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Message from Miss Talbot

Dear Parents,

Our PTFA is a really important part of our school community and has always provided the school with a tremendous amount of support both in terms of fundraising and creating a wide variety of exciting events that engage our children and families.

Our committee's last event of their tenure was the Mini Olympics evening held at the end of last month. This event saw the children taking part in a variety of sporting activities out on the field after school and the opportunity to enjoy the barbeque once they had finished. I would like to thank Mrs Ellis, Mr and Mrs Lund and Mrs Prior, who have led our PTFA, for all their hard work and for all the support they have given to the school over the years. Quite rightly, with children no longer at the school, it is time to pass the baton onto a new committee.

At our AGM on Monday night a new committee was elected with Linda Tunbridge taking on the role of Chair. Linda is the mum of Ryan in Year 2 and also a midday supervisor at the school. I am very grateful to Linda and to Jo Gandon, Tammy Carrol and Nicola Smith who have also taken on key roles, as without these key positions being filled, our PTFA would not be able to continue. There was a very disappointing turn out in the number of parents who attended the AGM but I hope that parents will show their support to our new committee by volunteering to help out at upcoming events.

Our next PTFA meeting will be held at school on Tuesday 30th October at 6.30 pm. At this meeting we will be talking about forthcoming events and would love to welcome anyone interested in helping the school to the meeting. We will be discussing plans for Christmas, including a potential disco and Breakfast with Santa. With the new committee only just taking over, it is likely that we won't have a Christmas fair this year to allow them time to settle into their new roles—however there will be a lot of exciting events during the course of the year to look forward to. If anyone has any ideas about fundraising events or opportunities for family events that you would like the PTFA to consider, please come along to the meeting on the 30th. Refreshments will be provided.

Can I take the opportunity to wish everyone a very enjoyable half term. We will see you all back in school on Monday 29th October.

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Reception Places for 2019



Applications for a place for your child in the Reception classes at Godinton Primary School in September 2019 open on Monday 5th November 2018 and close at midnight on Tuesday 15th January 2019. Applications are made via the KCC online Reception Common Admissions Form (RCAF) which is available online at: <http://www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-children/schools/school-places/primary-school-places>

Full details of the school's admissions criteria and the application process are available on the school website; please see Admissions in the School Information section.

We will be holding an information evening for prospective parents on Monday 26th November from 5.30 to 7.30 pm. Parents are invited to drop in at any time during the course of the evening to talk to staff and view the Reception classrooms. We will also be holding Headteacher tours of the school throughout the latter part of December and November. Dates and times are available on the school website.

Parents' Handbook

Our updated Parent Handbook for 2018–2019 is now available in the parent section of the website. This booklet contains useful information for parents about all aspects of school life. Please remember that Year Group Welcome Letters can also be found on the website.

Phonics and Reading Information Session

Thank you to everyone who attended the phonics and reading information session on Tuesday night. We hope that you found the information useful as a means of understanding how we teach reading and phonics in school and what you can do to help support your child at home. Regular reading practice is essential and all children should be reading at home every day. Children love reading to an adult and discussing the text with them and the more they can do, the more their reading confidence, reading stamina and reading ability will improve.

We have sent out a copy of the slides from the meeting to all parents in Years R to 2. If anyone was unable to attend the meeting but would be interested in attending a repeat of the session one afternoon, please register your interest with the school office. Likewise if any parents would be interested in further training through smaller group sessions or sessions for parents and children, again please let the school office know and if there is sufficient interest we will see what we might be able to arrange.

Fun Lunch Thank-you



I hope that all the children enjoyed the fun lunch last week. I am so grateful to everyone who signed their child up to join in with this event. Our uptake of school lunches on this day in October and then again in January, impacts on our funding. We had a very high uptake, which I hope will also have given everyone who doesn't usually have a dinner, an indication of the good quality of our school meals. With so many children taking part we did experience some longer than usual queues which we will improve ahead of our next fun lunch in January.

