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Message from Miss Talbot

Thinking of Others

Over the last few weeks, we have spent a lot of time thinking of those less fortunate than ourselves. This year has been one of significant upheaval and distress for so many people that it has been good to reflect on all the positives in our own lives. We hope that you will enjoy writing about the things that your family is grateful for or your hopes for 2021, to go inside your bauble which will be hung on the Christmas tree at the front of school.

Thank you to everyone who made a donation to the BBC Children in Need appeal. Your valiant fundraising efforts helped us to raise £1000 for the charity which is incredible. Next week we begin our STAR week and will begin our 'Caring for the Community' focus. Each year group will be looking at a way in which we can help groups within our community, from recognising the efforts of NHS heroes over the past year to helping Food Bank. We know that times are challenging for many of our own Godinton families so if anyone is in need of help, please let us know and we will try to signpost you to services that can assist.



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Class News

Year 1 Bubble Closure

Thank you so much to everyone for all your support and patience with the Year 1 bubble closure. It was lovely to have the children back in school today so keen and enthusiastic to return to their classrooms and see their teachers, teaching assistants and friends.

We very much enjoyed looking at all the excellent home learning that took place over the fortnight. This will really help the children to get back into their stride this week. Thank you for all your efforts in supporting this.

We are obviously hoping that occasions like this don't occur with any degree of frequency, but we have sent a questionnaire out to all Year 1 parents asking for feedback about your remote learning experience. This will help us to review our processes for any future bubble closures. Please see the ParentMail sent out to Year 1 parents last week. Your feedback is much appreciated.

Remote Learning

Home learning tasks will be set for the children in the event that they are at home self-isolating, perhaps because someone in their house is awaiting test results. Staff will contact you to see whether the household is well enough to engage with remote learning and if so, tasks will be emailed across to parents. Each year group has their own remote learning page on the school website where you will also find some 'base camp' tasks that your child can dip into as well, should they find themselves at home.

Children in Need

Dressing up on Children in Need certainly lifted everyone's spirits whilst at the same time raising such a huge amount of money for a very worthy cause.



We hope that you enjoyed looking out for your child on the BBC South East news that evening. Several classes were featured and it was lovely to be a part of this year's fundraising programme. Everyone looked great in their hero costumes.

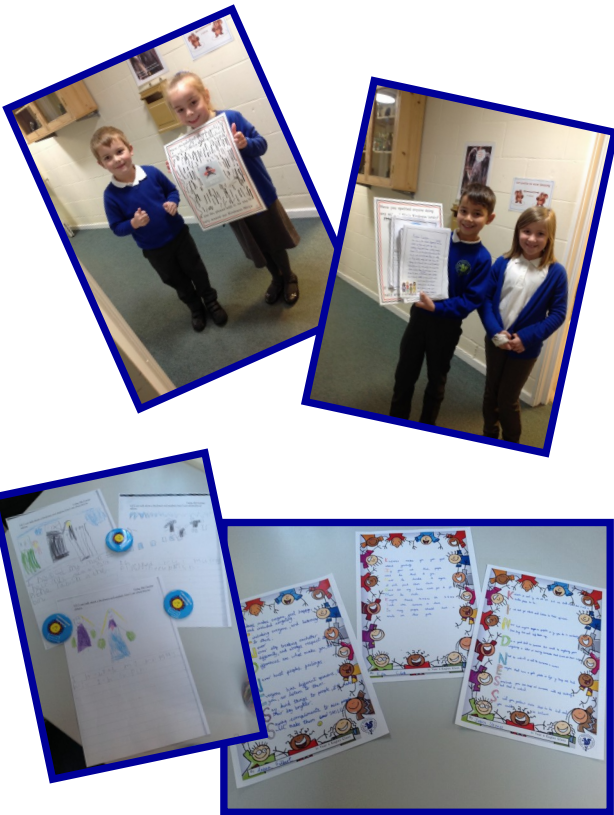
Remembrance Day

It was lovely to see so many children wearing their homemade poppies to school on Remembrance Day and a number of children wearing their Beaver, Cub, Rainbow, Brownie or Cadet uniforms as a mark of respect. We raised £282.96 for the Royal British Legion – thank you so much for all your donations.

