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Message from Miss Talbot

Welcome back! I hope that you all had a wonderful summer break and were able to enjoy lots of time together as a family. It has been lovely to catch up with the children about their exciting adventures over the holiday and to know that so many of them were looking forward to coming back to school. I am also delighted to welcome our all our new children and their families to Godinton and look forward to getting to know you too.

This term marks the start of a new chapter for our school. I have always been immensely proud to be part of the team at Godinton and after 16 years as Deputy Headteacher feel very privileged to be taking the school forward as Headteacher.

The children, staff, parents and governors all create a very special school environment and over the next few years we will continue to build positively on the accomplishments of our school. There will of course be some changes as we move forward and review our current policies and practices but the principles which already make our school a wonderful place to work and learn will be retained.

We have lots of exciting events to look forward to this year including celebrations for our school's 40th anniversary in the summer. An initial overview of core diary dates for this academic year will be sent out later this week.

I wish you all a happy and successful year.

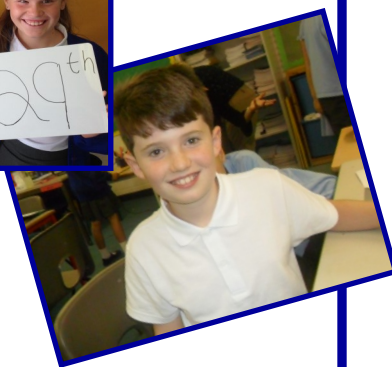
Miss Talbot

Year Group Welcome

Letters

We hope that you found the opportunity to meet your child's new teacher at the end of last term useful; it is always important to be able to put a name to a face. All staff will be out on the playground over the next couple of weeks at the end of the day so please take the opportunity to introduce yourself to them if you haven't already.

The systems in place in each year group will vary slightly as the children get older and move up the school. Every year group is producing an information letter for parents which outlines key information including details of homework, equipment needed and the days on which the children will be having PE. These will be sent out via ParentMail at the end of the week and will be put on the school website. The website also includes other useful information about how you can help your child at home with the phonics pages being especially useful for parents of children in Lower School.



Homework

This year we would like to have a significant push on reading, spelling and learning number facts as the core elements of homework. All children should be reading regularly at home and we would be grateful if parents could continue to spend time reading with their child each week.

The children will also have spellings / high frequency words to take home and learn and should either be practising their counting skills, number bonds to 10 and then 20 or their times tables (depending on their age and stage of development) each week as well. Parents often ask what they can do to support their children at home – focusing on these areas would be a tremendous help.

These core skills will then be supplemented by additional maths, English or topic tasks, further details of which will be outlined in the Year Group Welcome Letters. We will be moving to an online system of maths homework across the school this year and further details of this will be sent out in due course.

Clubs

The club timetable will also be distributed shortly. This term we are able to offer a variety of clubs across the year groups. Our clubs are very popular and it is not always possible to include all those who apply. However, staff running the club will rotate the groupings throughout the year in order to allow as many children as possible to attend.

Monday saw the auditions for this year's Young Voices choir. We are very much looking forward to taking those children successful in gaining a place up to the O2 in January.

Please assist our staff, many of whom run clubs on a voluntary basis, by ensuring that you arrive on time to collect your child from an after school activity.

PESE Information Evening

Please remember that an information evening for all parents regarding applying for a place at Secondary School will be held on Thursday 14th September at 7.00. Parents should keep an eye out for the dates of Secondary School Open Days and Information Evenings.

Summer Building Work

Over the summer, the school has been a hive of industry with a substantial amount of building and maintenance work taking place as well as a lot of hard work from the staff to get classrooms set up and ready for the start of the new year. Following a successful bid for Conditions Improvement Funding from the Department for Education we have been able to install Velux windows in the hall, Year R and Year 1 classrooms which will provide some much needed ventilation in these parts of the school. Further improvement to the school includes repairs to the floors and replacement carpets in 7 of our Middle and Upper School classrooms and the installation of a new server to improve the operation of our school IT systems.

