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Message from Miss Talbot

Celebrating Diversity

This term we have been celebrating our community’s diversity through our Black Culture assemblies. These have focused on the achievements of black figures, past and present and the impact they have had on society. This has included sports stars such as the Williams sisters, Mohammed Ali and Alex Scott, the poet Benjamin Zephaniah and musician Stevie Wonder. We have also explored traditional stories from African and Caribbean cultures and have looked at traditional European fairy tales set in African and Caribbean countries such as an African version of the ‘Princess and the Pea’. The constant theme throughout this work is that **Difference is good, difference is enough, we are all different.**

We have wide cultural diversity at Godinton and throughout the year we hope to include more focused work to celebrate the array of cultures that make up our school community. Showing respect for everyone is a core part of our school ethos and it is important to us that everyone within our school values how unique and special we all are.

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Class Update

Year 1 go back in time



This term, Year 1 have been learning about the past, and which games and toys children from Victorian times to the turn of the 21-century, played with. The children looked at toys from the past and discussed how they are different to our toys today. They had fun playing games from Victorian times, like jacks and rolled wooden hoops. The children found out many facts, like: Victorian children had games they had to concentrate on to keep them quiet in the nurseries and that Miss Coveney did not have an Xbox, Switch or PS when she was 6!

Finally, the children were visited by Maidstone museum and had a great time making their own doll in the style of a Victorian peg doll as well as comparing a range of toys from the past. The visit made all the children appreciate how lucky they are to have so many interesting toys to play with these days!

History is taught at Godinton as part of our Learning Adventure. A progressive curriculum starts by developing the children's understanding of past and present in EYFS and leads up to an analysis of sources of historical information as the children delve into Medieval history for example in Year 6. Full details of our history curriculum can be found on the school website:

<https://godinton.kent.sch.uk/curriculum/our-historical-adventure-the-history-curriculum-at-godinton/>

Year 3– Glorious Godinton House



We are extremely fortunate to have the wonderful Godinton House on our doorstep—it's always a pleasure to visit, at any time of the year. This term, Year 3 walked through the fields at the back of the estate, up to the house and explored the different plants grown in the gardens as part of their science topic. The children explored the varieties of fruits and vegetables grown on the estate and harvested some vegetables of their own. They also joined in with planting trees, making leaf rubbings to discover the parts of a leaf and investigated how plants can be habitats for different wild life. Bumblebees and Dragonflies even made some potato mazes to see if their chosen seed potato will be clever enough to make its way through to find the light and grow.



If you haven't explored Godinton House before, click on the link below to find out what's going on in the coming months:

<https://godintonhouse.co.uk/whats-on/>



Forest School at Godinton

Meet the Team...



Miss Attenborough
Forest School Lead



Mrs Pullen
Forest School Lead



Mrs Jury
Trainee Forest School Lead

Our Forest School experience at Godinton offers a comprehensive range of activities that not only contribute to the academic development of our children but also foster their personal growth and well-being. Each child gets a 6 week block of Forest School during the school year and are timetabled during the school day. Throughout their time at Godinton they will have the chance to explore the woodland across all seasons.



What we have been up to?

So far this academic year, the children in Year 3 and 5 have been outside in all weathers taking part in some wonderful activities such as den building, making musical instruments and looking after our woodland friends by making bird feeders and bug hotels. The children have been learning the practical skills of using different tools, but more importantly developing essential life skills such as self-confidence, communication and team work. The children are very much looking forward to the camp fire session where we light the fire and enjoy smores!



Dressing for Forest School

Forest School takes place in all weather conditions and seasons, making it crucial for the children to dress appropriately! The clothing they wear serves the dual purpose of protecting them from varying weather conditions whilst also providing protection against the natural environment such as insect bites and stinging nettles! Consequently, the children must wear long trousers throughout the year. As the colder months are upon us, the most effective approach involves layering clothes, socks, waterproof trousers, coats, boots, hats, and gloves. Given that our outdoor sessions extend into the afternoon during the winter, ensuring warmth is essential!

Mathematical superstars

Last week, twelve of our year 5 children attended a Maths Academy Workshop at Ashford Senior School. The workshop was planned by Year 12 and 13 students who were all Maths Ambassadors. The children worked with the Ashford School students on various tasks which focused on developing their spatial awareness skills. One task focussed on 3D drawings whilst another group spent time working on patterns on a cube and positioning after rotation. At the end of the session the children put their new skills to the test with a mini competition. All children worked really hard during the session and enjoyed the challenges set. This was the first time Godinton have attended the Maths Academy Workshop but we are hoping it won't be the last visit this academic year! Well done to : Kian, Olivia, Emily P, Emily B, Harlow, Natasza, Joshua, Lewis, Sam, Isabelle, Aarshiya and Jake.

