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Message from Miss Talbot

Dear Parents,

This month has seen many National events taking place to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the end of the First World war, an event of historical significance and one in which we were keen to involve the children.

We were delighted to have been invited to St Mary's Church in Great Chart to participate in a remembrance event involving Year 6 pupils from other local primary schools. The event, which was part of the 'Great Chart Remembers' commemorations, featured an audio visual presentation remembering the lives of soldiers from Great Chart village who fought in the Great war and the 27 men who gave their lives in the pursuit of peace. Our children played their part, with Angelica reading the poem 'We Shall Keep the Faith' by Moina Michael and Freya and Oliver laying a wreath, made by year 6 children with the help of Mrs Williams, at the war memorial. Back in school, all classes involved themselves in activities to remember this important anniversary, creating pieces of work, including poetry and art for a corridor display. In an afternoon assembly, we told the story of a war veteran remembering personal experiences in battle and ended with a period of reflection in a two minute silence. Thank you to everyone who made a donation to the poppy appeal, helping us to raise £200.

The last week of this term will also see our children remembering and considering the needs of others as we hold our second STAR week of the year. STAR (showing tolerance and respect) is our new curriculum week focusing on PSHE and RE. This term our STAR week will focus on caring for those in the community, with each year group supporting and learning about a local cause ranging from charities to support the elderly, homelessness and groups within the community who are vulnerable or unwell. When we come back to school in January, our STAR week will focus on online safety and anti-bullying. Classes will be focusing on respecting others and showing consideration to each other online.



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Class News....

Comic Art in Year 1



Year 1 enjoyed a morning exploring comic book art last month as part of their 'All About Me' topic. Comic artist, Emily Fellah, was invited into school to explore how to draw comic illustrations with the children investigating different facial features. The children used their skills to construct their own comic storyboards, starring themselves as superheroes. Some of their lovely work has been put on display in their classroom.

Year 6 Canterbury Visit

Year 6 enjoyed a stimulating day out in Canterbury on Thursday as part of their Learning Adventure on 'Journeys'. The children were following in the footsteps of Chaucer with a visit to the Canterbury Tales Exhibition and Canterbury Cathedral. As always the children's behaviour was impeccable.



Well done Year R

We are delighted with how well our Reception children are settling into life at Godinton and are enjoying all the exciting activities taking place in their classroom. Have a look at these lovely photos of their recent bear hunt...



Details of the tour times for prospective Reception parents (2019 Cohort) are available on the school website.

Times Tables

In the summer of 2020, the Government will introduce the statutory times table screening to all Year 4 pupils Nationally in order to assess their knowledge of times tables up to 12×12 . Our children always work hard at learning their times tables but additional practice is always beneficial. Parents often ask what they can do to help their children at home – supporting with times table recall would be useful (details of the colour coded times table practice sheets set as homework are available on the website). We will be involving our current Year 4 children in a National pilot for the screening in the summer. It is our current Year 3 children who will be the first cohort for the statutory assessment the following year.

Other News and Reminders...

Christmas Information

I hope that everyone is looking forward to the exciting plans we have in place for celebrating the Christmas season. Our staff are working hard to ensure that the children have opportunities to shine in Christmas productions and that our Christmas countdown includes plenty of fun.

Our Christmas calendar was sent out via ParentMail last week but for your convenience, below is a reminder...

From Monday 26th November – Christmas post boxes out.

Middle School performances on Tuesday 4th December and Wednesday 5th December at 2.00 pm

Lower School performances on Thursday 6th December and Friday 7th December at 2.00 pm

Saturday 8th December – PTFA Breakfast with Santa

Wednesday 12th December – Christmas Lunch.

Thursday 13th December – Carol singing at County Square 4pm – 4.30pm

Friday 30th November – PTFA Christmas Film (Years R-2)

Friday 14th December – PTFA Christmas Film (Years 3-6)

Monday 17th December – Christingle Making (children to bring an orange to school – more details to follow shortly)

Tuesday 18th December – Upper School Carol Service at St Mary's Church Great Chart – 1.30 – 2.30 pm

Wednesday 19th December – Christmas Parties (Don't forget party food and non uniform.)

Wednesday 19th December – PTFA Christmas Jumper competition

Wednesday 19th December – Term Ends.

Thursday 3rd January 2019 – Start of Term 3.

Cookery Afternoon

We had a fantastic response to our family cooking afternoon at the start of the month with 25 children and their adults (mums, dads, grannies and grandads) making and baking items for a wonderful afternoon tea party. With help from Miss Talbot, Mrs McGoldrick, Mrs McGibney, Mrs Gandon (from our PTFA) and Jo our school cook, the children prepared cakes, sandwiches, brownies, scones and sausage rolls. Invited guests joined in at the end of the day to eat a wonderful spread.

