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School Closure Weekly Update

Friday 8th May 2020

Dear Parents,

I am hoping that at some point over the next few days, we will get a better idea as to the Government's plans for the reopening schools. Thank you all for your continued patience, I will update everyone once we know a little more.

Home Learning

The experience of home learning will be a different one for each of our families but it should never become something which causes upset or frustration – you can all only do your best. When setting work for the children, we have to try and get a balance – we have some families who are clamouring for more work whilst others are struggling to keep up with the tasks have been set. Everyone has different pressures and circumstances at home that they have to navigate so please try not to place undue pressure on yourselves. It is important that the children engage in some home learning, ideally every day, but how you timetable this and what you engage in is up to you.

Most of the tasks set can be worked on independently, some may require some initial input to get the children started but none have been designed to have heavy adult input throughout the entire task. The children, should in the main, be able to manage what has been set for them – but this for some may be harder than usual simply because they are not in the school environment. The teachers have produced some help sheets to try and offer more explanation about the tasks set in the event that anyone is unsure or needs further guidance. However what we can't provide is that rich dialogue that is an essential part of the majority of school learning so this is a different experience to that which the children are used to. What I would ask, is that if you are unsure about anything please ask the class teachers. Please do not feel as if you are wasting anyone's time by seeking further clarification – they are there to help.

Message for the Children...

Hi everyone,

I hope that some of your parents have managed to send across photos of your Unexpected Adventure Trail work to your teachers so that they can have a look at what you have been up to. I've had a look at some of the emails that have come through and I have seen lots of amazing work. I can see that you are working hard and have put lots of effort into your tasks.

I know that it can sometimes be tricky to understand what you have got to do when your teachers aren't there to explain things so if you are ever unsure just ask your parents to email your teachers and they will give a helping hand and offer more explanation. We don't want anyone to worry.

Be kind to your parents – they are trying hard too and the way you do your learning may be very different to how they worked things out when they were at school. This is a new experience for everyone.

Stay safe everyone.

Smiles to you all

Miss Talbot

If you feel that anything is unmanageable, then please leave it. There are lots of other things that you can do to stimulate your children and all of these are just as valuable.

The Department for Education has issued a document for parents on supporting their child's learning at home. This can be accessed at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/supporting-your-childrens-education-during-coronavirus-covid-19>

Feedback on Unexpected Adventure Trail Tasks

We have seen lots of brilliant pieces of work that have been emailed into the year group emails – Our children are working really hard at home and we are immensely grateful for the support and guidance you are giving them with their work, especially when many of you are juggling so many other things as well.

As I mentioned in last week's update, we would like to offer the children the opportunity to have some feedback on their Unexpected Adventure Trail from their class teacher.

I would appreciate your help in enabling us to do this in an organised way which will enable staff to get back to all children in their class.

1. Please use the year group email accounts to email no more than 4 photos of your child's work. Please send just one email and in the subject box of the email please put your child's name followed by Adventure Trail tasks.
2. Please do not include your child's image in these emails.
3. Emails should come from parents please rather than the children.
4. Please choose work that shows the amazing effort that your children have been applying to their home learning tasks.
5. Staff will reply to the emails and will include a message for the children with feedback about their efforts. Please allow time for the staff to get back to you.
6. We would kindly ask that these emails are sent by Wednesday 14th May.
7. We will then set another time band for photos of work to be submitted for feedback after May Half Term.

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.

Additional Unexpected Adventure Trail Exercise Books

If your child is nearing completion of their home learning exercise book, please email your child's class teachers using the year group email address to request one. These will be posted out or hand delivered to you. With postal delays, please allow a week for these to reach you.

Please only request a new book when the current book is nearly full.

Speech Link Parent Portal <https://speechandlanguage.info/parents>

Last week, I mentioned the Speech Link portal which can be accessed by parents to support their children's speech and language needs at home. We strongly recommend that before you begin any activities with your child, you read through the information held in the portal. This includes information about speech production and language needs that are concisely and accessibly described in the 'Information' and 'Development' tabs of the portal. These pages are a quick read but very informative. Please remember to click on any arrows within the page for more information. Each week we are recommending an area for you to focus on. Please see below for this week's recommendation.

Now try this...

Explore the online 'Speech Activities Interactive Games' these can be found in the activities tab of the portal. These games will help your child to discriminate between sounds and identify what they can hear. Choose from such as 'Pirate Island' and 'Submarine'. There are also activity sheets that the children can complete as well.

Children Attending School during Closure

Please remember that 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. Thank you to everyone for all their cooperation with the arrangements that we have in place – it's helped the system to run smoothly.

