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# School Closure Weekly Update

Friday 15<sup>th</sup> May 2020

Dear Parents,

I wrote to you all yesterday in response to the Government's announcement of the phased reopening of schools. Our planning is well under way and I will keep you updated with regards to the steps that we will be taking to start increasing the number of children attending school over the coming weeks. This is no easy task and as I said in my letter – ensuring the safety and wellbeing of our whole school community will be of the highest importance.

All children in the groups identified within the first wave of school reopening are being encouraged to return when schools deem it is safe to do so. However, parents will be able to choose whether or not to send their children to school. We are aware that some families may be shielding for example and that this may impact on decision making. No family will be forced to send their child to school and there will be no penalty for not doing so. When our planning is a little further down the line, I will be explaining to parents in the first wave of year groups what they should expect if their child returns to school so that you can make informed choices. I will outline how the children will be in smaller class sizes, what these will look like and who the children may be taught by, how start and finish times will need to be adjusted, the procedures for entering and exiting the school site and arrangements for meeting best endeavours with regard to social distancing amongst many, many other points of information.

The DfE has produced guidance for parents regarding school reopening. This can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers/reopening-schools-and-other-educational-settings-from-1-june>

## Message for the Children...

Hi everyone,

I know that many of you enjoyed a very happy Bank Holiday VE Day last week judging by some of the photos I have seen. I was really impressed with the medals that many of you made – keep your eye on the website for a gallery of creative photos that includes some of your VE Day activities.



School was very quiet on Bank Holiday with just two children in school! I know from Mrs Crowfoot and Mrs Ellis that both children had a great day joining in with lots of VE Day activities.

We have just one more week of school before we break for Half Term. I don't know about you, but for me all the days are rolling into one! I hope that you all have a great time.

Stay safe everyone.

Smiles to you all

Miss Talbot

I would hope that during Term 6 we will be able to welcome back children from Years R, 1 and 6 in line with Government recommendations. It is unlikely that we will be able to do this all at once and at the moment are looking at a phased reopening starting with Year R alongside key worker children from all year groups and those children in the most vulnerable groupings. There would have to be considerable changes at National level for us to be in a position to accommodate all children from all year groups before the end of the academic year but we will continue to risk assess and respond to Government guidance in the weeks and months ahead.

For those children whose return to school is still a long way off yet, we will be looking at what more we can do to connect children with teachers and classmates remotely. We have no easy answers here either but are looking into different options. We have enjoyed looking at photos of all the things that the children have been doing at home but some 'live' interaction, I know would be useful too.

Children may well start asking more questions about their return to school. If this is the case, I would suggest that you avoid giving them specific dates or time scales as we cannot offer any certainties at the moment. Reassure them that we are doing all we can to see everyone back together as soon as possible but that we can only do this when it is safe to do so.

I will keep everyone updated about our plans.

## **Key Worker 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](mailto: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. School will still be open to key worker children in any year group, once other whole year groups are returned to school and it is likely that similar arrangements for booking places will remain.

We are still awaiting guidance from the DfE as to whether schools will be required to open during the May Half Term break (Monday 25<sup>th</sup> May to Friday 29<sup>th</sup> May). We will let parents know as soon as we are able to.

We know that with many key workers returning to their places of work, more places in school for their children may be required. If any key workers who have not as yet sent their children to school during the lockdown period, now need to do so, please contact Mrs Partridge via the school closure email address.

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>

## **Home Learning**

New Unexpected Adventure Trail tasks will be set for the children on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> May on the school website. These tasks will take us up to the Friday after Half Term (5<sup>th</sup> June). There is no expectation that the children will complete school work during the holiday and no Mathematics tasks will be set during the break. Once again, the teachers have produced some help sheets to support the children's learning and a newsletter for the children to read.

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

I would like to remind you about the Speechlink portal that parents can use to support your children with their speech and language needs during this period. 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...**

Begin to explore the support materials for language skills development by going into the 'Language Activities' area and clicking on the arrow for the 'Concepts' sections. Here you will find some information about what these skills are and what they involve. There are then some activities that can be completed with children aged between 4 – 7 and 7 – 11 years old.

## **Information from Kent Educational Psychology Service**

In response to the current coronavirus situation, the Kent Educational Psychology service has created a working group aiming to support parents and carers. They have developed a leaflet which gives practical support, information resources and websites, across areas such as parent/carer wellbeing, home schooling and children's emotional health. This is for all parents and carers across Kent. The leaflet is attached to this ParentMail 'Coronavirus – advice for parents and carers'.