Staff News

Mrs Varnaseri (teacher of Rabbits and Hedgehogs class and Lower School team leader) will be leaving Godinton at Christmas to take up an exciting new position closer to home, working for the charity Save the Children. We will all be so immensely sorry to see Mrs Varnaseri leave. Over the past two years she has been an asset to the school providing amazing education for our Reception children. I know that Mrs Varnaseri will be brilliant in her new role and I'm sure that you will join me in wishing her well for the future. Her last day with us will be on Wednesday.

Mrs Ischt-Berger will join our team in January, job sharing with Miss Marsh. We look forward to welcoming her to the team.

PTFA Update



Thank you so much to everyone who came along to the PTFA Christmas Fair last week. It was lovely to see so many of our families and lots of ex-pupils who came and said hello. These events are important to us as they bring our school community together so I am immensely grateful to the PTFA and all the helpers and school staff who worked so hard to put this event together. The number of stalls that we have will always be dependant on the number of helpers we are able to involve—so if any one would like to offer their services to the PTFA at any upcoming events, please just let us know. Funds raised at the fair will go towards the development of our outside area.

Children in Need

Thank you so much to everyone who donated to our fundraising appeal for Children in Need. Our final total was a staggering £511.

It was lovely to see the children dressed up as their inspirational heroes which included doctors and nurses, sports stars, astronauts and even a few Mr Rowsons and a Miss King.



A Message from our



Chair of Governors— Mr King

The Governors took part in our first Governor Training Day of the academic year which provided an opportunity to bring our knowledge of key aspects of our role up to date.

The day began with a session on 'Cyber Security' which is of course a subject we all have to consider in our private lives due to the ever increasing threat from cyber crime. Schools hold a lot of data both personal and financial that would benefit criminals and so it is essential that we understand the risks and how to help prevent them. All of the staff in the school are receiving the same training and so we are all well equipped to play our part.

The next session looked at 'Safeguarding'. All Governors have a part to play in ensuring the school has robust procedures in place and that they are being followed. Today's session concentrated on the latest guidance that was issued in September 2023. One of the key issues is online safety, particularly to ensure the schools systems have filters on them and that use of online systems is monitored. We have a Governor with safeguarding experience who takes the lead in monitoring the schools procedures but the session has ensured that all of the Governors now have a good understanding of their safeguarding responsibilities.

We then received an update on managing the school finances from the School Business Manager. We looked at the sources of income and the expected expenditure, which resulted in much discussion about the difficulties in budgeting the limited funds. We will soon be receiving our audited accounts for the 2022/23 financial year which will be published along with a report from the Trustees in January. These will be uploaded to the school website and so I will let you know when they are there.

The best part of the day was when we had the chance to meet with some of the children to look at, and hear about their 'Learning Adventures'. As always, the children were enthusiastic about their learning and keen to talk about what they had learned. Conversation strayed in to other things such as their likes and dislikes about school, their favourite subjects and what they did at play time. We have a great bunch of children at Godinton who are always a pleasure to talk to.

Our School Governors at Godinton:

Steve King (Chair),
Rob Wellard (Vice Chair / Parent Governor),
Jill Talbot (Headteacher)
Kelly Holden-Smith (Parent Governor),
Sam Messenger (Parent Governor),
Dora Grant,
Amanda Stevenson,
Alex Prickett,
Heather Vernon,
Rachael Dray
Karen Ward (staff Governor)
Wendy Settle is our clerk.

We are in the process of uploading Governor profiles to the school website so you can read more about the team.

Other News and Reminders...

- Don't forget that our first attendance certificates will be awarded to those children who have 100% attendance from the start of term 2 through until next Thursday. These will be handed out to the children on the last day of term. The children will have the opportunity to aim for another 100% attendance certificate at the end of term 4—this will be for 100% attendance in term 3 and 4. So far this year, Year 3 have the best overall attendance, standing at 96.6%
- As we head into December, there is always the possibility of wintery weather ahead of us. We always endeavour to keep the site open whenever possible but in the event that the site is unsafe or we have to close classes as staff are unable to get into work, we will send an alert out via ParentMail.
- Every 7 years, schools are asked to open consultation on their admissions policy even if no changes have been made during this time. Our Admissions policy is now open for consultation even though the policy remains unchanged. Consultation closes on Monday 6th January. Details of the policy can be found at: <https://godinton.kent.sch.uk/school-information/admissions/>

Caught on camera this month...



Sports Report

Excitement and energy levels were running high on Tuesday morning when a selection of students across Years 5 and 6 were invited to take part in a Multiskills Festival at The Lenham School. Children from a number of schools across East Kent participated in this one-day competition which tested their skills of speed and agility. There were many activities on offer including speed stack, obstacle courses, curling, golfing, hockey and speed bounce. Each group was given approximately ten minutes at each sports station, and points were awarded for individual performances as well as working together as a team.

The team members represented the school superbly throughout the event. Their behaviour was impeccable, they all demonstrated great resilience and determination if they found an activity particularly challenging and the support that they showed towards each other was second to none. Go Team Godinton!