We are hoping to offer similar workshops in the spring and summer and hope that other families will enjoy getting involved.



PTFA News

Thank you to all the parents who helped with the children's disco last week and in particular to Linda, the PTFA committee and Mr and Mrs Crust who acted as DJs. Our next PTFA event will be Breakfast with Santa on Saturday 8th December. Tickets are now on sale. With the PTFA committee new in post we won't be having a Christmas Fair this year however they have lots of exciting ideas for the new year. If you are interested in supporting our PTFA further, please come along to the next meeting which will be held at school at 6pm on Tuesday 8th January.

Congratulations and Success

School Elections

Congratulations to Walmer who were the winning house last term. They very much enjoyed their reward of squash and biscuits and an extended playtime. A number of children have already received their first coloured house point badge of the year and are on their way to achieving bronze. Our first three badge winners this academic year were Finn S (Year 2), Lucas B (Year 3) and Catia E (Year 3). Congratulations to all the children who have already achieved their first badge.

Elections for House Captains took place during STAR week last term. All the year 6 children who put themselves forward for nomination did an amazing job with their speeches. Congratulations go to them all, but in particular those who have been appointed to House Captain and Vice House Captain positions: Ameerah, Jacob-James, Suhangma, Joseph, Charlie, Evie, Mia, Theo, Zoe, Hugh, Oliver, Jessica, Remy, Samuel, Beth and Luca.



Towards the end of term we will be holding our Annual House Quiz and look forward to seeing our House teams compete against each other to win additional house points for their teams

I am also pleased to announce that we have a new Mini Management Team in place. Congratulations to Emily A, Ena B, Lily-Rose O'B, Harriet J, Charlie L, Suzie M, Henry C, Noah L, Raya H, Jenson J, Oliver W-H and Mia H on being elected to represent their classes. I am looking forward to working with you.

Baby News

We are pleased to share the happy news with you that one of our Year 4 teachers, Miss Brooker, is expecting her first baby in the spring; she will be taking maternity leave at the start of the Easter holidays. We have advised the parents of children in Nightingales class that we are starting the process of maternity cover arrangements and will of course inform parents once a way forward has been determined. I am sure you will join me in congratulating Miss Brooker on this lovely news.

We have also had a recent Godinton arrival with Mrs Fagg's daughter Coco-Rose being born at the start of the month. We have extended our warmest congratulations to Mr and Mrs Fagg who have promised everyone that they will bring her into school to meet us very soon.

Peer Review

The local network of Ashford schools operates a very successful Peer Review scheme which involves schools working in small groups to review aspects of practice within each other's setting. We have, this year, continued our link with Goat Lees Primary School and Lady Joanna Thornhill Primary School in Wye and welcomed the Headteachers and Deputy Headteachers from these schools to Godinton to look at how successfully we are addressing the teaching of phonics and writing in Lower and Middle School. Our colleagues provided us with useful feedback and highlighted many aspects of excellent practice in this area. They also praised the ethos of the school and the excellent behaviour of the children. We are in the process of completing return visits to Goat Lees and Lady Joanna and will see our colleagues returning to Godinton in March.

We thought you would like to see some of the lovely comments made about our children by our colleagues:

- Pupils were all polite and very well behaved.
- The ethos and values of the school were, impressively, visible.
- Across the school, each class was industrious and children were able to talk confidently about what they were doing.

I am very pleased that so many elements of good practice were acknowledged by our colleagues.

Useful Reminders...

Uniform and Possessions Policy

We have recently updated our uniform and possessions policy which is available to view on the school website. We have followed national advice with regard to jewellery and PE and will be retaining a policy in which earrings **must** be removed before the children participate in any PE activities. If the children are unable to remove these themselves, please assist them by taking them out at home in the morning. Only small, plain stud earrings are permissible in school. If you are considering getting your child's ears pierced, please do so at the start of the summer holidays. A couple of other uniform reminders:

Whilst colourful, large hair bows (JoJo bow type) are lovely for weekends, they are not suitable for school. Hair bows should be a suitable size and in the school colours.

Coloured nail varnish is also not allowed.

Children should wear plain black shoes or boots to school. High heeled shoes or boots are not allowed.

We are very proud of how smart our children look when they come to school. Thank you for ensuring that our school values with regard to school uniform are upheld.

Nuts

Please can I remind everyone that the school is a 'nut free' environment, meaning that nut based products are not allowed in school. This includes items such as peanut butter and cereal bars containing nuts. We thank you for your cooperation with this.

Communication with School

I know that from time to time, parents will have difficulties with their children in relation to school or problems that need to be addressed. Please can I ask that if this is the case, you let us know as soon as possible so that we can offer whatever assistance may be required. All too often, Facebook is aware of an issue before the school or instead of the school. We are always here to help and have a very open door policy, however we are limited in what we can do if we aren't told. If you ever have any concerns please make an appointment to see Miss Talbot or the relevant member of staff.

