

Dear Parents

As we reach the end of a busy but exciting Autumn Term, my first as Headteacher, I would like to thank you all for your continued support and belief in all that St Faith's is. As I show prospective parents and children around the school, I see how they are 'wowed' by all the opportunities our school offers. Our specialist teaching, digital strategy, musical opportunities and achievements far beyond those offered at other primary schools represent a culture that fosters positive wellbeing for every member of our community, and I am so proud of the excellence we strive for and achieve in all that we do!

Being able to use the spectacular new Groves Hall has been the one of the highlights of this term. I take great pleasure in dropping in to see our nursery children developing their physical abilities: balancing, climbing, throwing, catching and dancing. Cheerleading club, tennis, basketball, netball, gymnastics and fencing are all on the timetable, and alongside our wonderful music curriculum these balance the academic studies of our pupils. Being able to relocate the Carol Service to Groves Hall today meant that we were able to enjoy one of my favourite events in the calendar, despite unfortunately not being able to hold it in St Nicholas Church. We gathered together as a school to listen to lessons from the Bible and sing traditional carols. Next term, we plan to use Groves Hall for many other events which will mean that our parents will be able to experience assemblies and concerts in this fabulous facility.

This term, our pupils have excelled again in their musical achievements and have made the most of the opportunity to take ABRSM exams. We have seen impressive outcomes for all involved including a number of distinctions, even at Grade 5. Well done to all who have worked so hard.

Year 6 have undertaken a number of assessments, including the Kent Test and Dover Grammar assessments this term. An impressive 81% of our Year 6 children have already been assessed as suitable for a grammar school place, and others have started the process of applying for scholarships at local independent secondary schools. I look forward to sharing their successes later in the year.

I am sure you will agree that one of the highlights of this term was our first EDI (Equality, Diversity and Inclusion) day. This was a spectacular event which was made possible by our dedicated EDI committee, led by Mrs Cavanagh. The committee's passion for broadening our pupils understanding of diversity saw a range of fascinating workshops delivered to the children, concluding with the inaugural St Faith's Colour Run, which was a riot of colour and will no doubt be etched in the memory of our pupils!

We also say farewell to some of our long-standing members of staff, who are leaving St Faith's for new ventures. Mrs Harrop has supported many of our pupils and families in their learning journeys, and our thanks go to her for her dedication to championing the needs of those who require additional support. Mrs Reynolds also leaves us this term, having spent many years overseeing the smooth transition of our children from the nursery into the main school. The all-important first teacher for so many of our pupils, she also led our team of Early Years practitioners in the nursery and will be sadly missed by us all. Miss Doble, or simply 'Doble' to many, leaves us to further develop her expertise. An outstanding Early Years practitioner, her patience and professionalism will undoubtedly benefit everyone who works with her in the future. Finally, we also say goodbye to Miss Hildersley who joined us as 1:1 teaching assistant, and rapidly became an integral member of our Early Years team. We wish each of them well in their future careers. St Faith's has been richer with them as part of the family.

Finally, I ask you to ensure that you and your families take time to reflect on the how fortunate we are. There has been some sadness in our community this term, and it reminds me that we must appreciate every day with friends

5 THE STREET, ASH, CANTERBURY CT3 2HH T: 01304 813409 E: [info@stfaithsprep.com](mailto:info@stfaithsprep.com) W: [www.stfaithsprep.com](http://www.stfaithsprep.com)  
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and loved ones. I wish you all a safe and restful Christmas break, and I look forward to the next chapter of our journey through this academic year and all the adventures it will bring.

Merry Christmas!

Helen Coombs

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