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Message from Miss Talbot

Journey to the past

As we head into sunnier weather, we see our children enjoying a wide range of off site visits to enhance areas of the curriculum.

At the start of this week, dressed as evacuees, Year 4 ventured off to Tenterden railway station for an amazing World War 2 experience day. With railway staff in costume and character, the children learnt about rationing, the black market, bombing raids and the RAF. The children were then transported back to 1939 to imagine what it would have been like to be evacuated, leaving family behind for a journey into the unknown. One of the Tenterden steam trains took them deep into the countryside and when they reached their final destination, the children gained a glimpse of what it would have been like to be picked by unfamiliar families to live with them as the war continued. Passengers on the train included people who had themselves been evacuated, for real, as children and they had the opportunity to share their stories with us.

It is hard to imagine how difficult it would have been for all those who lived through the events of the Second World War. However by engaging with this experience, our children came a little closer to realising the experience faced by thousands of children 85 years ago.



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Year 2— At the top of the Beanstalk

Imagine the excitement of discovering that – a mysterious parcel had been left in Butterflies and Ladybirds classroom– a letter from a Giant and a package of unidentified beans.

The children planted the beans in plastic pockets which they stuck to the windows and eagerly watched them spring to life, identifying the roots, shoots and leaves as they flourished in the sunlight. Having now germinated, the children have planted the beans outside and are keenly waiting to see if they will grow up to the sky and reach the clouds.

With beanstalks on their minds, the children enjoyed exploring the story of 'Jack and the Beanstalk' and have written some fantastic alternative versions of their own with all sorts of things found at the top of their beanstalks.



Year 3— What did the Romans do for us?

Year 3 began this term, taking on the role of detectives, looking for clues about the past found in ancient artefacts. The children explored a range of objects and tried to work out what these told us about the past; thinking about what the objects were, who would have used them and which period in history they could have been from. Their exploration and questioning led them to Roman Britain and the start of an exciting new topic.

Since then, Dragonflies and Bumblebees have enjoyed discovering all about Celtic history, the Roman invasion of Britain in AD43 and Boudicca's fearsome battle. They have made Roman sandals and mosaics as part of their Creative Adventure work and will be telling us more about our their topics in their class assemblies this week.

Year 5— Matter of Fact

This term year 5 have been investigating states of matter and how different materials can change from one thing to another. The children built on their prior knowledge of solids, liquids and gasses by exploring the effect of dissolving, evaporating and separating and whether the changes that resulted were reversible or irreversible.



This unit of work involved a number of practical experiments in which the children discovered what the variables within the experiments were, and then learnt how changing the independent variable can create different outcomes within the experiment, whilst also learning how to observe or measure the dependent variable. Complicated scientific stuff! The results the children obtained and the observations made, helped them to understand why irreversible changes could not be changed back into their original parts.

To find out more about our curriculum, visit the curriculum pages on the school website:

<https://godinton.kent.sch.uk/curriculum/curriculum-overview/>

Year 6—Surviving SATs

Surviving SATs...and that's just the staff!

The children in Year 6 have worked their socks off this year. From co-ordinates to conjunctions and tenses to percentages, the students have covered countless areas of study in their daily Maths, Guided Reading and GPS lessons. They have completed enough practice tests to fell a small forest, and their brains are bursting with facts that are likely to flummox even some adults of a certain age!

Last week saw the culmination of all their hard work from over the past four years through the sitting of SATs (standardised assessment tests). These are tests which measure the educational progress of children between Years 2 and 6. They take place in schools across the country in May, and there are strict guidelines to follow for administering them. For some children, taking their SATs can be a daunting experience, despite reassurances from the staff that they should simply try their best.

Happily, this is exactly what the students in Eagles and Falcons did. They coped superbly with their 4-day testing schedule, demonstrating maturity and resilience, throughout the toughest of questions. Their sensible attitude towards the assessments was one of the contributing factors in allowing the week to run so smoothly. A huge thank you to everyone involved in making the week a success – to parents, for ensuring that the children arrived to school on time, well-rested and in a calm state, and to staff across the school for all their efforts in supporting and invigilating the tests. It really was a team venture.

Now that the SATs are over, the children in Year 6 have a great deal of exciting events to look forward to for the rest of the year. There's Activity Week, our annual trip to Chessington, the residential for some children and the highly-anticipated Leavers' Production, to name but a few. It's safe to say that all these treats are very well-deserved. Many congratulations, Year 6 – you did us proud!

Year R's Royal Adventure



Castles, dragons, princes and princesses have filled Reception's 'Royal Adventure' topic this term. It all started when a mystery egg appeared in the classroom from which a dragon hatched and flew around the school when everyone had gone home. It's a good job that we have CCTV! The children have gone on to learn about our Royal Family and even received a voice note from King Charles setting the children a very special learning challenge.

This week the children have enjoyed Julia Donaldson's book 'The Princess and the Wizard' which has led to lots of fun potion making and designing magic wands.

Staff News

Following Mrs Smith's departure from our school office, we are delighted to welcome Miss Sam Keep to the team. One of Miss Keep's key responsibilities will be the management of our children's medical needs. Mrs Clark, will take over Mrs Smith's role in supporting all matters associated with attendance and admissions.

Road Safety

With sunnier days ahead of us, please take the opportunity to walk to and from school. Not only is it good exercise but also significantly helps to ease congestion on the estate.

With the community car park in Loudon way easily accessible, there should be no reason for anyone to park in Lockholt Close. Residents should be able to park in front of their houses and often find themselves blocked in or unable to park at busy times. I have had further reports of dangerous driving which have been passed on to the police. Cars have been coming down Lockholt Close at speed and we have had further occasions when drivers have parked across junctions making crossing difficult. Please can I ask for everyone to be considerate of our neighbours on the estate and to think about our children's safety when making choices about how to drive and where to park.

