Welcome back

It is a great pleasure to welcome back our families at the start of the new term, including all our new pupils. This year we have a total of 64 new pupils across all year groups joining the St Faith's community, and we are helping them to settle in and find their feet. There will always be a friendly face to point someone in the right direction for their next lesson, to explain when to go into lunch, or where to store a games bag. The start of a new school year brings changes for everyone, as all our pupils find their way around new classrooms and timetables. Please do encourage your children to ask for help if they need it, whether from their teacher, a member of the support staff, their friends, or one of our more senior pupils, who will always be happy to help.

Be Curious and Give Time to Grow

One of the occasions that marks the beginning of a new academic year is our first whole-school assembly, when pupils and staff gather together in Ashburton Hall. It is always a special moment as we welcome new pupils and look ahead together to the year before us.

In our assembly on Thursday, I reminded the children that the beginning of a new academic year brings with it a sense of excitement and anticipation. For some pupils, it means joining a new year group; for others, it means new teachers, new classmates, new responsibilities and new opportunities. Whatever stage of school life they find themselves in, there are fresh experiences ahead for everyone.

I decided to illustrate our theme by telling the children a story about something that happened one summer in our garden. My wife and I noticed a chrysalis attached to our garden gate. We watched it regularly, but for weeks nothing seemed to happen. It remained still and unchanged. Then, gradually, its colour began to alter. One day, when we returned home from work, we found the chrysalis empty. A Red Admiral butterfly had emerged and flown away. We had recorded its progress with photographs, which I was able to share with the children as I told the

story.

There are several lessons we can learn from this simple but remarkable event. We reflected first on the importance of patience. The children considered how we often want things to happen immediately, when in fact growth, learning and achievement can take time and require perseverance, commitment and determination.

We also considered how little we could tell simply by looking at the chrysalis. For several weeks it seemed as though nothing was happening, yet inside an extraordinary transformation was taking place. This prompted us to think about how the same might sometimes be true of people: we cannot necessarily see the progress someone is making, or know what is happening beneath the surface, simply from outward appearances.

Finally, we reflected on how easy it can be to become so busy that we fail to notice some of the remarkable things happening around us every day. The natural world is full of wonder if we take the time to notice. Our Bible reading from The Book of Job this week also invited pupils to consider what we can learn from the natural world.

As we look ahead to the year before us, we considered the new interests and talents that pupils might discover along the way. A subject, activity or hobby that previously held little appeal might become a new enthusiasm, and some of the most rewarding experiences can come from being willing to try something new and keep an open mind.

As we begin this new school year, I encouraged everyone to be curious, to keep looking up and around, and to embrace the opportunities that come their way. Above all, I asked pupils to give themselves and others the time and space to grow.

Welcome!
St Faith's

Year 8 Prefect Tie Presentation

At the start of the school year, I have the happy privilege of conferring prefect status on our Year 8 pupils. On Wednesday morning, I presented each Year 8 pupil with their distinctive red tie. The prefect role is a very important one at St Faith's and offers all our Year 8 pupils new opportunities for leadership and responsibility, such as buddying, supporting and mentoring younger pupils. Further roles for our prefects will be introduced later this term.

With the theme of 'being our best selves' carried through from Preschool to Year 8, we look to our prefects to be excellent role models for the younger children. I am grateful to the families of all our Year 8 pupils for their ongoing support with this message at home, and I wish our new prefects every success as they take on their responsibilities.

First Days of School

As always, the first day of term brings some lovely moments as children renew friendships, find their new classrooms and settle back into the routines of school life. For one group of children in particular, Friday was a very memorable day as the Reception children arrived for their very first day at St Faith's.

Accompanied by their parents and greeted by their teachers and the wider Early Years team, the children began exploring their new classrooms and getting to know one another. We hope that they thoroughly enjoyed their first day and will be looking forward to returning on Monday.

Speaking of Monday, we will be welcoming our youngest pupils to the St Faith's community when eight new Preschool children begin their St Faith's journey.

