports teams reached the national finals in 2017. The breakfast club is a hit with busy working parents and families alike: '75 families join us each day', says the school. 'St Faith's encapsulated everything we were looking for,' says a mother.

Chariots of Fire Races

On Sunday, 18 staff will be running around the colleges in the annual Chariots of Fire relay

race. It begins at 09:30 and should end by approximately 11:00. As usual, the St Faith's staff and supporters will congregate on Silver Street Bridge, to cheer along our runners (and those of the hundred or so other teams) and enjoy the convivial atmosphere of this unique Cambridge event. So why not come along to encourage our energetic staff? All families are most welcome – the more the merrier!

Video Analysis

The PE and Games Faculty is developing the use of video analysis to enable all pupils to improve their independent learning through studying their own performances and techniques in training and matches. The pupils can access this information through the newly designed [PE and Games subject page](#) on the VLE. This learning platform can also provide parents with the opportunity to see not only what pupils are experiencing in various lessons but also, on occasions, match days too. The video library is currently in its infancy and will grow throughout the year. Please feel free to explore the pages and provide any feedback to Mr Welch.

Forthcoming Events

Next Friday is [Jeans for Genes Day 2018](#) when children are invited to come to school in jeans, but otherwise in regular school uniform, paying £1 for the privilege and thereby raising money to help children with genetic disorders.

Next Saturday morning, the annual [SFPA Scavenger Hunt](#) for the new Foundation children and their families will take place here at school. This is always a lovely occasion when our new arrivals have the opportunity to explore the school grounds and their parents can chat and mingle in an informal setting. We hope that as many Foundation families as possible will join us.

Finally.....

I thought you might like to see the new [School Prospectus](#), which was printed last week. You may even recognise a few faces!

Have a lovely weekend.

Best wishes,

Nigel Helliwell

