



www.godinton.kent.sch.uk

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School Closure Weekly Update

Friday 17th April 2020

Dear Parents,

I hope that the beautiful weather we have had over the past few weeks has helped to make lockdown a little easier for you all. Spending time outside, whether that's in the back garden or going out for a walk is a good way to break up the day and fresh air makes everyone feel better.

Monday sees that start of Term 5 and with no information yet as to when or if school will reopen this academic year, we will be continuing with our home learning programme. More information about this is provided below. After the two week break, try to get back into routines with this, undertaking some tasks each day. We don't expect anyone to recreate the same timetables that we have in school – you will know what works best for you as a family. Making sure that the children feel happy, safe and fulfilled should be the priority for everyone. If the children are having any difficulties with their work, please use the year group email addresses to contact staff who will be happy to help.

Contacting the School

If you need to get in touch with the school office during the closure period, you can call 01233 621616 between 8.30 a.m. and 3.30 p.m. Monday to Friday or email office@godinton.kent.sch.uk or headteacher@godinton.kent.sch.uk

In the event of an emergency, you can also contact emergency@godinton.kent.sch.uk and for safeguarding concerns please contact pupilwelfare@godinton.kent.sch.uk

Year group emails, for example year4parent@godinton.kent.sch.uk, can be used by parents to contact staff regarding any aspect of home learning. These accounts are checked Monday to Friday during school hours.

Message for the Children...

Hi everyone,

I hope that you have all had a great Easter holiday and haven't eaten too many Easter eggs! The weather has been really lovely in New Romney over the past two weeks with lots of signs of spring in my garden, including a robin that is nesting in our front hedge. I hope that you have all managed to spend some time outside enjoying the sunshine. Did any of you have a paddling pool out?

Term 5 starts on Monday and your teachers have been busy preparing lots of new learning tasks for you. These will be available for you to look at on the school website on Monday morning alongside a special newsletter that your teachers have put together for each year group. In these you can find out what the teachers have been up to over the Easter break as well as lots of other things to keep you busy.

All the staff at Godinton want me to let you know that they are missing you all very much and can't wait for things to get back to normal. It's as strange for the grown-ups as it is for all of you.

Smiles to you all

Miss Talbot

Home Learning

Unexpected Adventure Trails

The next 'Unexpected Adventure Trails' will be set for the children on Monday 20th April. For some year groups, this will see the launch of exciting new topics which would ordinarily have been delivered as part of our Learning Adventures in school. To access these, please click on 'Home Learning – School Closure 2020' which can be accessed from the main menu. We have set up year group specific pages which will also go live on Monday and can be accessed from this page or from the School Closure tab.

On the page for your child's year group, alongside their new 'Unexpected Adventure Trails' you may also find useful documents to support your child's learning. This may include fact files or 'how to...' sheets that will provide background information or explain new concepts. We hope that these will help to guide the children through the tasks set on their trails. For Year 1 and Year R, we have also provided some further information for parents on how to support children's early developmental skills in the Early Years Foundation Stage and information to support phonics.

The trail tasks should be completed in the children's work books. Don't forget to keep up with a daily diet of Mathematics, spelling and phonics practice, daily reading and number facts / times tables practice. In addition to the tasks set by the teacher in Mathematics, it contains a wealth of games including a 'Multiverse' section for times tables practice. There are also additional learning games and activities available on Purple Mash.

Unfortunately, we cannot set further individual work for the children in between the setting of the Adventure Trails. However to supplement the work set we are doing the following:

- Each week in this update we will be setting the children a challenge which they can interpret and engage with in as many different ways as they want. The opportunities here are endless.

If you need to ask questions about the tasks set for the children, please use the year group email addresses. Staff will be very happy to answer any queries you may have or will point you in the right direction. We don't want the completion of these tasks to be stressful for anyone so please just ask.

Year Group Newsletters

Also on the page for your child's year group, you will find the first of a fortnightly newsletter put together by year group staff for the children. These have been designed as another way for the children to feel connected to their teachers during the period of closure. In these you will find links to websites that can help to support learning, additional tasks that the children might want to do and messages from year group staff. We hope that the children will enjoy reading about what the staff have been up to during the Easter break.

Free Parental Access to all Resources on Twinkl

Many of you may have already explored the Twinkl website which offers all sorts of educational resources. Twinkl is usually a subscription service, however during the period of school closure they are offering free access to all their resources. To access this, parents will need to set up a free account and enter the code: **CVDTWINKLHELPS** Visit the Twinkl offer site to activate this access: www.twinkl.co.uk/offer

The site includes a huge range of resources for parents to explore and use with their children at home such as topic packs, reading activities, and resources such as flashcards or fact files. I would encourage parents to take advantage of the site whilst this offer is in place.

Help with Mathletics

Mathletics is a really useful platform for practising a range of maths skills. Children should first complete the tasks that have been set by their teachers, but can then explore the other activities that the site has to offer. We have placed an information sheet onto the **School Closure** page of the website which shows parents and children how to access the help guides on Mathletics which will explain how to approach the activities set, in the event that anyone is stuck. Don't forget that the **Multiverse** section on Mathletics will also help with times table practice. Learning times tables is such an important skill and now is the perfect time to get in some extra practice!

