

Contents

Year 6 Canterbury Trip	2
Year 1 and 2 Cookery Day.....	2
Year 2 Dover Museum Trip	3
Carnival of the Baubles	4
Homework Trails	4
Charity Update	5
Club News	6
Year R and 1 Cycling	6
Staff News	6
PTFA News	6
Sports Report.....	6



Message from Miss Talbot

Dear Parents,

Last month the school enjoyed taking part in Ashford Vineyard's 1000 Hours of Kindness project. So many of our children chose to join in with the task of collecting kind deeds in their Kindness Passports which ranged from helping at home to joining in with community projects to help those less fortunate. All acts of Kindness however big or small contributed to our overall total of 1,880 hours of kindness—far surpassing our original intention of 1000 hours.

We are very fortunate at Godinton to have such a kind and caring school community, where for the vast majority of the time our children show generosity and thoughtfulness towards others. The project has however helped our children to appreciate how lucky most of us are and to consider those less fortunate beyond our own school community. The class penny collection challenge, as part of the Kindness Project, encouraged the children to bring in loose change to fill their class jar. As a school this venture raised over £400 for charities chosen by each class. Further details can be found further inside the newsletter. Before the end of the term, we will also be holding our termly STAR week. This term our PSHE focus is on 'Caring for our Community' and will see each year group completing a task that will benefit the local community. As our school, one of our core values focuses on the need to be kind, friendly and thoughtful. The activities which have taken place over the past few weeks clearly show that our children demonstrate this value in bucket loads.

On a very personal note, I would like to say a huge thank you to everyone for all their kind cards, messages and gifts as I headed off for my first chemotherapy session. I have been immensely touched by everyone's thoughtfulness. My first session went well, not nearly as bad as I imagined and although I know there is a long road ahead, I feel much better having started the journey. I will be popping into school as my health allows but will be keeping in touch with everything on a regular basis from the comfort of my sofa.



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Class News...

On the road to Canterbury

Year 6 children experienced life as medieval pilgrims earlier this month, as they embarked upon their own journey to the city of Canterbury (although, perhaps, in slightly more comfort than the travellers of the Middle Ages!). To mark the midway point of their topic of 'Journeys', the students visited Canterbury Cathedral and the Canterbury Tales, whilst taking in some of the historic architecture of the city, on their way to these attractions.

The children had an opportunity to discover how the area had changed since the Middle Ages by comparing maps of Canterbury today to those dating back over 800 years ago. Hidden in amongst the modern buildings along the main High Street in Canterbury are churches and hospitals, which would have been used by locals and pilgrims long ago, as they made the long and arduous journey to Canterbury Cathedral, where Archbishop Thomas Becket was murdered in 1170. Following the Archbishop's death, the Cathedral became one of Europe's most important pilgrimage centres, where miracles were said to have taken place.

Whilst inside the Cathedral, the children were encouraged to put their artistic talents to good use, by sketching interesting features of the building. The highly anticipated climb up the 'Pilgrims Steps' to the Trinity Chapel did not disappoint, with the children ascending the steps on their knees, as pilgrims would've traditionally done (much to the bemusement of other visitors in the Cathedral!).



The children's trip to Canterbury also included a visit to The Canterbury Tales Visitor Attraction, which recreates five stories written by Geoffrey Chaucer at the end of the 14th Century. Within the exhibition, five Canterbury-bound pilgrims are invited to take part in a story-telling competition, with the best raconteur receiving a free meal at the end of their pilgrimage. It is clear from the stories within the exhibition that the themes which entertained people in the Middle Ages, are still as amusing for people today!

School trips significantly enhance our children's learning experiences and as always we are immensely grateful to all the staff for their hard work in making these visits such a success.



Cookery Workshop

Thank you to all the Year 1 and 2 children and grown ups who joined in with our special autumn cookery day a few Saturdays ago. This event is an excellent opportunity for children to engage in real cooking experiences—using the school ovens and proper equipment. The dishes created by our chefs were delicious—and included homemade bread, soup, roasted vegetables, quiche, and shortbread, Thank you to Mrs McGoldrick, Jo and Sam in our kitchen and all our staff who came along to help. We are planning a similar event in the spring.



A Journey to Dover



A tunnel through a hill, the Folkestone White Horse, sea as far as the eye could see and white cliffs were just some of the amazing sights which greeted the children in Year 2 as they made their way to Dover Museum for their school trip last Friday morning.

The journey to Dover proved particularly exciting for the children in Butterflies and Ladybirds with these fascinating spectacles, not to mention the sight of Dover Castle itself, standing proudly above the town. All this enthusiasm, before the day had officially begun!

