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Message from Miss Talbot

Dear Parents,

This month saw the launch of our involvement in the 1000 Hours of Kindness project which is being supported by schools across the Ashford area. The project encourages children to consider the impact of their actions on others and how we can create a culture of respect and thoughtfulness to all.

I hope that the children have enjoyed completing their Kindness passports and logging their acts of generosity and helpfulness towards others. So far the children have considered acts of school kindness, self-kindness and community kindness and across the school, in the first two weeks of the project, have notched up a staggering 844 hours of kind deeds. We are well on our way to reaching our goal of 1000 hours of kindness, with acts of family kindness still to be worked on over Half Term. Nightingale Class are currently in the lead, with the most acts of kindness logged but this could all change when the final scores are recorded after the holiday. The class that completes the most acts of kindness during the run of the project will win a hamper of goodies for their class.

Each class have appointed 2 Kindness Ambassadors who will help promote acts of Kindness across the school throughout the year. They have already worked hard to assist with the tallying of scores from their class passports and to help their classes to work on the class challenges I have set. At the start of each week, the children have been sent a special envelope containing three class Kindness tasks – these have included activities such as displaying kindness posters in their classrooms, writing letters of appreciation to staff and collecting pennies for a class charity. I hope that the children will continue with acts of Ninja Kindness throughout the year – those acts of generosity that they seek no reward or thank for but help to create a little more sunshine around the school.

Please remember to bring passports into school after half term for the final tally.

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Class News...

Year 1 Comic Book Illustrator Workshop

Year 1 have been learning to draw Comic Book illustrations through a workshop led by a visiting artist this month.

The children's 'Marvellous Me' Learning Adventure, has seen the children exploring what makes them special. Their efforts during the workshop enabled the children to turn themselves into superheroes to star in their own comic book adventure. The children's results are excellent!



Year 3 Swimming

Our Year 3 children have made a fantastic start to their swimming lessons at the Stour Centre. Experienced swimmers have the opportunity to extend their skills whilst others are in the early stages of learning to swim. All children are taught by the Stour Centre's instructors.

Swimming will be arranged for our Year 2 children when they are in Year 3 next autumn. The cost of the package of 8 lessons and coach transport is approximately £45.

Year 5 Science Workshop



Betty and Charlie from Year 5 were invited to attend a Science Fun Day as part of a Science Enrichment project involving other local schools.

The day was jam packed with opportunities to develop their scientific knowledge and work on group tasks with children from other schools.

Have a read of Betty and Charlie's report below...

We went to an exciting Science morning at Ashford Oaks Primary School! We did multiple science experiments including making magnets, testing pH levels and looking at the weight of different liquids. "Charlie and Betty represented the school superbly," said Mrs Gandon, who escorted us on the trip. As a surprise, there was cake as a snack for all the children that had attended the Science Fun Day.

Attendance

Thank you to everyone with your efforts in ensuring that your child has good attendance at school. We are heading into the season of coughs and colds and of course do not want children attending school if they are too poorly to do so. Attendance is essential in ensuring that children's learning is not disrupted and our Attendance Policy, in line with KCC guidance does not permit holiday to be taken in term time regardless of how good a child's attendance at school is. We hope that the two week half term break will have enabled more families to take holidays at a convenient time. We are currently reviewing term dates for 2020-2021 and will publish these in due course.

Garden Competition

We were delighted to welcome the Mayor of Ashford to Godinton last month to present a prize to the school. Last year, Ashford Borough Council organised a gardening competition to celebrate 2019 being the year of the Environment. Local schools were contacted to take part and asked to design a garden which included a sensory element and promoted the concept of recycling and reusing. Our current Year 3 children took part in the competition when they were in Year 2 as part of their Learning Adventure which incorporated learning about plants. We were delighted to be awarded with a £50 gift voucher. This will go towards a special school garden project that Mrs McGoldrick will be leading this year. Congratulations to Year 3 for all their hard work.



Harvest Festival

Thank you to everyone for your generosity to our Harvest Festival this year. We had a wonderful array of food items which have been donated to Vinnie's Diner and the Eldercare Day Centre and toiletry items for the Hygiene Bank. Your kind donations will help to make a big difference to the lives of many within our local community.