We do hope that you enjoy this selection of photographs capturing some of the activity around school during these first few days of term.

THE HUB

Inside Science

Mrs Pritchard writes:

"It has been wonderful to welcome all of the children back after their holidays and to see the laboratories full of pupils once again. We have certainly hit the ground running, with pupils across all year groups already engaging in exciting practical work and developing their scientific knowledge and skills.

Year 5 pupils have begun their very exciting journey into science within a laboratory setting. They have been learning about essential laboratory rules, identifying and using equipment safely, and building anticipation for gaining that all-important Bunsen burner licence later in the term.

Year 6 students have been putting their survival skills to the test by applying their knowledge of chemistry to investigate how fresh water can be obtained should they ever find themselves

stranded on a desert island. This topic has provided an excellent opportunity to develop both practical and problem-solving skills.

Year 7 pupils have officially embarked on the Key Stage 3 curriculum. They have been carrying out food tests using Benedict's solution to identify the presence of reducing sugars and iodine solution to determine whether starch is present in a variety of foods. These investigations have encouraged the children to think critically about the science behind everyday items.

Year 8 students have stepped up to a new level of challenge by investigating the affinity of different metals for oxygen and relating their findings to the reactivity series. They have also begun identifying and describing redox reactions, developing a deeper understanding of the chemical processes that underpin these important concepts.

It is already shaping up to be a fantastic year in Science, and we look forward to seeing all our pupils continue to develop their curiosity, confidence and enthusiasm for the subject in the months ahead."

'Meet the Tutors' and 'Introduction to the School Year'

At St Faith's we value greatly the support that we receive from our parents in building and maintaining the partnership between home and school. Our 'Meet the Tutor' and 'Introduction to the School Year' evenings are part of this process, as we help families navigate the new school year. This week I greatly enjoyed meeting families in Years 1-3 and 5 & 6 and I do hope that these evening events were helpful and informative.

St Faith's
CAMBRIDGE
Kindness, Community, Excellence
Meet the Year 5 Tutors
and an Introduction to the
New School Year
Guys
Dolls

Old Fidelian Barbecue

This evening, our annual Old Fidelian (OF) BBQ will be held in the Headmaster's Garden. It is a happy opportunity for former pupils to catch up with old friends and to share stories about their time at the school. Some of our guests will remember St Faith's as an all-boys' boarding school, whilst for others their experience will be much more recent, following the school's transition to a co-educational day school.

We also look forward to being joined by members of the current and former teaching staff – and of course it is just possible that some of our former teachers will be reunited with their former pupils! If you are an Old Fidelian, and would like to keep in touch about our events, please register your details on our alumni database, Update Your Details – St Faith's Cambridge.

Our next events will be the OF v Parents 5-a-side football on **Friday, 13th November** and the Steele Bodgers match on **Wednesday, 25th November**. Please do save the dates.

Whole School Open Morning, Saturday, 10th October

As we look forward to the term ahead, our next Open Morning will take place on Saturday, 10th October. You may already have seen our banners displayed outside school. Although the event is predominantly for families who wish to join St Faith's in September 2027, we will also welcome families who are looking ahead to 2028, when they would be joining the new all-through school, The Leys School, Cambridge. Bookings are now open and families can register via our website, Visits & Open Mornings – St Faith's Cambridge

I warmly encourage you to share details of the Open Morning with any friends or colleagues who may be interested in finding out more about St Faith's for their children.

And Finally…

My thoughts return to the Red Admiral from Thursday's assembly. Its story gave us an opportunity to think about curiosity, patience and the value of taking time to notice what is happening around us — all useful thoughts with which to begin a new academic year. I hope our pupils enjoy discovering the many interests, activities and opportunities that await them over the months ahead.

I look forward to meeting with parents, both new and familiar, during the coming days and weeks. More immediately, I hope you and your family enjoy a relaxing and enjoyable weekend.

With all best wishes,

C. Hyde ~ Dunn

Crispin Hyde-Dunn