

THIS WEEK AT ST FAITH'S

14 December 2018

How about this cracker joke which appeared at the School Christmas lunch on Wednesday. 'What does Santa call his little helpers?' The answer - 'Subordinate clauses!' I think the English Department would have been pleased to have written that one. The rest of the cracker jokes weren't any better than usual, but it didn't prevent everyone from revelling in the Christmas spirit and enjoying a delicious festive meal. Santa made a surprise appearance to hand out the crackers, although on this occasion, he didn't have any subordinate clauses to help him.

On Tuesday, the Pre Prep Christmas party had an air of serenity as the children politely shared snacks and sang Christmas songs to the catering staff.

https://youtu.be/WyljZhV2_og

It was full-on partying on Wednesday evening when Years 5 to 8 let their hair down at the Christmas discos. Some of the staff couldn't resist a quick bop, as you can see from the photos.

Year 3 and 4 Carols Around the Tree

Also on Wednesday the Year 3 and 4 pupils, staff, parents and grandparents gathered in the Hall for an afternoon of 'Carols around the Tree'. Following a series of impressive ensembles, all the children sang a nativity musical, 'Hurry to Bethlehem', a series of enchanting

songs interspersed with readings from their teachers, which altogether told the Christmas story. By the time we had all joined in some congregational carols and enjoyed a mince pie and mulled wine afterwards, Christmas was well under way.



Rotary Concert

There was plenty of carol singing at the Rotary Concert at Great St Mary's Church on Monday evening. The rapidly growing Senior Choir, now over 60 in number, was one of six school choirs to perform and I am delighted to say that our singers did the school proud. A photograph and video restriction on the night prevents me from showing you the children in action, but here is a lovely photo of some of them before the concert, enjoying the festive atmosphere in Cambridge.

Last House Standing

Yesterday afternoon pupils and staff joined together for 'Last House Standing', an almost indescribable blend of random comedy acts, wildly-enthusiastic competitive singing and general mayhem. One surprise after the next kept us all hugely entertained. The afternoon kicked off with Mr Mutucumarama, Miss Jones, Mr Gillick and the band performing some Christmas

favourites, closely followed by Mr Kite and Mr Critchley, the Morecambe and Wise of St Faith's, warming up the audience with a comedy double act. Then came a flurry of singing, dancing, acrobatics, instrumental music and surprise entrances from staff and children wearing fancy dress, ranging from the sublime to the ridiculous. We even had a staff pantomime, 'Cinderella', with the two ugly sisters played by Mr Kite and Mr North, which had to be seen to be believed.

Somewhere in the middle of all the hilarity was a competitive House singing competition, and a very good one indeed, with the standard as high as anyone can remember. The children's singing, accompanied by a live band, raised the roof of the Ashburton Hall with renditions from famous musicals, 'Consider Yourself', 'Electricity', 'Just can't wait to be King' and 'Mama Mia.' In all the mayhem and laughter, Chaucer won, but the real winner was the event itself. I can honestly say that I will never forget the afternoon and my cheeks are still aching from all the laughter. What a fabulous event which highlighted the very special atmosphere at St Faith's.

Carol Services

After the frenetic excitement of the Christmas lunches, parties, discos and variety shows, we ended the term on a more traditional note today with our Carol Services. At St Faith's we have much to be thankful for and these services provide a great opportunity for the school community to come together to reflect on the meaning of Christmas and consider those who are less privileged than ourselves. Thank you to all the parents and grandparents who were able to join us for these special occasions.

The End of Term

It has been three and a half months since the school community reunited, all bright-eyed and bushy tailed from our summer vacations, to begin another school year. The Michaelmas Term is the longest of the three terms by some considerable distance and therefore, the most important period for teaching and learning. As always, there have been many remarkable achievements to note, many of which have been highlighted in this weekly newsletter. Much of the great work, however, goes on quietly behind the scenes. From the jolly phonics programme in Foundation to the learning of Latin conjugations and declensions in Year 8, and all the learning in between, it is the dedication and talents of our staff and pupils in day-to-day lessons that enable so much progress and success to be achieved. I see this at first-hand every day, particularly when I show prospective parents around the school, but I appreciate that for many this is largely hidden.

In the final newsletter of the term, therefore, I would like to say a sincere thank you to each pupil and member of staff for their enthusiasm and inspiration in class every day over the past term. It is this valuable work that is the heart-beat of the school and creates our uniquely positive and purposeful environment.

Finally...

A splendid array of Christmas jumpers brightened up the School yesterday, all in aid of Meseret, a charity that supports homeless women in Ethiopia. The founder, Mrs Duke, gave a powerful presentation in assembly on Monday.



In the very early hours of tomorrow morning, forty of our pupils will set off for a week of skiing in Mayrhofen, Austria. I wish them a fantastic holiday.

Whether you are skiing down mountains, walking up hills or just relaxing at home, I hope you have a very happy Christmas and wonderful holiday and we look forward to seeing you again in 2019!

With all good wishes,

Nigel Helliwell