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Message from Miss Talbot

Dear Parents,

As December approaches, we are into the season of cold weather and dark evenings. Although the prospect of snow doesn't seem likely at the moment we never know what might be on the horizon and as bad weather can impact on school opening, parents should be aware of school procedures in the event of closure.



In the event of heavy snow every effort will be made to ensure that the school remains fully or partially open in order to minimise the impact on parents. In order to prevent closure, the usual curriculum may be altered or alternative arrangements made such as children completing activities in larger groups in the school hall. The school will only close if the site is hazardous or if insufficient staff are able to make it into school to ensure that the children can be adequately supervised. In these circumstances, parents will be notified via ParentMail, as soon as possible, as to any full closure of the school or if the school will be closed to certain classes or year groups. An alert will also be put on the KCC Closures Website which can be found at www.kentclosures.co.uk. Parents can also sign up for an SMS/Email alerts on the Kent Closures website; this service will send an SMS or email alert to let parents know if our school is closed. This alert will trigger announcements on local radio stations (KMFM, BBC Radio Kent or Heart FM) as well. The school website will also be updated with any announcements.

We hope that we will not have to put these arrangements into action this year but of course it is always best to be prepared for the worst.

As weather patterns can be so changeable at this time of year, please ensure that your child comes to school with a warm coat and suitable shoes. The children will be expected to wear their coats at playtime. In the event of a good downfall of snow, providing it is safe to do so, we would allow the children the opportunity to play on the school field as long as they have wellington boots in school. If it therefore looks like snow is likely or in the event of snow please ensure that your child has boots to bring or wear to school – this is an essential requirement for building snowmen and making snow angels!

Teaching Staff News

We are delighted to welcome Miss Rosy Almond to our teaching team in January. Miss Almond is an experienced teacher who will be replacing Miss Marsh in teaching Ladybirds class alongside Mrs Clark. Miss Almond has recently relocated to Kent from London where she has taught for the past 12 years. Miss Almond will be popping into school later this term to meet the children and I know that she is very much looking forward to taking up her position at Godinton.

We are in the process of recruiting a teacher to fill the vacancy left by Mrs Fisher's departure in January. We will notify parents once a successful appointment has been made.

September 2018 Reception Intake

Parents of children who are due to start school in September 2018 are invited to our New Intake Parents Evening which will be held this week on Wednesday 22nd November from 5.30 to 7.00 p.m. Parents will be able to talk to school staff and view our Reception classrooms – there will be activities for the children to join in with too. Headteacher tours of the school will then take place over the next 3 weeks and can be booked either during the new intake evening or by contacting the school office. We are very proud of our school and look forward to showing prospective parents around.



Creative Homework



We were all impressed by the quality of work produced for this term's Creative Homework Task on the theme of structures. Whilst standing on the gate, I saw a fantastic array of models and pieces of art work coming into school ranging from replicas of Big Ben to models of animal habitats. How the children complete the Creative Homework is entirely up to them – some children enjoy the opportunity to work on a task independently whilst for others the chance to work on a project with someone at home works well.

All the children who took part had the opportunity to share their work with their class. One child from each class was then chosen to have a special tea party with me in which they had the chance to show me their marvellous creations. Congratulations go to everyone who took part but in particular – George B and Taylor G (Year 6), Elizabeth D and Angelica B (Year 5), Quinlan F and Thomas L (Year 4), Lilia G and Olly B (Year 3), Isabelle B and Isabella H-D (Year 2), Abby B and Choden L (Year 1) and Isabelle M, Harley J, Skyelah P and Millie G (Year R).

All children who take part in two out of the three Creative Homework tasks set this year will be rewarded with a special film in school in the summer.



School Dinners

We hope that parents enjoyed the opportunity to sample some of the food produced by Independent Catering at Parents' Evening last week. The catering team welcomed the opportunity to hear feedback from parents regarding the provision of school meals and we hope that parents found it useful to ask any questions.

If parents would like their child to start having school dinners and have not yet set up a Sauid payment account, please contact the school office who will be able to advise you as to the process for doing this.

My Maths Homework

Feedback from the children has indicated that they are really enjoying the new online system for completing their maths homework. 'My Maths' gives the children the opportunity to develop and practice the mathematical skills they have been learning in class. The children work through the differentiated activities set by their teacher but also have the opportunity to complete additional tasks as well. The children have said that they like the format of the site and enjoy being able to complete additional questions and challenges if they want.

The system provides teachers with detailed feedback about the children's engagement and success in the tasks set enabling them to pick up any misconceptions or difficulties back in the classroom. Engagement with maths homework using this system appears higher than previous paper based maths homework. Parents can also instantly see their child's success with a particular skill or concept which we hope will help you in supporting your child's learning at home.

If anyone is still experiencing log in difficulties please get in touch with either Miss Moss or Miss Collins who will be happy to assist.

Charity Fundraising

Thank you to everyone who has helped with our charity fundraising efforts this term. We were delighted to have raised over £150 for the Royal British Legion through the sale of poppies and £628 from generous donations to Children in Need on our pyjama day last week. I know that the children enjoyed spending the day dressed for bed and our Star Award tea party certainly was one to remember!



Class Assemblies

This term we have enjoyed a very successful class assembly from Eagles class which celebrated the work they have been completing in class on the Canterbury Tales. We are very much looking forward to watching Nightingales' assembly at the end of this week and hope that parents are enjoying the opportunity to come along and see the work that the children have put into their performances.

PTFA Reminder....

