

# THIS WEEK AT ST FAITH'S

11 January 2019

## Happy New Year!

Happy New Year and welcome back for what promises to be another busy term. I hope you enjoyed a wonderful Christmas break and that your children are feeling refreshed and ready for the challenges of the new term. It is always a great pleasure for me to see the children back at school and the St Faith's community reunited after the break.

I used my start of term assembly on Wednesday morning to wish everyone a Happy New Year, and explore, with the children's input, how they can continue to make the most of their opportunities at school and just as importantly, help others to do the same. We focused on the importance of supporting and encouraging others, including showing respect and understanding towards different points of view, a theme of the Queen's 2018 Christmas Address. I used the opportunity to highlight two recent examples of our pupils going out of their way to consider and help others. Over Christmas, Reuben (pictured here) and his family travelled to Uganda to support a school there, using the funds which Reuben had raised last term. What a lifetime opportunity that proved to be and one which Reuben certainly made the most of.

Closer to home, I was delighted to hear that the School Council (also pictured) has chosen to use some of their budget to enable children in a local primary school to access the Life Bus, a facility which visits our school biennially to provide lessons on life skills, linking with the children's work in PSHCE.

It is this mind-set of philanthropy, compassion, altruism, respect and tolerance that we will continue to cultivate and focus on over the coming months, reinforcing the importance of even the smallest acts of kindness and respect such as holding doors open, looking smart, showing gratitude and encouraging and supporting others. As the Queen alluded to in her Address, these are the skills which our communities need, particularly at this uncertain time in the country's future. I believe they will also help our young people to lead happy and fulfilling lives.

## **Ski Trip**

In the first week of the Christmas holiday, forty of our children in Years 5 to 8 enjoyed a fantastic week of skiing in Mayrhofen, Austria. The trip itself ran very well indeed until the return flight was cancelled owing to the closure of Gatwick Airport. Fortunately, alternative flights were found and after a marathon 19 hour journey, the party arrived back to school safely, a day later than scheduled. My sincere thanks to the party leader, Miss Kennerley, and her team of Mr North, Ms Cox, Mr Clayton-Smith and Mr Graves for managing the trip so well, particularly the last two days. The cabin crew on the planes were particularly complimentary about the behaviour of our children, which is always great to hear.

## **Uniform**

In assembly this week, pupils were reminded that if they wear a coat in school (and we encourage them to do so at this time of the year), only a school uniform coat should be worn. We also emphasised that the only jewellery which should be worn are small, plain stud earrings

(of gold or silver colour). Further details of uniform requirements are in the Parents' Handbook and a full uniform list can be viewed [here](#).

## Last House Standing

In the previous newsletter, you may have read my report of Last House Standing, a House singing competition which took place on the penultimate day of last term. You may be interested to see our videos (filmed by the Marketing Department) of the pupils' singing, both the House songs and the talent acts, which can be viewed [here](#).

## Old Fidelian Engineers

On Thursday we welcomed back three former Chaucer House pupils, George, Freddie and William, who have kept in touch with each other since leaving St Faith's in 2013. They are all now studying Engineering at university and wanted to come back to see The Hub in action. Mr Mageean gave them a tour of our new facilities and then we all enjoyed a good catch-up over lunch. If you are wondering what the boys are holding, I can tell you they are photos that Mrs Price found of the boys when they were in Year 8, displaying their experiments at the annual Science Fair!

## Finally...

When I delivered a birthday card to Lottie in Year 1 this week, I was impressed to see that the children were learning about onomatopoeias; below are pictures of the children hard at work and of some of them displaying the words they chose to illustrate.

This is the time of the year when many of our Year 8 pupils have their heads down, revising for and sitting the various entrance and scholarship assessments to senior schools. They are very well prepared but will still have more than a twinge of anxiety as the day of the exam approaches. My very best wishes to them and indeed every member of the St Faith's community for a happy, fulfilling and successful 2019.

With all good wishes,

Nigel Helliwell