Year 2 have been studying homes around the world in their current topic of 'Who lives in a house like this?' So far, they have explored the traditional techniques used in the building of Masai Huts, as well as the construction of Chinese Stilt Houses, so-called as they are built on stilts of varying heights in order to protect against properties flooding in certain communities. In Dover Museum, the topic took on a historical slant, as the children were introduced to housing during the periods of the Bronze Age, Romans and The Stuarts. The children discovered how the Great Fire of London brought about significant improvements in the way that houses were constructed, especially in the materials that were used and the proximity of neighbours!

Dover Museum is also home to a Bronze Age boat, considered to be the world's oldest, known seagoing vessel. This wooden, prehistoric boat, discovered in Dover in September 1992, is thought to be some 3,000 years old. As well as seeing the actual boat and finding out some

fascinating facts about its construction, the children were treated to an educational presentation which explained how the boat was discovered, excavated by archaeologists and preserved so that it may give some insight into how people from the Bronze Age lived their lives.

The visit to Dover Museum also included an artefact-handling session, where the children were introduced to some unusual historic objects, varying in date from the Roman era, through to the Victorians and into the 1960s. The children were given the task to decide what each artefact may have been used for – and their suggestions were very entertaining (it was suggested that a Victorian carpet beater may have been used to keep errant children in their places!). A certain adult within the party remembered some of these historical objects being used by an elderly relative during visits to their house, although this individual shall remain nameless!

Finally, the children's topic was brought back to the present with a practical art session, whereby the classes were invited to make a model of their home out of clay.

A great time was had by all. Many thanks to Mrs Walker and Miss Moss for organising such a busy day.



House Point Badge Winners

This week we have our first Bronze House Point badge winners picking up their badges in recognition of earning 50 house points. Congratulations to Eddie in 3D and Seb in 6E.

Carnival of the Baubles



We were delighted to work in partnership with a special group of artists this week, who are helping to light up Ashford town centre in a light parade, 'The Carnival of the Baubles', on December 14th. Our Year 5 children have been busy making lanterns which they will parade through Ashford, along with children from just six other local schools. They will be joined on the parade by Roberta, a giant 5m tall retro robot, 12 large uniquely designed baubles and a fantastic samba band. Everyone is encouraged to come and watch the parade which starts at the Picture House cinema in Elwick Road at 5.30 pm. The parade will then move up Bank Street to the Lower High Street where there will be a night market selling hot food and drink, making it a perfect family evening.

Visit www.loveashford.com for further details of the festivities taking place in the town centre in December.

October Half Term

We hope that families enjoyed having an extra week in our October Half Term this year. We are currently looking at the calendar for next academic year, in order to see whether we can do something similar next year. We will advise parents in due course of the term dates for next academic year as we know that many families like to plan ahead. Please note that term time holiday will not be authorised, apart from in exceptional circumstances.

Homework Trails

Thank you to everyone for all the positive feedback about our new Homework Trails. We have been delighted by the response of the children which has seen many engaged in positive home learning experiences often involving the family. The children have said that in particular, they have enjoyed being able to interpret some of the tasks in their own way and have liked the flexibility of choosing when to complete their tasks.

It was a pleasure to join in with the Homework Showcases in which the children were able to share their homework with each other. The tasks were many and varied with some beautiful pieces of research and writing and some amazing artwork.

Most children engaged with the expectation of completing 3 tasks set. Almost 30% of children however went the 'Extra Mile', completing 6 challenges and gaining 5 extra house points in the process. Those children who earn 3 'Extra Mile' stickers this year will have a special end of year reward.

We also had a number of children who completed all 9 challenges on the grid. They were very enthusiastic about the tasks and said they couldn't wait for the next trail.

Homework trails have been set for this term (as well as being in the children's books they are on the website) and are due back in school for the Homework Showcase on Tuesday 7th January.



Pastoral News...

Charity Update

Penny Jar Totals

Thank you to everyone for all your help in supporting our charity endeavours this term. Our penny jar totals were amazing and saw many charities benefitting from your generosity.

Year R and 1 raised £267.65 for Great Ormond Street Hospital

Year 2 raised £38.29 for Kent Air Ambulance

Year 3 and 4 raised £79.21 for Children in Need

Year 5 raised £11.19 for Cancer Research UK and £27.80 for Great Ormond Street Hospital

Year 6 raised £36.79 for the Teenage Cancer Trust

Children in Need



We hope that the children enjoyed dressing up in their pyjamas as much as the staff did on Children in Need Day. Thank you to everyone for your kind donations which raised over £400 for the charity.

We were joined by a team of dancers from Homewood School who were being sponsored for the number of different venues they were able to dance in during the day.



Litter Pick Success

Congratulations to Phoebe and Aubree who completed a litter pick in October to raise money for Battersea Dogs Home. The girls collected litter in the local area over a 4 hour period, raising £180 for the charity.

Well done girls.