Spelling in Upper School

As part of weekly homework, children in Upper School are given a set of coloured spellings to learn. The children are usually tested on these between 1–2 weeks after starting a new set. Once the children have attained full marks, they will then be given a new set of spellings to take home and learn. The class teachers will give the children an indication of when their test will be but this can change as sometimes there could be 12 different spelling tests to complete as the children progress through the different colours. We have placed all of the Upper School spelling words which have been taken from the National Curriculum word lists on to our school website. These can be found in the 'Curriculum' section and then navigate your way to 'How I can help my child at home.' Within this section you will also find the coloured times table tests.

We want our children to learn their spellings to be able to apply them to all of their written work rather than learn the spellings just for a particular test day, therefore there will be no set test day. When the children are practising their spellings, it is important that they know the meaning of these words so that they are able to use them in their writing.

Garden Competition Success

Congratulations to our gardening club who have come runners up in the Kent Life School Garden Competition. The children were awarded with a certificate and garden centre vouchers at a prize giving afternoon held at Hadlow College. Well done to all the children involved and to Mrs McGoldrick, Mrs Paggett and Mrs Spriggs for all their enthusiastic involvement.



Pedal Power



This term over 200 pupils have been working hard at developing their cycling skills by participating in the Cycle ready programme or Bikeability.

Balance Bikes and Cycle Ready

Within two weeks of starting school, our Reception children were building up their confidence on balance bikes with instructors from Cycle Circle. It was lovely to see so many children making rapid progress in moving around the playground on these. We have now purchased a set of balance bikes in school for the children to continue to practise their riding skills. This week, the instructors returned to Godinton to work with our Year R and 1 children to develop cycling skills further; teaching many of them how to ride a bike without stabilisers and to develop confidence in their cycling. The children have been fantastic!

It has been lovely to see Lower School parents join us for the after school parent sessions as well.

Bikeability

For the past 6 years, we have worked in partnership with Cycle Circle to enable children in Years 4–6 the opportunity to participate in Bikeability. Bikeability is a new and much-improved version of the classic Cycling Proficiency Test. This year, we were delighted to see nearly 90 children participate in these sessions. All children have received a certificate which outlines their achievements in the sessions and many of the children were presented with either a level 1 or 2 badge. Congratulations to all of the children who took part – we are all proud of your achievements.

I would also like to thank Spencer and his team of instructors from Cycle Circle for all of their hard work in helping the children to make such great progress in their cycling.

Breakfast Club

Could we please remind you that breakfast club needs to be paid in advance of the sessions that your children attend. Payments can of course be made on the day, but accounts should not fall into arrears. All payments are to be made through Parentmail, thank you.

STAR Week

This week has been our first STAR week of the year. STAR stands for showing tolerance and respect and is the week in school when we focus on our RE (religious education) curriculum and PSHE (personal, social and health education). We believe that it is important for our children to become tolerant members of society with an interest in the world around them. Our RE curriculum, which is the statutory Kent Scheme, explores different world religions and themes such as making choices.

This week, our STAR lessons have also focused on our whole school PSHE theme – Having a voice. Children have been exploring the theme of democracy and will be having the opportunity to take part in real elections for members of the Mini Management Team and their House Captains. The children enjoyed voting for the MMT rep in our polling station. Thank you to all the children who have put themselves forward for the elections, the results of which will be announced in Friday's assembly.



Can I take the opportunity to say a huge thank you to the children on our 2017-2018 Mini Management Team (Gracie, Isabella, Hollie, Henry, Ella, Oscar, Emily, Ethan, Hugh and Eleanor). They have all been fantastic and it has been a pleasure working with you.

Class Assemblies

Well done to Eagles for our first class assembly of the school year. Their assembly, written and put together by the children presented work they have produced, inspired by the book 'Wonder' by R.J Palacio as part of their 'Journeys' learning adventure. The book explores themes of self discovery, friendship and tolerance and respect towards others. It is a great read for Upper School children and for grown ups. Well done Eagles.

