World Mental Health Day

Today we marked World Mental Health Day (which takes place tomorrow) by adding a cheerful splash of yellow to our usual school attire. From socks and ribbons to hats, gloves and even wellington boots, pupils and staff alike embraced the occasion with enthusiasm. In support of this important day, the school will be making a donation to the charity Young Minds, which supports children and young people with their mental health and wellbeing.

The occasion also provided an opportunity to remind pupils of the importance of looking after their mental wellbeing, alongside their physical health. We reflected on how talking to someone we trust can be helpful when we have worries or concerns. Pupils were reminded that they can speak not only to parents, siblings and friends, but also to the many adults in school who are here to help – their teachers, tutor, Head of Year, or our school nurses.

For those who might prefer to write rather than talk, we have MyVoice on Teams or Seesaw, which provides another way for pupils to share any worries or concerns with staff.



This Week at St Faith's





C Cubed Essay Competition Launches for 2026

The C Cubed Essay Competition has launched for the new academic year, offering Year 7 and 8 pupils another opportunity to explore subjects that interest them and develop their research and writing skills through the school's academic enrichment programme. Building on the success of last year's competition, which attracted 36 entrants from St Faith's and The Leys, we hope that even more pupils will take up the challenge this year.

C Cubed stands for:

Connection – between St Faith's and The Leys, and between different ideas.

Curiosity – asking questions and exploring topics in depth.

Creativity – thinking imaginatively and exploring new approaches.

Pupils can choose from 13 thought-provoking essay titles covering a wide range of subjects and interests. Each essay should be between 1,000 and 1,100 words and is expected to take around four to six hours to complete.

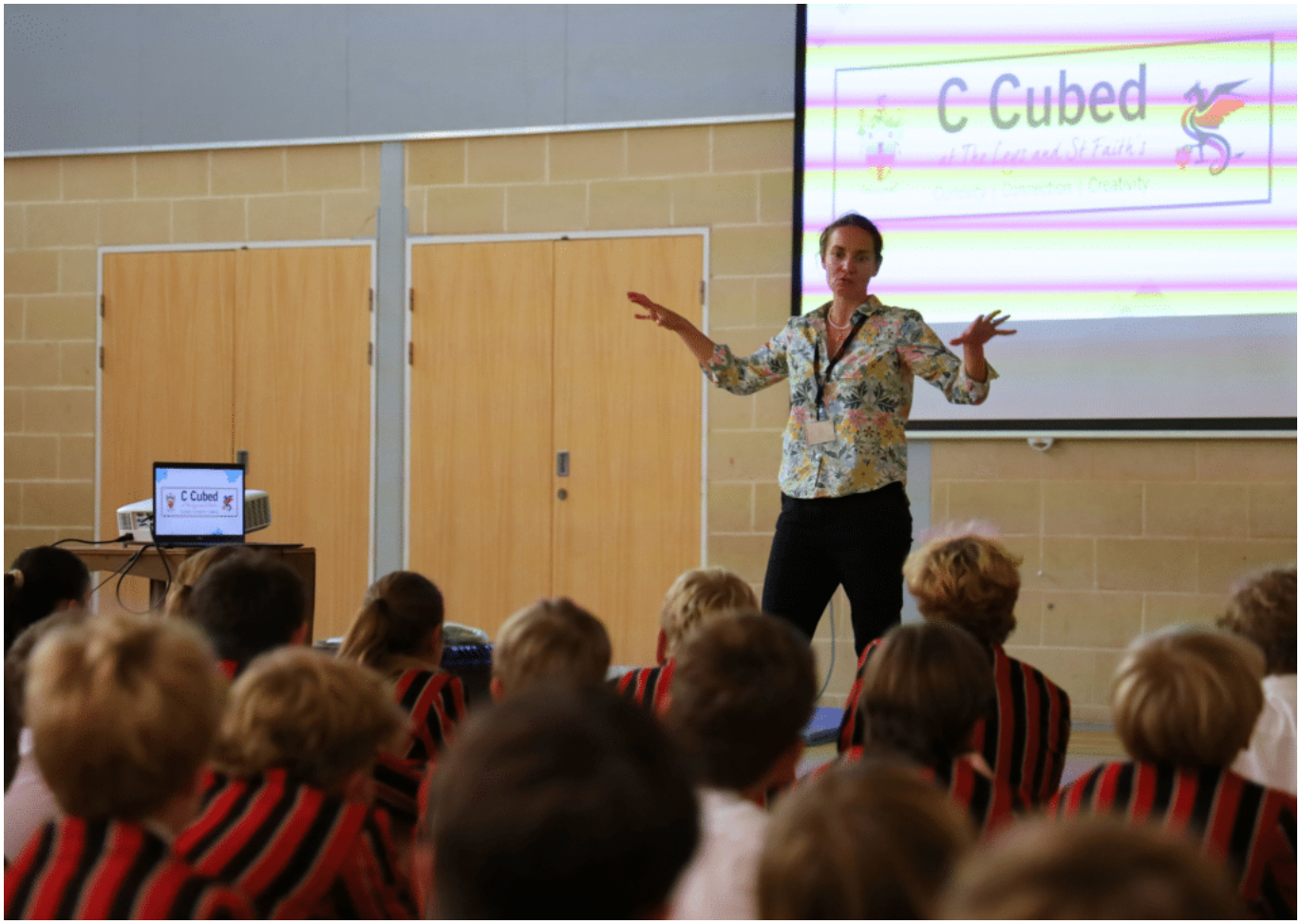
The competition provides a valuable opportunity for pupils to explore a topic that genuinely interests them in greater depth, whilst developing key skills that will benefit them both now and in the future. For those considering academic scholarships in due course, the experience may also provide useful preparation for independent research and discussion.