Road Safety

Mrs Humphrey has become increasingly concerned by the number of children and parents who are attempting to cross Loudon Way at points other than where she is based as our road crossing patrol officer. She has also noted a number of cars parking dangerously in Loudon Way and obstructing visibility for pedestrians. Please can I remind parents to use the Chimneys car park and to make use of our valuable road crossing patrol service. Thank you.

Safeguarding

The school has recently updated our child protection policy which is available on the school website. Please may I take the opportunity to remind you that myself and Mrs Stein are the school's designated child protection leads and that any child protection or safeguarding concerns should be brought to our attention. Further details about safeguarding are available on the school website.

School Closure—Bad Weather

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.

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

It is now the time in the school year where we are looking forward to the

Christmas performances, carol singing and watching the children busily making decorations to brighten up the school but, for the Governors, it is also time to concentrate on school finances. Part of our role is to oversee the financial performance of the school and to ensure its money is well spent.

November is the month in which we receive the audited accounts for the year ending 31st August for consideration and approval. Once approved, they, along with the Trustees report I mentioned last month, will be published on our website. I have been looking at the draft accounts in preparation for the meeting of Governors and I am pleased to note that they demonstrate another year where our limited budget has been well managed and well spent.

Over the past few years our income has reduced while necessary expenditure has increased making setting and managing the budget more challenging than before. At Godinton we are fortunate that we have an excellent Finance Manager who keeps a tight rein on spending and a headteacher with a clear understanding of what the school needs to do to make best use of its limited funds.

Despite the efforts of all concerned in managing the budget there is increasingly the need to look for other ways to raise much needed funds because reliance on Government funding alone could mean a school would potentially run in to deficit. One way of raising money has been to increase our lettings of parts of the school, which for the last financial year helped ensure our positive financial outcome. With budgets being low it is difficult to fund more than the day to day essentials and so we rely greatly on our PTFA to raise funds for the things to help the school provide a good environment for teaching and learning.

The PTFA Committee work hard to achieve their excellent results but this can only happen if we support them and so it was good to hear that a high number of parents attended the first meeting of the new committee to offer support. On behalf of the Governing Body may I record thanks, to the committee (past and present) and to those who have or will be giving them support.



Getting to know our Governors

Governor Profiles

Stuart Lund (Staff Governor)

Stuart is the staff Governor at Godinton Primary School.

He has provided the following detail about himself :

I became a Parent Governor in 2014 and then, in 2017, I moved to the Staff Governor role following my appointment as Caretaker of the school. During my period of office, I have had various key responsibilities including Vice Chair and Joint Finance Lead, as well as Educational School Visits.

I am married with 3 children at Secondary School, all of who went to Godinton.

I care passionately about the school both as a Governor and as a member of staff and fully support the vision aims and values of the School. I wish to see it grow and develop so the school can continue to provide the excellent standard of education my children have received whilst retaining its community and friendly

Other News...

- We are very happy for parents and guests to take photos of their children during school performances and assemblies. However, we would kindly ask that when doing so, you are mindful of not blocking other members of the audience and that any photos taken are for personal use only. Not all parents are comfortable with their child's image being uploaded to the internet or social media. Thank you.

Caught on camera this month...



Sports Report

Cross Country

The school participated in the Kent Junior Schools Cross Country Championships at Detling on Saturday morning. Our children all ran their hearts out, uphill and over very wet grass, on a windy and cold day achieving some super results.

The year 3 & 4 children ran 1.2km. Finley P lead from the start in the Year 3 race and maintained a great lead from the start, coming first out of 166 boys from across the county. George, Samuel, Jacob, Catia and Hollie made up the rest of the team and all did well. Isaac, Zak, Jack, Phoebe, and Ella are all congratulated for their performance in the Year 4 race.

Year 5 and 6 had a slightly increased distance of 2.2km to run. In the Year 5 race, Lily-Rose secured 5th place out of 120 runners. She was joined in her team by Teegan, Thandie and Kyla who all ran superbly. Charlie, Zach, Thomas and Thomas made up the Year 5 boys team and all achieved good times. Finally in the Year 6 girls' race, Elizabeth and Jessica ran, coming in 27th and 28th respectively out of 115 girls. Congratulations to all our participants for their fantastic efforts and superb sportsmanship.



Sports Hall Athletics

Last week, our children took part in a Sports hall athletics tournament at the Julie Rose Stadium, competing against other local schools. Every member of the team took part in 2 track events and 2 field events. They worked really well as a team, showing excellent sportsmanship to their peers and other schools as well. They congratulated the winners and all understood that taking part was the most important thing. Our team came 11th overall and we congratulate them all on their excellent achievements.