We were delighted to invite Nathan Wilson, from St Mary's Church in Great Chart to lead our Harvest Festival. He reminded us all of the power of generosity through the Bible story of the loaves and the fishes and by showing the children the largest courgette I have ever seen! Nathan will be back at Godinton in the Spring to lead our Easter assembly.



Homework Trails

I hope that the children have enjoyed working on their new Homework Trails and have managed to be disciplined enough to pace themselves and not leave their tasks to the last minute. The trails give the children an opportunity to select tasks that most engage and excite them and give them the opportunity to explore their talents and interests. I know that we will have a lot of children who will go 'the extra mile' and receive their special sticker in their homework books for completing 6 challenges from their grid. All those children who gain 3 stickers over the course of the year will be able to participate in a special 'Movie Morning' in the summer term. The children will showcase their tasks to their class mates on Tuesday 5th November. Their new Homework Trails will be sent out the following Monday. Reception children will join in with our Homework Trails after Half Term.

I have had very positive feedback about our new Maths homework programme, 'Mathletics'. As well as completing the tasks set for them, the children are able to engage in additional tasks and participate in a wide range of games and challenges including some in which they can compete against other children. We run a Mathletics club on a Monday lunchtime for those children who have been unable to complete their homework at home or who just want some further practice. The children are just able to turn up to the Computing Suite for this.

Class Assemblies

Thank you to all the parents who joined Magpies class for their class assembly earlier this month. The children have been reading the book 'Street Child', a novel set in Victorian England as part of their Riots and Revolutions topic and performed extracts from the book to their audience. Well done Magpies!

With Christmas production rehearsals dominating hall time next term, or next class assembly doesn't take place until Friday 10th January, when Cuckoos will perform.

Staff News...

Mrs Christopher

After many years of full time teaching, Mrs Christopher has decided to reduce her teaching commitment to 2 days a week and in doing so will also relinquish her role as



Lower School Team Leader. I anticipate that this will take effect from January.

We have started the recruitment process to find an equally enthusiastic, committed and inspiring teacher to job share with Mrs Christopher and to continue the excellent start that the children in Rabbits and Hedgehogs class have made to their time at Godinton. I know that Mrs Christopher will continue to have a very positive impact on the school and our children albeit in a reduced role and am delighted that we are not losing her completely from the Godinton team. She is a very dedicated and caring professional who will work hard to ensure that her job share is a success.

We are also in the process of making an appointment to the position of Lower School Leader and will advise parents once this has been finalised.

Staff Vacancies

We currently have two vacancies for Teaching Assistant positions at Godinton, the details of which are on the Kent Teach website. One vacancy is the result of Mrs Ades reducing her hours in order to concentrate on the SEN admin role she fulfils in school.

We are also looking for relief Midday Supervisors to cover on days of staff absence. If you are interested in this position, please contact the school office or our Business Manager, Claire Williams, for further information.

PTFA News...

Thank you to the small number of parents who came along to the PTFA's AGM on Monday night. We have reappointed our committee to their positions and I would like to express my gratitude to the committee for all their excellent hard work in fundraising for the school. Last year, the PTFA raised almost £6,500 for the school with over £2,000 being raised at the school discos alone. We are in the process of deciding where the funds will be used. We would like to continue to develop the playground with the implementation of a 'chill out zone' and are looking at constructing an all-weather walking / running track on the field which will help to improve the fitness and physical stamina of our children. I will keep you posted about these developments.

Thank you to everyone who has helped to support the PTFA in their fundraising. It was lovely to see so many helpers at the disco.

The PTFA will be looking for volunteers to help out at the Christmas Fair on Saturday 7th December. Please let the committee know if you are able to help:

Linda Tunbridge – Chair

Tammy Carroll – Vice Chair

Nicola Smith – Treasurer

Jo Gandon – Secretary

The PTFA are setting the children a challenge – to bring in items for different hampers that will be raffled at the fair. The year group that raises the most money on the day for their hamper will win a special treat in the new year. Donations for the hampers should be brought into school from the week commencing Monday 4th November.

