

THIS WEEK AT ST FAITH'S

12 October 2018

One of the highlights of my day is having lunch with the pupils. As we sit together around the table, enjoying the latest delicious meals served up by our wonderful catering team, the conversation flows from one subject to another in a delightfully uninhibited fashion. That's one of the joys of being with children; you never know what they are going to say next! This week, I found myself talking to a group of pupils who joined the school at the beginning of term. One boy told me how kind everyone had been to him since he started (music to my ears of course), one was thriving on the breadth of subjects on offer and another explained that she loved the school so much she had written to the tooth fairy to thank her! Whether your child is new to the school or not, and whether they have a close relationship with their tooth fairy, I trust they feel happy and settled and have made a great start to this academic year.

Year 1

On Monday, Year 1 had a fun-filled afternoon when they took their learning to the Cambridge Botanic Garden. Setting off in the sun after lunch, the children and adults alike spent their afternoon working together to compare different habitats, estimate and measure the largest trees, follow a tree trail using the identification cards to locate different trees native to Britain and sketch the wondrous plants that inhabit the arid deserts of the world. The magic of entering the 'rainforest' with its dark, green foliage and brightly coloured flowers was a new experience for some children whilst others, seasoned visitors of the garden, enjoyed learning new facts about the familiar plants and places in the garden.

On Wednesday morning 1DH delighted their parents, teachers and fellow pupils with an enchanting assembly on the health benefits of spending time around trees and woodlands. They then entertained everyone with a self-made story of what one might find in a woodland setting. From 'Pigs in Wigs' to 'Owls on the prowl with towels' the children delivered their lines with clarity and confidence and a great degree of humour. The photos and videos they shared with the audience of their explorations of the trees around school reinforced how fortunate we are to be surrounded by such a lovely, spacious and tree-filled site.

Year 5 Hajj Experience

Year 5, as part of their Humanities studies on Islam, were able to experience the Hajj on Wednesday. Hajj is the Muslim pilgrimage and one of the five pillars of the faith. During Wednesday afternoon the children travelled to five stations around Ashburton Hall to discover the importance of this pilgrimage to the followers of the Muslim faith. At each station the children participated in a different activity such as dressing for Hajj and circling the Kabah. The children thoroughly enjoyed the experience and have come away with a better understanding of the Muslim faith as a result.

Year 2 Visit the Mobile Planetarium

On Thursday, Year 2 were given an astronaut's eye-view of the Solar System when a mobile planetarium visited Ashburton Hall. A digital orrery showed the eight major planets orbiting the sun as well as simulations of moon phases and the rotating Earth. Films and practical demonstrations had the children enthralled at the size and complexities of space. They clearly relished the opportunity to further explore the Solar System, which has been their topic of focus this term.

Minimalist Music

This term, Year 8 have been learning about minimalist music (developed in New York in the 60s) in their class music lessons and listening to composers such as Steve Reich and Terry Riley. On Tuesday, 8N performed a much shortened version of Riley's 'In C'. Pupils decided that they would like to use their own instruments for the lesson and quite by chance we had the most extraordinary range of instruments (marimba, orchestral xylophone, bass clarinet, soprano saxophone, 'cello, glockenspiel, violin, trumpet, clarinet, piano, classroom xylophones!). A truly wonderful snapshot of the range and breadth of musical learning taking place at St Faith's. For more information on Minimalism, visit the Music pages on the VLE Subjects/Year 8.

Rugby Festivals

Congratulations to the U11 boys' rugby players who won all their group matches at the New Hall Rugby Festival last Sunday. Here is a photo of Mr North talking to the team.

Our U12 A squad competed at the Finborough Rugby Festival last weekend. Other than a narrow loss to Bedford they won all their other games. There was great excitement when England and Northampton Saints hooker, Dylan Hartley, helicoptered in to land on the Headmaster's lawn and to meet the boys. As ever, our children did themselves and St Faith's proud.

Junior Brass Trip to Oundle School

Eight St Faith's brass players are visiting Oundle School today for a Mass Musicians' Day. Our pupils are joining 80 brass players from several schools, forming three brass ensembles followed by a performance to parents in the Great Hall at Oundle. This is truly an inspirational concert for all our beginner brass players. On Monday our advanced brass players will join forces with brass players at The Leys as well as with the UK's original rock n' roll oompah band, [Oompah Brass](#). Described as "legends in lederhosen" (Chris Evans, BBC Radio 2), Oompah Brass are a five-piece brass group specialising in high-energy performances of rock and pop classics. This concert is on Monday 15th October at 19:00 in the Great Hall at The Leys. It is open to the public and you are most welcome to attend with tickets available through The Leys School [box office](#).

Weekend Events

Tomorrow sees over 20 pairs of pupils and parents competing in the annual St Faith's Golf Competition at Cambridge Lakes. Pupils from Years 3 to 8 will be competing, in Greensomes format, with a parent or other adult for a chance to win The Leggoe Shield. The tournament is designed to be a fun introduction to golf but we have no doubt that the standard will be as high as ever. Very best of luck to all those taking part.

At the same time, our U13 boys' rugby side will be in action at the Framlingham College rugby festival. We wish them a great day.

On a less energetic but equally competitive note, the first round of Cambridgeshire Chess League matches will take place at St Faith's tomorrow morning. For those new to the school, this league was founded about 5 years ago by our Head of Computing, Mr Mitchell. It rapidly grew in popularity and now includes over 20 school teams (from maintained and independent schools) which compete at St Faith's on a number of Saturday mornings throughout the year. Junior chess is now thriving in Cambridge and at St Faith's thanks to Mr Mitchell and his large band of volunteers.

AcE Day

As you can see from the programme in the index of this newsletter, the children will be enjoying a feast of trips and special in-house events on the AcE (Academic Enrichment) Day for Years 3 to 8 next Thursday. The day itself will culminate in a Science sleepover where almost all of Year 5 have signed up to an evening of Science experiments, pizza supper, a late-night film and overnight stay in the Ashburton Hall! Mollie and I will be on patrol during the evening but will be staying in our own beds on that night.

Half-Term

A reminder that we break up for half-term on the evening of Thursday 18th October and the Michaelmas Term resumes at 0820 on Tuesday 30th October. There will be no newsletter, therefore, next Friday.

Finally...

I thought you might like to see this [brochure](#) from Chartwells, which is sent to all schools that use this catering company. It prominently features Kevin Johnson, our Head Chef who, you may be interested to know, has been selected (by Chartwells) to cook the dinner at the annual Chartwells Awards Ceremony in London during half-term. Both the brochure and the selection as Head Chef at the annual awards evening speak volumes for the regard with which Kevin is

held on the catering circuit.

I will finish with a photo from yesterday lunchtime showing our children enjoying the spirit of Multi Coloured Sock Swap Day, a charity event run by Latham House in aid of Action for Children.

With all good wishes.

Nigel Helliwell