

THIS WEEK AT ST FAITH'S

01 March 2019

I hope you and your family enjoyed a lovely half-term and your children have settled back in to their school routines. The glorious weather has made for an uplifting start to this half-term with the sun shining brightly on our fields, children playing happily under blue skies and quite amazingly for February, our groundsman, Mr Gibbs, mowing the grass! Never to miss an opportunity, the local ice-cream van appeared on Newton Road after school this week - another bizarre sight at this time of the year. Anyway, normal weather has resumed, coats are back on and umbrellas will be up this weekend.

If you haven't seen much of me this week, it is because I have been inspecting another school, something I do once a year. I find it fascinating to see, in depth, another school in action. It also helps me to fully understand the inspection process and prepare St Faith's for inspection when the time comes.

News of the Edible Kind

We were delighted to hear that our Head Chef, Kevin Johnson, was awarded the 'Golden Whisk' in the Chartwells Chef of the Year Final during half term. He was placed second overall and missed out on the top spot by just two points. This year Kevin cooked up a mouth-watering, strictly gluten-free, menu that included blow-torched sea bass served with crushed new potatoes, smoked cauliflower puree, roasted cauliflower, wilted spinach and roasted shallots finished with a lemon & dill sauce. Whilst Kevin is disappointed not to have won, he is pleased to have moved up from his 3rd place position last year and is already planning his winning menu for 2020! Our congratulations to Kevin on this considerable accolade.

In further catering related news, Coeliac UK recently conducted an assessment of our catering and are pleased to report that we have retained our Gluten Free accreditation. Our thanks to Catering Manager Peter Burt and his team who work hard to ensure that all members of the school community have access to, where necessary, allergen-free and nutritious food every day.

Year 2 on the Trail of Dinosaurs

Earlier this week Year 2 consolidated much of their recent topic on dinosaurs with a visit to the Sedgwick Museum. Using dinosaur fossils as sources of evidence, the children investigated how our understanding of dinosaurs has changed over time, and how it continues to change as we find more fossil evidence. Museum staff showed the children just how rare dinosaur fossils are and looked at some examples of how we interpret fossils by looking at the characteristics of animals that are alive today. Clearly everyone enjoyed the trip and learnt a lot along the way.

Year 7 Shakespeare Event

On Thursday, Year 7 were immersed in the world of Macbeth when the Young Shakespeare Company visited St Faith's. A storyteller and four actors performed Shakespeare's mesmerising story of ambition, guilt and revenge in a fast-moving fully-costumed interactive production. Brought vividly to life around and amongst the children, the actors included the whole audience to create dramatic scenes such as the meeting between Macbeth and the witches.

Our pupils were encouraged to explore the motives, thoughts and feelings of the characters, improvising, for example, how Lady Macbeth might try to persuade her husband to carry out the assassination of the King. Volunteers were also chosen to become individual characters in the story. This was a most enjoyable enrichment event for Year 7 as part of their Arts Award work,

and no doubt an experience they will remember for some time.

Sport

It has been a busy week for the sports teams. In addition to the many school fixtures, yesterday we hosted the regional qualifiers for the IAPS U11 netball, today our U12 and U13 netball teams are competing for places in the National Finals at Felsted and our U11 boys' hockey team are playing in the regional qualifying tournament at Bishop's Stortford. We have just received today's results and I am delighted to tell you that the U11 boys and the U12 girls won their regional tournaments and the U13 girls finished 2nd, so all three teams have reached the National Finals of their respective competitions. What a day for the sports teams!

This weekend our U9, U10, U11 and U13 girls' gymnastics teams are travelling to St Catherine's School, Surrey, for the ISGA National Gymnastics Championships, which is, according to Mrs North, the most hotly contested gym event of the year. We wish the girls competing and their coaches all the very best of success.

This weekend Ashburton Hall will host the final event of the Cambridgeshire Chess League season. Thirty teams, including four from St Faith's, will be competing. Our 'A' team is currently lying 4th in the league table and are hoping to perform well enough on Saturday to clinch a bronze medal position. We wish all 24 St Faith's pupils the very best of luck and look forward to reporting the results next week.

My Special Place

Where is the place where you feel most happy and peaceful? This was the question posed by the Year 4 teachers as part of a recent Humanities project. As you might expect, the children's responses were wide and varied and included their bedrooms, their scout hut, their grandparents' garden, Waterstones book shop, Murrayfield and Twickenham! Here is photo of a few of the children with their work in my office today.

The Week Magazine

This week we heard that The Week has selected St Faith's as the 'Best for Innovation' in their 'Best of the Best' Schools Section. The link to the article can be read [here](#).

Finally

The staff football team surpassed all expectations by winning the annual indoor matches against the Old Fidelians and Parents' teams. Our new signing, Mr Day, had a remarkable debut as goalkeeper, keeping a clean sheet in both matches and providing plenty of entertainment with his flamboyant saves. Manager and Captain, Mr Clayton-Smith, was left surprised and delighted by the team's performance and is already plotting tactics for next year's matches. Thank you to everyone who played and stayed to enjoy the refreshments and banter afterwards.

With all good wishes,

Nigel Helliwell