Reception Outside Area



Thank you to everyone who made a donation to our

Reception outside area at the end of last year. Our Reception team and several parents have worked hard over the summer to make great use of all the items received. The children now have a new and improved mud kitchen, a stage and performance area, a fantastic pirate ship sand pit and an exciting area for construction. Please have a look over the fence as you come into school in the morning. These improvements will help to support our children with all areas of their learning and development. I am sure that they will find this an exciting place to be and will have lots of fun!

Site Safety

In order to enable our youngest children to be seen safely into and out of their classrooms, we will closing the gate nearest to the school building which separates the two playgrounds at the start and end of each day. The gate beyond the pirate ship should be used to move from the small playground to the large playground.

The pedestrian gate leading to the Chimneys path will now stay open until 6.15 pm in order to allow access to parents collecting from the nursery or the after school club. We hope that parents will find this helpful.

Please can we remind parents new to the school that the school car park cannot be used for parking or dropping off unless you are a blue badge holder and have requested permission from the school office.

School Uniform

All the children have returned to school looking very smart in their school uniform and it has been lovely to see so many children wearing our new school logo sweatshirts. Please remember that items of uniform, book bags and PE bags can now only be purchased from our online supplier:



www.kentschooluniform.com

As the weather has been so unpredictable recently, children will need to have a lightweight coat or waterproof jacket in school each day. Can I also ask that children do not wear nail varnish to school and that hair bows are kept to a sensible size and in the school colours of royal blue, black or grey. Only plain black shoes are permitted in school.

Thank you.

School Kitchen



We are sorry to be saying goodbye to our cook Wendy Woosey who has been part of the catering team at Godinton for the past year. Wendy will be putting her feet up, enjoying a well-deserved retirement at the end of this month and will be replaced by Jo Creed. Jo has already been working in the kitchen since the start of term and we wish her all the best in her new job. Our kitchen serving hatch has also had a makeover over the summer with the installation of a new hot plate serving station designed to keep the prepared food lovely and hot. Weekly menus will continue to be sent out via Parent Mail each week.

Safeguarding

You may have noticed that all school staff are now wearing lanyard ID badges to ensure that they are instantly recognisable to pupils and parents. All visitors to the school will be required to sign into the school office and will be issued with an orange ID badge.

If anyone has any concerns about the safety or wellbeing of any pupil at the school please contact Miss Talbot who is the school's safeguarding lead. In her absence Mrs Stein (Assistant Headteacher) or Mrs Jones (FLO) should be contacted.

The safeguarding pages on the school website contain useful information about safeguarding at Godinton. You will also find links to websites offering further information about child welfare.

Assemblies

Having rearranged our hall timetable we are delighted to now be able to invite parents into school to watch their child's class assembly. During the course of the year each class leads an assembly which usually focuses on showcasing the exciting things they have been learning about in class. We will include the dates of all class assemblies in the diary dates which will be sent out later this week. They will take place on a Friday afternoon at 2.40. We hope that you will enjoy the opportunity to be involved in this part of school life.

Godinton Star Award and House Points

Our Citizen of the Week Award will now become our Godinton Star Award. This will be given each week to one child from each class who has demonstrated our updated school values. Our Godinton Stars will be invited to tea party with Miss Talbot on Friday afternoons.

We will be retaining our current system for House Points this year with four new badges for the children to collect. We hope that we will have even more children reaching 100 house points by the end of the year.

This week our Year 6 House Captain elections will take place – good luck to all the children taking part.

Other Reminders ...

We do have a number to children who are frightened by dogs, large or small and have noticed that we have had an increasing number of dogs coming onto the playground. Can we therefore ask that dogs are not brought onto the site. Thank you.

Data collection sheets need to be returned to the school office by Monday 25th September, even if no changes need to be made.