Year 3 Recycling Project



Well done to Year 3 who have had a fruitful return from letters written to various local supermarkets asking for donations of recycled materials to the year group's 'Trashion Show' project. 12 children from the year group visited Sainsbury's on Tuesday to collect some donations and to have a tour of the store. We are looking forward to seeing the clothing designs that the children make from these recycled materials.

We were also visited by Mark and the team from our local Co-op who also donated bags and bags of recycled material. Thank you to Sainsbury's and the Co-op for supporting us with this project.



Harvest Festival

Thank you to everyone for all the generous donations for our Harvest Festival which was held in school last week. The abundance of harvest gifts will be shared between the Eldercare Day Centre and Vinnie's Diner. The recipients have asked me to pass on their grateful thanks.



Attendance

Good attendance and punctuality really matter at Godinton and we know that it does to our families too. Thank you to everyone for arriving promptly, ready for the start of the day when the register is taken at 9.00. Please remember that any attendance below 95% is considered to be low. Parents will be informed of their child's current attendance percentage with their term 2 report.

Congratulations to Year 3 who currently have the best attendance in the school. Attendance percentages for term 1 are below:

	Attendance percentage Term 1
Year R	98.2%
Year 1	96.4%
Year 2	98%
Year 3	98.8%
Year 4	96.4%
Year 5	98%
Year 6	95.4%
Overall	97.3%

Certificates will be awarded at the end of the year for children with excellent or improved attendance rates.

The Godinton Coffee Hub

We hope that you are all enjoying getting to know our lovely new FLO—Jacqui McGibney.

Jacqui would love to see the numbers at the Godinton Coffee Hub increase on a Wednesday morning so if you'd like a chance to put your feet up for an hour and have a catch up with other parents, pop along. The next regular coffee morning will take place on the Wednesday after half term.

Family Cooking Morning

We are delighted to be reinstating our Saturday morning family cooking events. These have proved very popular in the past and are an excellent way for children and a parent, grandparent or other relative, to practice their cooking skills. A letter will be coming out to all children in Years 1 and 2 after half term advertising our autumn event, which will be held on Saturday 10th November. Places will be limited.

Water

I would like to remind parents that plain water is the only drink permitted in classrooms during the school day. Flavoured water, squash or juice is not allowed. Children are allowed to access their water bottles during the day and whilst older children can have these on their tables, younger children will have a particular place in the classroom where these can be kept.

The children should have a clear plastic water bottle in school every day. We are currently reviewing with our Mini Management Team, the types of water bottle allowed in school. In the meantime we would ask that all children have a clear water bottle no larger than 500ml. We are currently using a large number of plastic cups to accommodate those children who do not have a water bottle which, as one of the children pointed out, is not good for the environment.

Governor News

In order for parents to get to know more about our Governing Body, we include information from our Governors in each newsletter.



Message from the Chair of Governors: Steve King

With the lovely summer becoming a distant memory it is time to settle in to the usual routines of a new school year, which is now well underway. We began the year by welcoming a new group of children along with some new members of staff and we have enjoyed watching them settle in to the school community. As Governors, the first school term marks the time to reflect on the previous year and plan governor responsibilities and actions for this year.

We are currently putting the finishing touches to our 'Trustees Report' which will give you a picture of the 2017/18 school year at Godinton. Drafting the report has helped in our review of the previous year because we have to include our aims and achievements which then assists us in formulating the plans for this year. The draft report is currently with our auditors to add some financial information prior to being published at the end of December. We will advise you when it is available on the school website.