Home Learning Photos for Website

Please have a look at the 'Children' section of the website for some lovely photos of our Lower School children taking part in the Rainbow challenge set during the first week of closure. Over the holiday period, we invited the parents of children in Upper and Middle School to send in photos of their children taking part in any spring or Easter activities. We are in the process of sorting out photos to be uploaded and would ask if there are any more photos that they are sent to homelearning@godinton.kent.sch.uk by the end of this week.

Over the next two weeks we are asking parents with children in Lower School or Middle School to send in photos of their children taking part in the challenge from this week which or next. This week's challenge is all about 'Imagination' – see below for more information.

Online Safety

We recognise that at this time, children may be accessing the internet more than they would normally. We would encourage parents to continue to monitor their children's online activity and to ensure that suitable filters are set on all laptops and devices used. In order to support parents in supporting their children's online activity, we have put some useful links onto the new safeguarding page on the school website. This can be accessed from the main safeguarding tab. It includes links to resource sheets that can be used to set profiles on sites such as Tik Tok. We would urge all parents to follow any age restrictions on sites used by the children.

Free School Meals

Families in receipt of benefit related free school meals should by now have received their supermarket e-voucher for the Easter holiday with their first term time voucher due to be received on Monday. We are sorry that the Easter vouchers took so long to come through – this was due to technical difficulties with the portal used to order the vouchers. This has now been upgraded and we have been assured that the system has the capacity to deal with the demand. If anyone has any difficulties with their vouchers, please contact our School Business Manager, Mrs Williams who will be happy to assist.

If any family believes that they might be entitled to benefits related free school meals, please look at the criteria by following the link below and should it relate to you, please contact the school office. Should your family circumstances change at any point, the school office will be happy to help you access any entitlement to free school meals.

<https://www.gov.uk/apply-free-school-meals>

Children Attending School during Closure

The school has been open during the Easter holiday to provide supervision for children of key workers who are out at work. I am very grateful to all our staff who have volunteered to work during the holiday to facilitate this arrangement and for the cooperation of parents who have kept their children at home whenever possible.

Key workers are asked to book places for the following week by contacting schoolclosure@godinton.kent.sch.uk by 12 p.m. (midday) on a Friday. Mrs Partridge is managing these arrangements and will confirm bookings with parents.

Please can we remind parents, that if they are working from home, then their children should remain with them.

The children who have been attending school have all been brilliant. I know that school must seem like a very strange place with only a handful of children in each day but they have been well behaved, sensible and have adhered to the social distancing arrangements we have in place.

Please note a few alterations to the arrangements that we have in place for children attending school:

- Children may come into school in their home clothes if this is easier for parents. We would ask that this is sensible clothing and footwear for outdoor activity.
- Parents will now collect their children from the front school entrance at the end of the day. Please wait outside the school building and remember to keep your distance from each other.

If any parents now have a permanent arrangement in place, meaning that they will not need a place for their child at school during the closure period, please contact schoolclosure@godinton.kent.sch.uk so that Mrs Partridge can remove you from the database.

Safeguarding

In light of the current situation, schools have been asked to add an addendum to their child protection (safeguarding) policy to reflect the unique circumstances that we find ourselves in. This can be found by clicking on the 'Safeguarding during School Closure' tab under the safeguarding section of the school website. Here you will also find some other useful information regarding safeguarding, including advice for parents about managing online safety when their children are accessing the internet at home and information for families about domestic abuse.

If anyone has any concerns about a child, the safeguarding team at Godinton (Miss Talbot, Mrs Stein and Mrs McGibney) can be contacted on pupilwelfare@godinton.kent.sch.uk

Further information is also provided on the school website about the steps that anyone can take if they are worried about a child.

The current lockdown situation may place more stress on some families. On the 'Safeguarding during School Closure' page on the website, you will find contact details of services that can support parents with issues surrounding domestic abuse including a domestic abuse Isolation poster produced by Kent Police which contains details of emergency contact numbers that can be accessed at this time.

Another useful source of information and support is the following website:

<http://www.domesticabuseservices.org.uk/>

Coronavirus Scams – Be Vigilant

Kent Trading Standards are aware of a wide number of coronavirus themed scams operating. This can include fraudsters offering to do shopping or collect medication for vulnerable individuals and asking for money upfront and then disappearing. Trading Standards have produced a letter linked below to highlight these.

https://www.kelsi.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0010/106687/Covid-19-CCG-Bulletin-Children-and-Young-People-April-2020.pdf

The National Trading Standards (NTS) Scams Team has produced some helpful materials to help promote scams awareness around coronavirus (COVID-19) scams. The team has released a press release around criminals exploiting fears about coronavirus to prey on members of the public, particularly older and vulnerable people who are isolated from family and friends.