The process encourages pupils to plan carefully, research thoroughly, draft thoughtfully and refine their work. Along the way, they will strengthen their writing skills, learn from feedback and redrafting, and develop confidence in expressing their ideas clearly and persuasively. These qualities lie at the heart of the C Cubed programme, which aims to foster curiosity, creativity and intellectual exploration.

The first draft deadline is Tuesday, 3rd November, with final submissions due by Monday, 16th November. Winners will be announced on Monday, 7th December, and the overall winners will enjoy conversation over afternoon tea with the Heads of both St Faith's and The Leys.

We wish all entrants the very best of luck and look forward to reading this year's essays.

This Week at St Faith’s



Harvest Festival: A Celebration of Gratitude and Generosity

On Tuesday, the St Faith's community came together for our annual Harvest Festival service, giving pupils an opportunity to reflect on the importance of gratitude, generosity and helping those in need.

The modern tradition of Harvest Festival services in British churches is often traced back to 1843, when the Reverend Robert Stephen Hawker invited his parishioners to a special thanksgiving service in Morwenstow, Cornwall. More than 180 years later, this tradition of giving thanks and helping others continues to have an important place in school life.

Pupils joined in singing *The Harvest Samba* before reflecting on the words of Psalm 65, which speaks of flowing rivers, fertile fields and God's provision for the world. The assembly also included the familiar story of the feeding of the five thousand from St John's Gospel, which encouraged pupils to reflect on the importance of sharing what we have with others.

We were delighted to welcome Major Chaundy from The Salvation Army in Cambridge. He thanked the children for their warm welcome and expressed his gratitude for the many generous donations of food contributed by St Faith's families. He also spoke about the important work of The Salvation Army, which supports people in need in Cambridge and beyond, through a range of community initiatives.

The assembly concluded with a performance of *Seeds of Friendship* by the Junior Choir, bringing the service to a fitting close.

The food donated by our families will help support people in need within our local community through the work of The Salvation Army. I am very grateful to all our families for their generous contributions, and to the pupils and staff who helped prepare this year's Harvest Festival service.

This Week at St Faith's







Reception Books & Biscuits

The Library is a favourite place for many pupils and staff at St Faith's, and this week saw the welcome return of our popular *Books & Biscuits* sessions. Parents spent time with their children and enjoyed reading a favourite book together – accompanied, of course, by a biscuit or two. Our librarian, Miss Johnson, was on hand to welcome families, and I hope everyone enjoyed the opportunity to relax and read together in the calm and inviting surroundings of the Library.