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

Children should not attend school if they are displaying any of the symptoms of coronavirus. Testing is available to key workers and their families. The following guidance provides further information:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-getting-tested>

If you haven't yet returned your Zoom Football session permission slip, please do so as soon as possible.

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.

Latest Government Guidance

The latest Government guidance on Coronavirus can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

The Department for Education has issued a document for parents on supporting their child's learning at home. This can be accessed at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/supporting-your-childrens-education-during-coronavirus-covid-19>

Home Learning Photos for Website

Over the next week, we would like to invite children from any year group to share photos with us for the school website of them completing any creative tasks from their new Unexpected Learning Adventure or of them making a medal as part of last week's VE Day challenge.

Please send these to homelearning@godinton.kent.sch.uk by Wednesday 13th May. In order to stand the best chance of your child's picture making it to the website, please ensure that the image is of good quality and let us know that you give permission for it to be uploaded to the website. I will also be including some of the photos in school newsletters.

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: **Kindness**

We have now spent 7 weeks in lockdown – so can you think of something kind to do for someone else to help brighten their day? This could be something you could do for someone at home or something you could send to someone you haven't seen for a while. You could:

- Do a job for someone at home to help them out
- Make something for someone at home to say thank you for all the things that they have done for you over the past few weeks
- Post something to a member of your family or a friend who you haven't seen for a while – write a letter, make a picture, send them a rainbow.
- Why not try some of the wellbeing activities below...

Wellbeing News...

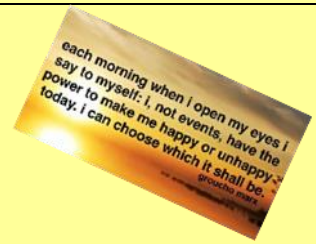
From Mrs Stein and Mrs McGibney

How many minutes of kindness can you rack up per week?

Here are some brave challenges for you to consider.....

Choose a member of your family and ask if you could show them some love. First ask them to wash their hands, then sit beside you. You will need a towel and hand cream. Place the towel on your lap or table, then gently massage the cream/lotion into the palm of their hands, taking care to massage all fingers gently. When their hands are facing palm down, pay special attention to their nails and cuticles, (these get very dry with lots of hand washing.) Once both hands are finished, asked if they enjoyed their hand massage. Hopefully the answer will be YES! Don't forget to put the hand cream back where you found it.

(Next stop if you are feeling super brave and their not ticklish, try the feet! (Clean feet are definitely a MUST!)



Family Fun...

Get a pack mini marshmallows and some cocktail sticks, then decide who will be the leader. They will need to sit with their back to you and create a 2D/3D shape using one Marshmallow and one cocktail stick at a time. See if you can make the exact creation just by good listening and following their instructions.

If this is too tricky and you don't want to be throwing Marshmallows at each other, simply sit together and create some shapes. The best way to finish this task, is to eat your creation minus the sticks or float it in your next cup of hot chocolate.....yummy!!

Children's Challenge...

Go out into your garden if you have one or stop and pause on your daily walk or outside activity and close your eyes. Use your other senses of hearing, smell and touch to identify the animals you can hear, the things that you can smell and what you can feel on your skin. Is there a breeze that makes the hair on your arms stand up? Can you hear any birds tweeting or dogs barking? Can you smell the diesel from a lorry or van as it drives past or near you? This activity will help you to stop and think about the world around you. Even though your experiences at the moment are very different to what you normally experience everyday there are still new things happening all around you. Open your eyes, can you see vibrant colours around you? Are there any buds or new leaves growing on the trees, bushes and flowers around you? Try and do this a few times a week and maybe keep a journal of the different experiences that you have to remember the positive moments from this period.

Something to Explore...

Mindfulness is a good way for both adults and children to stop, pause and take a breath in periods of anxiety or stress. It is practised by many people around the world and doesn't need to take a lot of time, preparation or space to do. There are many websites, books and apps that provide meditations, guidance and music to support mindful activities. Take a look at the website below that offers mindful activities like the one suggested above and guidance on how to teach mindful methods to your children. This website can also be found on the wellbeing links on the home learning section of the website.

<https://positivepsychology.com/mindfulness-for-children-kids-activities/>

If anyone has any concerns about a child's welfare or wellbeing during the period of school closure, please contact pupilwelfare@godinton.kent.sch.uk

Have a good week everyone and enjoy the Bank Holiday weekend. Take care and stay safe.

Kind Regards

Jill Talbot

Headteacher