At our next Full Governing Body meeting we will spend some time reviewing the Governing Bodies past performance and considering what, if any, changes or improvements need to be made. We will also be considering the School Improvement Plan (SIP) which identifies areas that the school is aiming to improve this year. Governors will then be using the Plan to monitor progress against planned actions as the year progresses. The meeting is also the time that we appoint individual Governors to specific tasks for the coming year which includes allocating responsibility to monitor specific sections of the

SIP and to lead on key areas such as finance and safeguarding.

This year we are facing the need for existing Governors to take on more tasks because the board is currently below complement leaving fewer people to share the load. We don't have any parent vacancies at present but would welcome interest from anybody who may like to join us. If you know of anybody who would like to know more about becoming a Governor please encourage them to contact me on chair@godinton.kent.sch.uk

Getting to know our Governors

Governor Profiles

Steve King (Chair of Governors)

Steve first became a governor at the school in January 2001 and has been Chair of Governors since May 2005 and is currently a Member Appointed Governor. Steve has provided the following detail about himself :

I have recently retired having completed 40 years in the civil service, most recently working for the Home Office as a budget manager.

I was keen to become a governor at Godinton to enable me to put my skills to good use in support of the school in recognition of all they were doing for my children. By 2005 my children had left the school but its continued advances made me want to stay and share in its future successes. My experience in financial management, property management and health & safety assist me in my governor role and in leading the schools team of Governors.

As Chair of Governors I have a number of responsibilities in addition to the usual governor role including chairing meetings and taking the lead for health & safety. I also have joint lead responsibility for safeguarding and finance.

I am married with two grown up children who both attended the school and I have lived on the Godinton Park estate since 1988. My spare time activities include gardening, woodworking and, due to advancing years, long naps in front of the television.

Other News...

- You may well have noticed that a familiar face has returned to the school office. We are delighted to welcome Mrs Smith back to Godinton who will resume her role in administering the school's attendance and admissions arrangements.
- In order to ensure the continued safety of our children, please can we ask that pedestrians entering the school site from Lockholt Close, use the pedestrian gate at all times and do not access the school on foot by ducking under the car barrier on the road. Thank you.

Caught on camera this month...



Sports Report

Cross Country

Again this year we have had success with our cross country teams. On Wednesday 3rd October, we took 13 children from years 5 & 6 to compete in the 1.6km cross country event at Godinton House. The children ran in 4 separate groups: Yr 5 boys, Yr 5 girls, Yr 6 boys, Yr 6 girls. All of the children put in 100% effort and ran their hearts out. Although we didn't have enough children for a team result in each section, in the sections where we had 'a team', we did incredibly well – the Year 5 boys achieved 2nd place team overall, and the Year 6 girls achieved 3rd place team overall. Individually we also had some impressive times and results – Lily-Rose O'B achieved 1st place for the Year 5 girls (5:30, a good 27 seconds ahead of her nearest rival) and Elizabeth D and Jessica D came in 4th and 5th place respectively for the Year 6 girls (only 8 seconds between them, and only 15 seconds behind first place). In the second event of the season on Wednesday 10th October, again involving Years 5 and 6 we also did well. Our Year 5 and 6 boys' teams each came third as did our Year 5 girls with Elizabeth in second place and Jessica in third. The Year 5 girls team came first, receiving a trophy that was presented in assembly, with Lily-Rose again achieving individual first place too. As always our children conducted themselves impeccably and Mrs Crowfoot was incredibly proud of how they represented our school. Well done everyone!

We have further cross country competitions this week and into next month as well. We wish all the children taking part, the very best of luck.

Dodgeball Tournament

On 2nd October, our Year 4 Dodgeball Team went to Towers School for a Tournament involving 4 groups of 6 teams. We won our 5 games, so came top in our group and went through to the play offs for 1st 2nd 3rd or 4th place. Unfortunately we lost our first game but won our 3rd/4th play off so came 3rd overall which was amazing given how many schools were there. Despite a mix up with medals at the end, it was a fantastic afternoon for the children and we congratulate them on their success and excellent sportsmanship.