This Week at St Faith’s





History off the Page: The Great Fire of London

Ms Hendry writes,

"On Monday, Year 2 travelled back to 1666 for an immersive day learning about London life during the time of the Great Fire of London. The children started the day by becoming apprentices, learning skills common for workers of the era such as leather work, bread making, candle making and sewing under the watchful eyes of master craftsmen (teachers and family members who volunteered to help)! The Barber surgeon was a popular potential job amongst our young apprentices, but strangely becoming a baker was not! Some children also became rat catchers, plague doctors and body collectors as unfortunately the plague was still rife. However, with the flames drawing ever nearer, the children had to take action to stop it, including forming fire lines and tearing down local buildings. Sadly, they weren't successful and lots of the city burnt. In the afternoon, the children had to excavate what was left of the charred city, looking for personal belongings and important legal documents that could help the city start

the process of rebuilding.

The day provided children (and adults) with a deeper understanding of our history topic and most importantly everyone had lots of fun with some declaring it the "best day ever!"."



This Week at St Faith’s





Success in the Rugby Poetry Competition

We are delighted to congratulate one of our Year 6 pupils, who has been awarded a Highly Commended certificate in the prestigious *Ode* Poetry Competition organised by Rugby School.

This achievement recognises creativity and literary talent, and the award brought with it the opportunity to spend a special day at Rugby School alongside other prize winners from across the country. The day included a range of inspiring creative writing workshops and activities, giving young writers the chance to develop their skills and share their interest in poetry with other young writers.

Many congratulations on this well-deserved recognition. Be sure to read our prize winner's own account of the experience in the sidebar of this newsletter, where they reflect on their day at Rugby School and the activities they enjoyed.

Science in Focus

Mrs Pritchard writes,

"Year 5

Our Year 5 pupils have been developing their investigative skills by independently carrying out a practical investigation into **forces and friction**. They explored how the surface of a ramp can affect the amount of force needed to move an object, carefully collecting results and drawing conclusions from their findings. The topic concluded with an exciting look into the wonderful world of **magnetism**, where pupils created impressive 3D models of magnetic field lines to visualise how magnetic forces act around a magnet.

Year 6

Year 6 have begun their Physics unit on **light**, exploring how light travels and enables us to see the world around us. As part of their studies, pupils completed a GCSE-style required practical investigating reflection, examining the relationship between the **angle of incidence** and the **angle of reflection** when light strikes a plane mirror. They demonstrated excellent practical skills and scientific reasoning throughout the investigation.

Year 7

Year 7 have also started their Physics journey with a GCSE-style required practical focused on **density**. Pupils investigated how to calculate the density of an irregular object using a top-pan balance to measure mass and a Eureka can to determine volume by displacement. They worked scientifically to collect accurate measurements before applying the density equation to calculate their results.

Year 8

Year 8 continued their Biology studies by exploring **photosynthesis** and the complex structures within plants that enable this vital process to take place. Pupils examined plant cells and tissues under microscopes, producing detailed biological drawings to develop their observational skills. They also enhanced their digital literacy by using their iPads to capture and analyse images of microscope slides, combining traditional scientific techniques with modern technology.

Spelling Bee

Year 7 and Year 8 pupils also took part in the qualifying rounds for our inaugural entry into the Biology Spelling Bee, held as part of National Biology Week. The heats were fiercely contested, with pupils demonstrating an impressive command of complex biological terminology.

Congratulations go to a Year 7 and a Year 8 pupil, who both achieved perfect scores in their respective heats and went on to represent St Faith's in the finals.

Despite the understandably nerve-racking nature of the competition, both pupils performed exceptionally well and were excellent ambassadors for the school. Their final scores have now been submitted, and we look forward to hearing how they have fared against competitors from across the country. Well done to both pupils on a fantastic achievement!"



PE in Focus

Mrs North writes,

"In true St Faith's style, steeped in a long tradition, PE and Games are two very distinct areas of the curriculum. Differentiated by uniform, children participate in PE wearing their House tops, white socks, and black shorts.

