



From small beginnings...

In assembly this week, Mr Davenport shared a story with the children that neatly captured the idea that small beginnings, when combined with ambition and perseverance, can lead to something remarkable. In 1968, a local farmer from Swaffham Bulbeck began a nursery business supplying cut flowers to the wholesale trade. He ran it from a single shed before eventually acquiring a 14-acre site in Great Shelford, allowing the business to expand. Many of you will recognise that business today as Scotsdales, founded by the late David Rayner.

Together with his daughter, Caroline, Mr Rayner grew the enterprise into the group of Cambridgeshire garden centres that are now so familiar to the local community. Importantly, the business has remained in family ownership, with service to and support of the local community at the heart of its values.

Mr Davenport used this story to illustrate to the children how ideas, when paired with dedication and hard work, can grow far beyond their original form. From our eight key Learning Habits, we are reminded that ambition and resilience are skills that support us throughout life, and that believing in ourselves and having the confidence to try, is often the most important first step.



New Era Speech and Drama Examinations

Pupils who took the New Era Speech and Drama examinations last term have received an outstanding set of results, with every award achieved at Distinction or Merit level. In total, our pupils were awarded 26 Distinctions and 20 Merits. These results reflect careful preparation, confidence and commitment, and I should like to congratulate all involved on their success. Thank you as well to those staff involved in providing expert teaching and support of the pupils in this specialism of Speech and Drama performance.

Angles Battleships

Mrs Rainsford writes,

“Our Year 6 pupils have been diving into the world of geometry this term. One highlight was an exciting ‘Angles Battleships’ activity, where pupils used their knowledge of angles to plot and locate battleships on a grid. The activity sparked lively competition and kept everyone highly engaged, while also developing accuracy in measuring and drawing angles.”





Cambridgeshire County Schools' Cross-Country Championships

Mr Mageean writes,

"Four of our Year 7 girls represented Cambridge Schools in the **County Schools Cross Country Championships** at Ely on a very chilly Saturday morning last weekend (having all qualified from the recent City Championship). On a flat and fast course our pupils competing against the best 50 cross country runners from Ely, Huntington, Cambridge and Peterborough.

They all put in fantastic effort on the day and have shown great development of their race tactics, pacing and sprint finishes. Our girls finished: 6th, 7th, 23rd and 31st. Two of our girls qualified inside the top 14 and they are to be congratulated on being awarded their County vests – they progress to the next round which is the Anglian Schools' Cross Country Championships which take place at Northampton later this month.

It was also super to see two Old Fidelians also qualifying to represent the County in the next



round too; winner of the Minor Boys event and 11th place in the Junior Girls event.”





Humanities Challenges

Miss Dow writes,

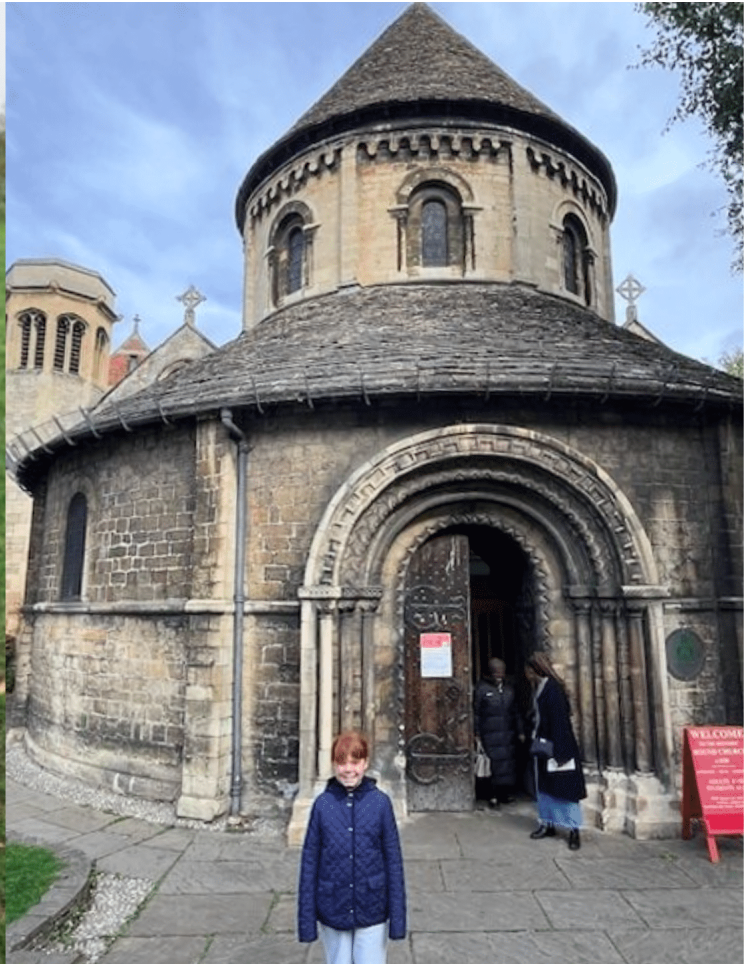
“Throughout last term, pupils in Years 5 to 8 were busy completing Humanities Challenges in their own time. Each year group was given a selection of challenges linked to the topics they were studying, allowing pupils to choose activities that particularly interested them.