Friday 24th November is a non-uniform day in return for bringing something in which can be donated to the PTFA Christmas Fair.

The Fair this year is taking place on Saturday 2nd December and as always promises to be a great start to the Christmas celebrations at Godinton.

Breakfast with Santa will then take place the following week; Saturday 9th December.

Mini Management Team

When we came back to school after Half Term, we held elections for our new Mini Management Team. All the children in Years 1–6 had the opportunity to vote for someone from their class who they felt would be able to best represent their ideas as to how we can improve our school.



Congratulations go to the following children who have been elected onto the Mini Management Team. They will be starting to work with me this week, firstly by looking at ways in which we can improve our playground to make playtimes more interesting.

Our new Mini Management Team Members are:

Year 1 Gracie F and Isabella M

Year 2 Hollie R and Henry S

Year 3 Oscar DTM and Ella C

Year 4 Emily H and Ethan J

Year 5 Eleanor P and Hugh P

Year 6 Madison K and Joshua C

Safeguarding

If parents ever have any concerns regarding pupil welfare or safety, this can be brought to the attention of Miss Talbot who is the Designated Safeguarding Lead at the school. In her absence, Mrs Stein or Mrs Jones should be contacted.

All our children are encouraged to think about a grown up in school who they could talk to if they ever have any concerns or worries about issues at home or at school or if they are worried or concerned about another pupil. Posters are up in the classroom to remind the children who the safeguarding leads are in school and that all adults will listen to any concerns they might have.

PE and Sports Premium

Since 2013, the Government has annually allocated funds to schools for the purpose of the development of PE and sport within the school. This is known as the PE and Sports Premium Fund and can only be spent on the development of sporting activity in school. This year the funds have increased and the school will be in receipt of just under £20,000 of funding which will be used to deliver the following DfE aims:

Aim 1 Increasing physical activity for all children.

Specialist sports coaches from premier Sports will be running lunchtime activities on the playground twice a week in order to encourage participation in physical activity from all pupils. In Term 5 / 6 we will be offering after school activities which will focus on engaging more reluctant participants in physical activity. We will also be developing our own range of after school clubs including a multi-skills club for Lower School.

Aim 2 Raising the profile of PE

Funds have been primarily allocated to the purchase of new gymnastic equipment; this includes benches, a-frames, and modular units which will enhance PE provision for all year groups.

Additionally funds will be used to train Year 6 pupils as sports leaders and to implement systems in which they can help develop the profile of sport across the school.

Aim 3 Increasing confidence, knowledge and skills of all staff in teaching PE and sport

This funding is being used to support staff CPD in the teaching of our PE curriculum. Staff will work alongside professional sports coaches to develop their own skills and techniques for delivering high quality lessons to our children. Staff will also receive training in the use of gymnastics equipment and how new pieces of equipment can be incorporated into their lessons.

Aim 4 Broadening the experience of a range of sports and activities offered to all pupils.

Funding has been allocated to the review of the PE curriculum across the school.

Aim 5 Increasing participation in competitive sport.

Funds have been allocated to support the inclusion of groups of children to compete in competitive sports competitions run locally.

A full breakdown on the way in which the funding will be spent by the school can be found on the Sports Premium page on the school website.

Other News...

- Don't forget to get up a little earlier on Wednesday mornings for our 'Wake Up on Wednesdays' – our new wake up, shake up activity from 8.35 a.m. to 8.45 a.m. after half term on the playground led by Mrs Ellis.
- Our 'No Pens Wednesday' last week proved successful with the children spending the day not having to use pens or pencils. The idea is that this time is used to develop verbal and non-verbal communication skills. If children are better able to articulate ideas or explain their reasoning, then this in turn will help them in their ability to problem solve in maths or write stories. The children were presented with a range of challenges which required them to explain, discuss or present ideas. This is something that we hope to repeat again at different intervals over the course of the year.
- Thank you to everyone who bought a book from this year's Book Fair. The school earns commission on every purchase made with all funds going back into providing reading resources for the children.

Caught on camera this month...



Sports Report

Sports leaders

Last week our newly appointed Year 6 Sport Leaders underwent training at the Julie Rose Stadium to assist them in their roles. These 6 children have been selected to represent the views of children within the school with regard to the development of sport and physical activity and will help with the promotion of sporting activity within the school. They will be keeping a Sports Information Board in the school hall and have plans to develop a section of the school website to publicise the physical activity taking place in the school. In the summer we hope to involve the Sports Leaders in the arrangements for Sports Day and to give them the opportunity to lead some sporting activities for the younger children in the school. We also have Sports Leaders from Year 5 who will assist as well. Congratulations go to Liam W, Max K, Joshua O'B, Rhiannon P, April M and Katie S from Year 6 and Theo S, Jessica D, Brooke M, Oliver W, William L, Sophie-Rose K from Year 5 who are our 2017-2018 Sports Leaders.

Dance Competition

Last week we were delighted to be amongst a group of Ashford schools involved a Dance Competition organised by Towers School. Children from Year 5 and 6, under the guidance of Mrs Ellis, brought back some 1980's nostalgia with a performance they choreographed to the theme from the film 'Flashdance'. Dressed in customised t-shirts and fluorescent leg warmers, the children put on a fantastic performance which secured them fifth place. We were immensely proud of all the children who took part and of all the hard work and commitment they have shown in working on their routine over the past 8 weeks. Congratulations go to Elizabeth, Jessica, Oliver, Florie, Evie, Freya, Ellie, Madison, Daisy and James.