<https://www.nationaltradingstandards.uk/news/beware-of-covid19-scams/>

If you become aware of any scams relating to Covid-19 please contact Kent Police or Action Fraud at www.actionfraud.police.uk Tel: 03001232040

Latest Government Guidance and Useful Resources

The latest Government guidance on Coronavirus can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

Kent County Council has launched a new 24 hour helpline called Kent Together to support vulnerable people in Kent who need urgent help, supplies or medication. The helpline will provide a single, convenient point of contact for anyone in the county who is in urgent need of help during the Coronavirus outbreak. It is a collaboration between KCC, central Government, District, Borough and local councils, the voluntary and community sector, the NHS, emergency services and other partners to ensure help is at hand for vulnerable people.

If you are vulnerable and have an urgent need that cannot be met through existing support networks, or are concerned about the welfare of someone else you can contact the Kent Together helpline at www.kent.gov.uk/KentTogether or by calling on 03000 41 92 92. It is a 24 hour service.

The NHS has requested we circulate this guide for parents on Covid-19. It includes information on when to ring 999, go to A and E, contact your GP or ring 111. Please see the link below:

https://www.kelsi.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0010/106777/NHS-CoVID-19-Parent-Guide.pdf

If any families are finding themselves in challenging circumstances, where food is hard to afford, you might be able to access help from Food Bank. To find details of your nearest Food Bank, please follow the link below.

<https://www.trusselltrust.org/get-help/find-a-foodbank/>

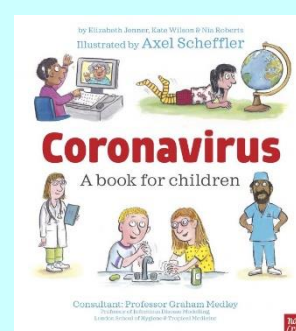
Online Resources for Children

Illustrator Axel Scheffler (famous for illustrating many of the Julia Donaldson books such as the Gruffalo) has joined forces with authors Elizabeth Jenner, Kate Wilson and Nia Roberts to produce a **free** digital information book for primary school age children to help explain the Coronavirus and the measures taken to control it. It answers lots of questions in a child-friendly way, and aims to both inform and reassure. Published by Nosy Crow and illustrated by Axel, the text had expert input from Professor Graham Medley of the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, and also two Headteachers and a child psychologist. You can find out more, download and read the book here:

<https://nosycrow.com/blog/released-today-free-information-book-explaining-coronavirus-children-illustrated-gruffalo-illustrator-axel-scheffler>

The NHS have also produced a resource poster for children:

<https://campaignresources.phe.gov.uk/resources/campaigns/101/resources/5093>



Weekly Challenge...

Why not join in with this week's 'Weekly Challenge'. This is something that the children could work on independently or you could work on as a family.

This week's challenge is all about:

Imagination

Perhaps you could...

- Create your own fantasy story or play. Include imaginary creatures or characters. Use your imagination to write an additional chapter of your favourite book.
- Draw an imaginary world or make one from Lego or as a junk model. Make up an imaginary creature – draw and label any special features it has
- Use your imagination to engage in role play activities – pretend you have travelled to a far-away island or make a den.
- Create your own fantasy football team. Write about why you have included each player.
- Imagine all the things that you are going to do when life returns to normal – make a list of the things that you are looking forward to most.

I'm sure that you can use your imagination to be really creative!

Wellbeing News...

It's important to look after our mental health during this time especially as the measures in place to keep us safe may limit our usual actions to respond to stress. The Kent and Medway NHS Mental Health Needs Bulletin contains a list of resources to support parents, carers, schools, colleges and children and young people during the pandemic. There are also resources to support learning at home as well as to help parents and carers to look after their own wellbeing. It can be accessed via the following link:

https://www.kelsi.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0010/106687/Covid-19-CCG-Bulletin-Children-and-Young-People-April-2020.pdf

And Breathe...

Breathing deeply is an excellent way for you to help to ease any feelings of anxiety or stress that either you or your children may be experiencing during this unsettled time.

Find a comfortable place in your home to practise deep breathing so that you can call on this in times of need. You can sit in a chair with your back, head and neck supported or lie on your back with your knees and head supported by a pillow or cushion. It is important to take time to really notice and listen to your breath, focusing on its regularity. Often, we breathe in relatively shallow breaths, especially when we are under any form of stress or anxiety and this adds to feelings of being out of control or panic.

Begin by breathing in through your nose and out through your mouth. Can you breathe in for a count of 3 or 4 and breathe out for the same count? Now put your hand on your tummy and on your chest, as you breathe in through your nose feel your tummy rise as it fills with air from your deep breath and then fall as you exhale through your mouth. Continue this three times.

You could do this exercise together as a family activity, teaching each other how to manage worrying feelings of anxiety and enabling them to pass together but also, once these techniques are learnt, individuals in your family can call on them when they need too.

I will continue to keep everyone updated on a weekly basis with any new information that comes to our attention during the period of school closure.

Kind Regards

Jill Talbot

Headteacher