The focus of PE is to introduce a diverse range of activities that will boost pupils' interest, confidence, and skill levels. This diversity reflects a cross-section of activities that are available through community clubs or can be enjoyed recreationally throughout life.

In Years 3 to 6, all pupils follow a core programme on a four-week carousel. They develop their swimming skills, enjoy gymnastics, take on challenges in ball skills, and improve their balance, agility, and coordination through athletic development. In Year 6, pupils exchange gymnastics for the thrill of trampolining.

The swimming programme in Year 7 focuses on personal survival skills, while in Year 8 pupils are introduced to Water Polo. In Health-Related Fitness, pupils learn about the effects of exercise on the body while developing an understanding of the basic psychology of sport.

In addition, pupils are asked to select five activities from a list and rank them in order of preference. The aim is to accommodate everyone in their three favourite activities.

On Wednesday 7th October, we reached the end of the first block of lessons. It has been fantastic to see the enthusiasm and progress shown by our oldest pupils in activities ranging from Water Polo and Athletics to Ultimate Frisbee and Volleyball.

On Monday 12th October, we embark on Block 2, introducing Trampolining, Table Tennis, and Badminton to this year's programme. We hope that these four-week taster sessions will inspire pupils to seek opportunities outside school to gain further experience in new sports and develop a lasting enthusiasm for them."

This Week at St Faith’s





This Week at St Faith’s







Parent-Teacher Meetings

On Thursday evening, it was a pleasure to welcome Year 6 parents to Ashburton Hall for their parent-teacher meetings. These evenings provide an important opportunity for parents and teachers to discuss pupils' progress and achievements, and are a valuable part of the partnership between home and school. I also enjoyed the opportunity to catch up informally with many of our parents during the evening.

Next week, it will be the turn of Year 3 and 4 parents on Monday and Wednesday, and Year 8 parents on Tuesday.

Years 7 & 8: School Ambassadors

As we look forward to our Whole School Open Morning on Saturday, we are fortunate to be able to draw on such an excellent and enthusiastic group of Year 7 and 8 pupils to act as ambassadors for St Faith's, welcoming prospective families and leading tours of the school. This week they have been preparing for this important role.

This is one of the many leadership opportunities available to our senior pupils, and I am sure they will rise to the occasion and enjoy representing St Faith's. The Open Morning is now fully booked, and we are very much looking forward to welcoming prospective families and giving them a first-hand experience of what a St Faith's education can offer.

Thank you to our parents, pupils and staff for supporting this important school event.

Calling All Old Fidelians!

We are looking forward to welcoming Old Fidelians back to St Faith's for two sporting and social occasions this autumn, offering opportunities to reconnect with former classmates, friends and members of the school community.

OF Football v Parents

Friday, 13th November, 5.30pm to 7.30pm, Sports Hall

Whether you are keen to take to the pitch or simply cheer from the sidelines, we hope you will join us for an enjoyable evening of football and an opportunity to catch up with old friends. Post-match refreshments will be served.

Steele Bodgers Rugby Match

Wednesday, 25th November

This much-loved rugby fixture offers another opportunity for Old Fidelians to meet former

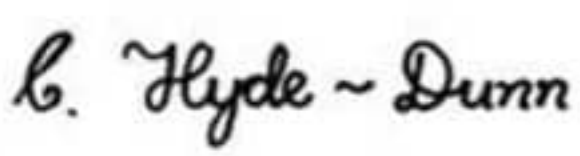
classmates and friends, with lunch beforehand. Please note that tickets for this event are limited. The match is organised directly by a group of Old Fidelians rather than the school's alumni association. Anyone interested in attending is welcome to contact marketing@stfaiths.co.uk in the first instance to enquire about availability.

And Finally…

I am very much looking forward to tomorrow's Open Morning. It is always a pleasure to see our Year 7 and 8 pupils taking such pride in showing prospective families around St Faith's, sharing their experiences of school life and answering questions along the way. I am grateful to everyone involved in preparing for the event and helping to make our visitors feel welcome.

I wish you all an enjoyable weekend and I hope that, after the activities of Saturday morning, there will be plenty of opportunity for some well-earned relaxation.

With all best wishes,



Crispin Hyde-Dunn