Christmas is Coming

We can sense the mounting excitement in school at the thought that Christmas is just over 3 weeks away now. I hope that many of you will be able to join us for our Christmas celebrations over the next few weeks. Our calendar of Christmas events has been sent out via ParentMail and details all you need to know about events taking place at school over the Christmas period, including details of Christmas lunch, tickets for school productions and the church service for Upper School at St Mary's Church in Great Chart.

You may have noticed a rather beautiful Christmas tree sitting outside the school entrance. We were very fortunate in winning this in a competition held by Longacres Garden Centre in which parents had to nominate a school into the prize draw. Thank you to everyone who entered on our behalf—the tree is a wonderful addition to our Christmas decorations.

We hope that parents will come and watch our school choir who will be carol singing in County Square on Thursday 5th December at 4 pm.

Club News...

Club of the Month

Art Hub Club



It has been a pleasure working with children from Year 5 and 6 over the past term on an art project involving mythical creatures. The children have created piece of work, focused on the eye of a fantasy creature—completing their edging in pen and then shading in coloured pencil. Their finished pieces are amazing; we will find some wall space where we can do them justice over the next few weeks.

I will pick up Art Hub Club again in the Spring when I am able to commit to a regular timetable.

Cycling Sessions—Year R and 1

Our Year R and 1 children have done really well in their recent cycle ready sessions with many of them either now able to steady their balance on a balance bike or to pedal on a cycle. We hope that your child's cycling experience will encourage families to get out and cycle. The school has good cycle rack provision—so why not ditch the car and cycle to school.



Other News and Reminders...

Sickness Bug

This year we have been hit relatively hard by a sickness bug doing the rounds. Information has been sent out to all parents via Parentmail which I would encourage you all to read. Whilst attendance at school is important, containing the spread of certain bugs is essential. If your child is suffering from a bug which has caused sickness or diarrhoea, please ensure that they are kept at home for 48 hours after their last bout of illness. All children have been reminded about the importance of good hygiene.

Staff News

We are delighted to welcome Miss Julia Marsh back to Godinton in a permanent capacity in January when she begins her job-share teaching role with Mrs Christopher in Rabbits and Hedgehogs class.

Mrs Kelly Prior will also be joining our Teaching Assistant Team in the coming weeks.

We wish both Miss Marsh and Mrs Prior well in their new positions.

PTFA News

Thank you to everyone for all the generous donations that have come in for the Christmas Fair. The class hampers look particularly good so make sure you purchase lots of tickets.

Our Christmas Fair runs from 12 pm to 3 pm on Saturday 7th December. Please come along and join in the fun, or if you are able to help in any way, please see a member of the PTFA.

We also have Breakfast with Santa to look forward to on Saturday 14th December. Tickets are selling fast.

Thank you in advance for all your help and support.

Other News and Reminders...

- Please remember to notify the school office on the first day of your child's absence from school and on each subsequent day unless this has been discussed with the school. Attendance is monitored every day and it is important that we are made aware when children are absent from school.
- Please can I remind parents that the school car park is not to be used by parents for pick up or drop off unless this has been specifically agreed with the school (e.g. blue badge holder). We are very lucky to have ample parking by the village hall which parents can take advantage of. Lockholt Close does not need additional traffic in the morning or afternoon as this only places our children at greater risk of accident. Your cooperation on this matter is essential—thank you.

Caught on camera this month...



Sports Report

Sports Hall Athletics Competition, Volleyball Competition, Dodgeball Competition



It's been a busy term competition wise, with teams entered into a variety of local competitions against other schools. As always our children did exceptionally well and demonstrated great team spirit. Congratulations to everyone who represented the school at these events.

Kent Junior Schools' Cross Country Competition

Last Saturday, Mrs Crowfoot and Mrs Ellis took 16 children from years 3–6 to the Kent Junior Schools' Cross Country Championships 2019 at Brands Hatch. This proved to be a challenging course, much harder than Detling where the competition had been held in previous years, and as always seems to be the case the weather was bracing. Years 3 and 4 had to run 1200m, whilst years 5 and 6 had to run 2200m – both courses ending on a particularly steep section, which was tough for all.

Whilst we haven't had the official times through yet, we did have some very good results on the day: Year 3 boys – Jack came 16th out of 144, Year 4 boys – Finley P came 3rd, Year 6 boys – Charlie came 14th, Year 6 girls – Lily-Rose came 11th meaning she will represent Kent at the national event next year.

All of the children put immense effort into their races and ran their hearts out – I know that everyone who came along to watch were extremely proud of the children and I certainly echo that. Well done everyone.



I understand from the staff who attended that the venue was not as good as previous years and that despite some organisational challenges, everyone who came along remained in good spirits and were incredibly encouraging to the children. A great Godinton team effort from everyone. Particular thanks go to Mrs Ellis and Mrs Crowfoot for all their hard work and the support they have given to the children.