Over 50 pupils completed more than 100 challenges. These ranged from cooking a South American meal and litter picking along a stream, to reading a book set in Victorian England or learning to play the classical piece *Vltava* on a musical instrument. Some pupils visited significant historical and geographical landmarks, including Canterbury Cathedral, the Georgian House in Bristol, and closer to home, Castle Hill and the Leper Church. Others discovered fascinating artefacts and documents in museums, such as a hoard of medieval coins at the Fitzwilliam Museum and the Magna Carta at the British Library. Their enthusiasm and curiosity, so evident in their photographs, have been a delight to see.

Congratulations to all pupils who took part — we hope you are inspired to explore this term's new set of challenges.”







Entrance Assessments

As reported in last week's newsletter, we have been welcoming applicants seeking to join St Faith's in Years 1 to 7 this September. Yesterday served as a further assessment date for children who were unable to attend on 8th January, including some travelling from overseas. We were pleased that our prospective pupils were able to complete their assessments in a happy and welcoming atmosphere, enjoying time with current pupils at break and lunchtime. We do hope they enjoyed their morning with us.

'Pop-in & Play': A warm welcome

On Wednesday morning, we opened our doors to prospective Reception and Preschool families for our 'Pop-in & Play' event. Visitors had the opportunity to experience first-hand the vibrant, nurturing environment that defines Early Years education at St Faith's, and it was a pleasure to welcome so many families into school.

The Leys Scholarships Assessments

Those who follow our social media channels will have seen that on Tuesday we welcomed the Head of The Leys, Dr Clare Ives, who undertook scholarship interviews with our pupils. Dr Ives commented on how well the children presented themselves and she also noted their kindness and support for one another, which was particularly commendable.

Scholarship assessments have also been taking place at The Leys this week and they will continue into next week. Undertaking scholarship assessments of any kind represents a significant commitment and our pupils have prepared extremely diligently for the occasion. We wish all those involved every success.



SFPA and Old Fidelians

The start of term also marked the first meetings of 2026 for both the St Faith's Parents' Association (SFPA) and Old Fidelians (OF). Members of these invaluable volunteer committees give most generously of their time throughout the year, playing a vital role in planning events and activities that enrich our school community.

If you would be interested in joining or supporting their work — whether as a committee member or through one-off involvement — please do get in touch via sfpa@stfaiths.co.uk (SFPA) or marketing@stfaiths.co.uk (OF). Looking ahead, the SFPA Easter Community Day will take place on Saturday 14th March, and the 2026 Old Fidelian BBQ is scheduled for Friday 4th September.



Next week

Next week the Pre Prep children are going to be very busy, as they seek to banish 'Blue Monday' with brightly coloured outfits and plenty of energetic outdoor play to lift everyone's spirits. The day will also include a mindfulness session for parents at the end of the school day, provided by Mrs Walker. Meanwhile on Tuesday, Year 2 will embark on an interstellar journey with a visit from the Stardome Planetarium, and Year 8 Art & Design pupils will find inspiration at the Castle Fine Art Gallery.

Before then, we wish the Years 5 and 6 boys the very best of luck as they take part in hockey matches tomorrow against Kent College.



And Finally...

This week has included many quiet reminders of the habits that underpin effective learning — curiosity, independence, collaboration and resilience among them. These qualities develop steadily over time, and it is always uplifting to see them evident across the school.

As the first shoots of Spring bulbs start to appear around us, I do hope the weekend provides an opportunity for some relaxation before another busy week.

With all best wishes,

C. Hyde ~ Dunn

Crispin Hyde-Dunn