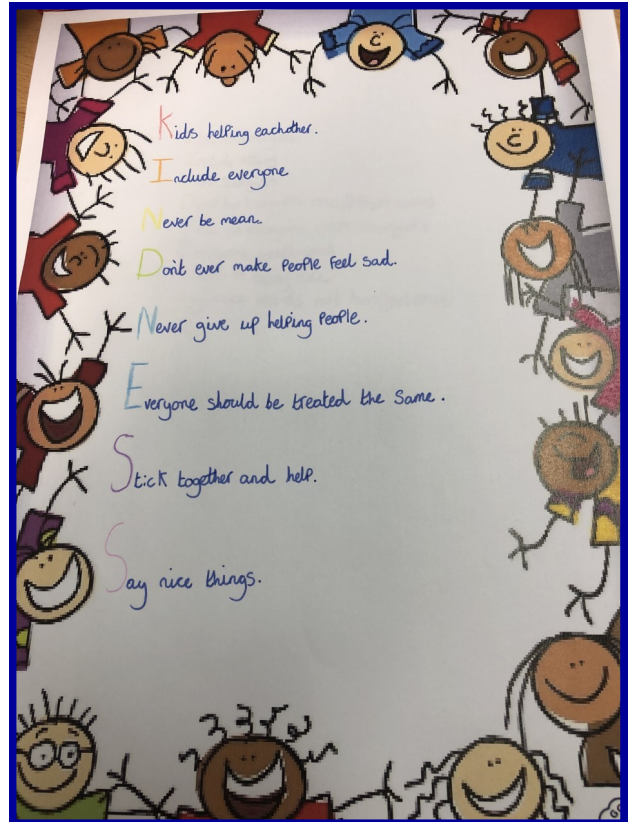
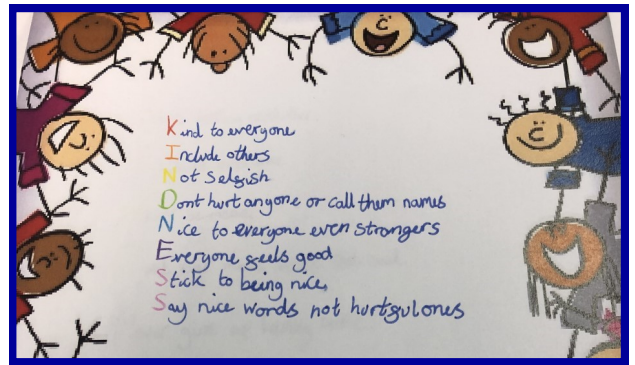


Kindness Project

During the month of October our children were busy carrying out acts of Kindness as part of our Kindness month activities. The number of acts of kindness completed by each class, including acts of ninja kindness was amazing. With the help of our new Kindness Ambassadors, all points were tallied and resulted in Bumblebees being our kindest class with 2825 acts of kindness, Ladybirds came second with 2229 and Dragonflies third with 1255. Bumblebees were therefore the proud winners of our first kindness hamper of the year.



We also enjoyed looking at all the Kindness stories and poems that the children wrote when they returned to school after half term. Some were stories of real acts of kindness that the children had carried out, others were descriptions of kindness they had received. We also had a number of lovely poems written by the children. Each month, I will be including some of these in the newsletter. This month we have poems written by Scarlett and Lacey in Year 6.



House Points

Congratulations to Olivia P in Year 2 who was the first child in the school to receive their 2020-21 coloured house point badge for Dover. Since then we have had a number of children who have gained their coloured badges and are working towards their bronze. Keep up the good work everyone.

Congratulations to Leeds who won the most House Points last term. This term's winners will be announced at the end of term. Walmer are currently in the lead, with Leeds in second place, Dover in third and Rochester in fourth.

Christmas Reminders

Our Christmas celebrations are getting underway this week and we hope that we can make this Christmas a memorable, albeit slightly different one for the children this year.

Don't forget to bring your baubles in to decorate our beautiful Christmas tree donated by Longacres Bybrook Garden Centre. The children's baubles will be tied onto the tree as they come into school in the morning (so siblings can do this together). Each house has been assigned a different day on which to bring their baubles in:

Tuesday 1st December—Walmer (yellow) and Moles class

Wednesday 2nd December—Leeds (green) and Badgers

Thursday 3rd December—Dover (blue) and Hedgehogs

Friday 4th December—Rochester (red) and Rabbits

Anyone who forgets can bring their bauble in on Monday 7th December.



From the week commencing the 7th December, we have Christmas parties and Christmas dinner to look forward to (different dates for each year group) and we have Christingle making to look forward to in the final week of term.

I have had a lot of parents asking whether the children can bring in a Christmas gift for their teacher. The staff are always very appreciative of your acts of kindness at this time of year but it is certainly not an expectation. If the children would like to bring in a gift for staff, they can do so on their party day.

Christmas Pictures for the William Harvey Hospital

We have been approached by staff at the William Harvey hospital asking whether our children would be able to draw some festive pictures to brighten up the wards this Christmas. In the absence of Christmas decorations in the hospital, the pictures will hopefully spread a little joy for patients. The children have been very busy drawing some amazing pictures which will be displayed in the Celia Blakey Chemotherapy Unit and Bartholomew cardiac ward.