Friday 22nd November will be a non-uniform day in return for bringing in other items for the Christmas Fair.

Thank you in advance for your help.

Club News...

Our Club timetable for Term 2 was published last week so you can see the variety of activities on offer. This term we are also introducing a Times Tables Club for Years 3–6. This is a really useful opportunity to practice multiplication skills through fun games and challenges including those on the iPads.

Clubs of the Month

Our clubs of the month for October are 'Papercraft Club' and 'Science Club'.

Papercraft Club involves children from Years 1 and 2 working on a range of fabulous craft projects.



Have a look at the amazing rocking birds the children have made!

Mr Smith has been busy with Year 5 and 6 Science Club. The children have completed various investigations such as which liquids make the biggest bubbles, chromatography experiments and making balloon rockets. Science Club will be offered to different year groups after Christmas.



House Points

Congratulations to Harley in Ladybirds for being the first child to receive their House Point badge this year.

Well done Harley!

Other News and Reminders...

Brexit

With the Brexit countdown clock ticking, I would like to take the opportunity to remind parents of the need to be mindful of possible traffic disruptions that may occur in the Ashford area in the weeks following 31st October. Whilst no one can predict what impact Brexit, with or without a deal, might have, the school has put together an action plan to help consider the difficulties that may arise. This includes arrangements for meal planning, waste collection and staffing in the event of traffic problems.

If difficulties impact significantly on the safe operation of the school, and school closure is threatened, the school's severe weather plans will come into play and a ParentMail message sent.

Whilst it is unlikely that this situation would play out, it is best to be prepared for all eventualities. We would ask parents to allow extra time for their journeys in order to ensure that their child's attendance at school is not disrupted.

Reception Intake 2020–2021

Our information evening for new parents will be held on Monday 18th November. This is an informal session where parents of children due to start school in September 2020 can drop in, between 5.30 and 7.00pm to find out more about life at Godinton. Tours of the school led by myself, Mrs Stein and Mrs Partridge will run during November and December. Please see the school website for dates. To book a place on one of the tours, please contact the school office.

Please remember that if you have moved more than 2 miles away from the school since an elder sibling started at Godinton, then the sibling link is considered broken. For further information about Admissions, please see the school website.

Other News and Reminders...

- Over Half Term, our pirate ship will be repaired so it is ship-shape once again. Please can I remind parents that the children are not permitted to play on the pirate ship at the start of the school day and may only play on it at the end of the day if they are supervised by their parents. Thank you.
- Another parking reminder I'm afraid. Please can I ask for parents cooperation on ensuring that they use Chimneys care park rather than parking on the main road and causing obstructions for motorists which then makes Mrs Humphrey's job as road crossing patrol more challenging. Thank you.
- Please can children remember that they should dismount from bikes and scooters before entering the school grounds.
- Whilst hair bows look very pretty, I have noticed a number of children wearing large brightly coloured bows again. These are not allowed. Bows can be worn but should be small in size and in the school colours – thank you.

Caught on camera this month...



Sports Report

Bikeability

Congratulations to all our Year 4, 5 and 6 children who have participated in Bikeability levels 1 and 2 this term. Despite the rain, often heavy at times, the children have worked hard on developing their cycling skills both on the playground and out on the local estate roads. We had over 85 children taking part which has been fantastic and which will certainly help the children to stay safe when riding their bikes. We are grateful to Cycle Circle for all their fantastic work in delivering excellent sessions to the children.

Our Year R children have also been busy cycling this term and have completed Balance Bike sessions out in the playground. The children have been brilliant and have worked really well with the instructors.



Cross Country

We are immensely proud of our Cross Country team for all their efforts in the recent sessions at Godinton House. Lily Rose, Charlie and Finley have all been successful in gaining a first place within their categories, as has the Year 6 girls' team who brought a trophy back to school. Some of our Year 5 and 6 children have also helped out at the events, acting as marshals (Anna, Zak, Thomas D, Thomas L and Thandie) and I am very proud of the kind and responsible attitude they showed. We are looking forward to hearing how the team gets on at the District Cross Country event at Brands Hatch at the end of November.