## **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](mailto:office@godinton.kent.sch.uk) or [headteacher@godinton.kent.sch.uk](mailto:headteacher@godinton.kent.sch.uk)

In the event of an emergency, you can also contact [emergency@godinton.kent.sch.uk](mailto:emergency@godinton.kent.sch.uk) and for safeguarding concerns please contact [pupilwelfare@godinton.kent.sch.uk](mailto:pupilwelfare@godinton.kent.sch.uk)

Year group emails, for example [year4parent@godinton.kent.sch.uk](mailto: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>

Guidance for parents on school reopening: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers/reopening-schools-and-other-educational-settings-from-1-june>

## 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 science, history or geography tasks from their new Unexpected Learning Adventure or completing this week or next week's 'Weekly Challenge' (see below).

Please send these to [homelearning@godinton.kent.sch.uk](mailto:homelearning@godinton.kent.sch.uk) by Friday 29th 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

# 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: **Movement**

This week's challenge is all about making things move – this could be making yourself move or making something else move. You could:

- Create a dance or exercise routine – perhaps some circuit training.
- Play a sport in your back garden or at the park – running, hitting a ball with a tennis racket, goal shooting practice, set up a mini golf course
- Make moving model or vehicle – this could be with an electrical moving part, with a spring or card joined with split pins
- Make a moving image – this might be by videoing mini figures or drawings that you have created to create a 'stop motion' animation, where you use one small element in each frame to create the effect of movement. Or use more traditional methods and create a 'flip book'. In the same corner on each page, draw the same image but one step ahead.



# Wellbeing News...

## From Mrs Stein and Mrs McGibney

Are you ready for some Ninja Kindness? It's simply a random act of Kindness done in secret, in true Ninja style. Here are a couple of options.... 1. Without being seen, write a note to someone in your family and leave it under their pillow or next to their toothbrush. Clearly write their name so there is no mistake of who it's for, then say what you really appreciate and admire about them. You can do this for as many members of your family as possible, be inspired. 2. Choose a friend who has supported you and post one to them too, they won't be expecting it. **SURPRISE!!**©

## Family Fun... TIME TO CONNECT ~ Create a family memory that you can frame.

*"During a time where the world tells us we need to stay apart, staying together was our favourite part."* To create your staying together Lockdown 2020 picture, each family member, draws around their left hand on their favourite colour paper. Next cut & stick the biggest hand print in the centre of the frame or on white A4 paper, then continue adding prints on top of each other lining up the bases until complete. You should have a family handprint keepsake to admire. **"Together was our favourite part." ENJOY!**

**Children's Challenge... Pom Pom Alert!** The link below tells you how to make some simple PomPoms using just your hands, some scissors and any spare wool. Make sure that you ask for help from a grown up when you need to do some cutting. The video clips suggest using wool for your PomPoms but if you don't have any wool at home you could use string or even some old sheets, duvet covers or T – shirts that have been cut up into a long strip of fabric. Remember to ask your grownups at home before cutting anything! Once you have made your PomPoms try squeezing them when you feel cross or worried; putting them underneath your bare feet and feel the material between your toes, you could also try rolling them with your feet. If you make a few PomPoms you could try throwing and catching them in the air or you could even try to teach yourself to juggle.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=daJyhdlEJ1s>

## Something to explore... Advice from Pooky Knight– Smith on managing anxiety and mental health.

Pooky Knight – Smith has a PhD in child and adolescent mental health and is an internationally respected speaker and advisor on this subject. She offers accessible advice through her website and YouTube channel, both are detailed below. Videos on the YouTube channel are no longer than 15–20 minutes and offer practical ways to support adults managing their own mental health as well as the wellbeing of their children. Please take a look at some of these, there are many videos but three have been recommended below.

<https://www.pookyknightsmith.com/>

<https://www.youtube.com/user/pookyknightsmith>

### Recommended videos:

Covid 19 Anxiety: 5 tips for staying mentally well during the Coronavirus pandemic

Anxiety: Top phrases for calming anxious children

Anxiety Hack: Using 'If... then...' to reduce worry.

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](mailto:pupilwelfare@godinton.kent.sch.uk)

Take care and stay safe.

Kind Regards

Jill Talbot

Headteacher