Christmas Food Vouchers for Children Entitled to Free School Meals

The parents of all children who are entitled to benefit related free school meals will have received a letter outlining the arrangements for the distribution of meal vouchers over the Christmas holiday period. The vouchers for either Asda or Tesco will be sent directly to you this week from KCC.

The government decides who is eligible for free school meals. You can find out about who is eligible and how to apply here <https://www.gov.uk/apply-free-school-meals>

Governor News

Please see our latest update about the Governors' involvement at Godinton Primary School.



Message from the Chair of Governors: Steve King

It has been a while since I contributed to the Godinton Gazette largely due to the difficulties we have all been facing since the outbreak of Coronavirus in March. I have missed making a contribution but there have been more important articles that I hope kept you informed and have helped you and your families through the difficult times we have all been facing.

We are clearly some way off seeing the back of the dreaded virus but I hope you will agree that we have made progress in school since the March lockdown. As Jill mentioned in the September edition of the gazette we are now working under "the new normal". Numerous changes have had to be made to the old ways, with the new priority being to keep the children and staff safe. We now have all the children back in their classes with many of the old routines in place albeit with restrictions.

To me, the October edition of the gazette indicated that things are gradually beginning to improve. Reporting on all the fun activities we have come to expect over the years is back and so I think it is time to give you an update from the Governors.

The Governors have continued to monitor provision while trying our best to give support to Jill and her team throughout the current difficulties. Our monitoring role has changed from looking at things such as progress in writing to looking at the schools reaction to the ever changing Government guidelines as we move through the pandemic.

The original lock-down in March, and everything that has followed, created an enormous amount of

work for Jill and her team in planning what the school was able to provide and how it could be done safely. The Governors came off lightly in the planning process because our role was only to consider and approve the plans produced by the school. In our deliberations we concluded that the plans provided a sound assessment of the risk and covered all that was possible for the children's ongoing learning. Because the restrictions on provision in the early stages meant most of the children had to remain at home there was a clear impact on their learning and raised concerns over their well being.

When September arrived we were able to start bringing the school community back together. This provided better opportunities to address the children's learning needs and enhance their well-being. More detailed planning was needed and it became clear that for the plans to be successful the whole school community would need to pull together and play their part to ensure a successful, safe reopening. Despite the need to make a few minor adjustments in the early stages of re-opening the Governors have noted that the plans are now firmly embedded and working well. The children have settled in well, they are working hard and taking the changes in their stride.

The success of the plans is partly thanks to the efforts parents and carers have made in providing learning support when the children were at home and for helping to implement the restrictions now in place such as the drop off and collection arrangements. Your efforts in support of Jill and her team are much appreciated by the Governing Body.

We will continue move forward together in the hope of returning closer to the old normal in the not too distant future.

Thank-you for the support you give to the school.

Other News and Reminders...

- If anyone has a child due to start school in September 2021, the application period opens on Thursday 5th November 2020 and closes on Friday 15th January 2021. We have put two promotional slideshows onto the school website to help those parents who are looking at schools for their child. These can be found on the Admissions page on the school website. I'd be grateful if you could share the link below with friends who may be interested in a place at Godinton for their child. <https://godinton.kent.sch.uk/school-information/admissions/>
- I am still hearing of cars parking dangerously at the junction of Springwood Drive and Lockholt Close and blocking the bus route along Springwood Drive by double parking, presenting a significant difficulty should an emergency vehicle need access. Where photos have been sent to me, I have forwarded these onto our PCSO. Please ensure that you park considerately and don't place the safety of our children at risk.
- As we will be entering tier 3 on Wednesday, I would ask that parents continue to wear face coverings at drop off and pick up. We want to do all we can to continue to keep everyone as safe as possible. Thank you for your cooperation with this.
- Should you need to gain entry to the school site during the day, please press button 1 to speak to the school office. The nursery can be contacted by pressing button 2. Over the weekend our car park bays were remarked, clearing defining spaces assigned for those displaying a blue badge.

Caught on camera this month...



Sports Report

Over the last few weeks, we have invited our Year 6 children to cycle to school. The children have been immensely sensible at securing their bikes in the cycle racks adjacent to the field and pushing their bikes across the school site. Thank you for ensuring that the children wear a helmet if they are cycling in and with the evenings getting darker much earlier, we would also recommend that the children wear a high visibility vest as well.

At the end of this term, we will review the feasibility of offering the opportunity to cycle to school to more children from other year groups and are currently looking at ways in which we can get bikes secured in bike sheds without the mixing of bubbles.