Spring in the Forest

The Forest School setting has really transformed this term with the onset of spring. We have again had lots of wet days, but the children have embraced this and really thrown themselves into everything they've been presented with, whether that was the task set for them, or the endless muddy puddles.



Waterproof clothing has been vital for ensuring the children get the most out of their time in the forest and this term the two year groups have, among other things; built shelters, created forest art, made grass caterpillars, toasted marshmallows and enjoyed making many creations in the mud kitchens. Most importantly though, the children have had a lot of fun being free to explore nature and experience many new things.

My thanks go to our brilliant Forest School team: Miss Attenborough, Mrs Pullen and Mrs Jury for creating such amazing opportunities for the children.



PTFA Summer Events

We have three PTFA events to look forward to next term. Firstly, our Father's Day Present Shop takes place on Thursday 13th June. Information about this has been sent out. We then have our Summer Fair on Saturday 22nd June. This is always a highlight of the school calendar and we very much look forward to welcoming children and their friends and family to the fair. This event relies on donations and help. On Friday 7th June we will be having a non-uniform day in return for donations of items for the fair. We are always grateful for any things you may be able to help us out with. If you can help out on the day of the fair: either helping to set up, clear away or run a stall, please let our committee know.

We are so immensely lucky to have a brilliant PTFA committee who have put on a great range of events for our children and whose fundraising efforts generate thousands of pounds for the school. Next year, our Chair, Lynsay Keech, is looking to stand down from her position and we are looking for someone keen and well organised to take a lead with our PTFA. If you think that you might be able to help out, come and have a chat with me to find out more. Many schools no longer have a PTFA but I would hope that amongst almost 700 parents we are able to find some volunteers to help us to continue to deliver fun opportunities for our children and families.

Repton Connect– Big Recipe Challenge

Thank you to everyone who has already engaged with the Repton Connect Big Recipe Challenge. We were delighted to be invited to take part in this project which will see our children's recipe's put into a health eating community recipe book. The recipes should be things that children will enjoy eating and which promote healthy choices, based on one of the themes below:

- Breakfast
- Lunch meal or packed lunch
- Dinner
- Dessert
- Healthy snacks, e.g. homemade flapjack

The children should write their recipe out and illustrate it on the sheet provided. These were sent home earlier in the term and also attached to a previous ParentMail. **There will be a prize for all children who take part.** Some recipes will be included in the book and there has been talk of a local café making the winning recipe available to customers.

The deadline for this has been extended to Wednesday 5th June to allow the children a bit of extra time to work on their recipes over half term. Please hand these into the office once completed.



Changes to Playtimes



Next year, we will be embarking on some very exciting changes to our playtimes through participation in the Opal Play scheme.

This is an exciting new play concept which gives children in all year groups amazing opportunities to develop imaginative play skills. The scheme sees schools opening up playgrounds and field spaces all year round into different zones designed to keep children busy, motivated and engaged at playtimes. The opportunities open to them would include den building, dressing up, colouring and craft, digging, water play, dance, stage area, role play, climbing etc. This would be a very different approach to that which we currently offer to our children. We've seen the scheme in operation at some nearby schools and have heard fantastic things from colleagues in other settings. We think that this would be a great way forward for playtimes at Godinton.

We have so far shared our plans with our Mini Management Team who have given the scheme a big thumbs up and we will be filling in the rest of the children after half term. In the meantime, you might want to have a look at the video clips below so you can see OPAL play in action.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l427pLSNRGQ>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HWz3-wjmbyY>

Our PTFA will be helping with some of the purchases needed to get up and running but I hope that other items such as tyres, pallets, tubing, unwanted dressing up clothes, tarpaulins etc. can be donated. We will share more information as to how you may be able to help us with this project, after the break.

Space to Chill Out

You may have noticed a transformation to an area on the edge of the school field under the large oak tree. Mr Rowson has been busy digging, rotavating and turfing, to create a wonderful chill out space for the children to use at playtimes. Once the grass has taken root and a protective mesh layer applied to strengthen its hold, the area will eventually be decked with wooden teepees, cushions and lights to create a tranquil space offering a quiet space at playtimes or a cosy area to use for outdoor learning. Our Mini Management Team have been overseeing this and have lots of great ideas.

Thank you to Mr Rowson for all the hard work that has gone into this project and to our PTFA for their ongoing support.

Reading Partners

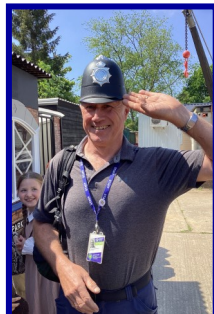
Following on from World Book Day, we have looked for further opportunities for children from different classes to read to each other. This week saw a brilliant reading swap, with our older children enjoying books with our younger children. Ask your children who they read with this week.



Other News and Reminders...

- Please remember that we return from Half Term on Monday 3rd June. The last day of the academic year for the children is Tuesday 23rd June.
- Parents dropping children off at Breakfast Club must accompany their children to the drop off point in the morning. This is to both to ensure that the children are safe and also to enable us to catch parents with any Breakfast Club matters.
- We look forward to welcoming parents of children starting school with us in September to our welcome meeting at 6.30 on 17th June. This will also be the time to pick up your information packs and find out which class your child has been allocated.

Caught on camera this month...



Sports Report

On the bright, sunny morning of Saturday 11th May, 9 children from our Year 5 & 6 High 5 Club arrived at Willesborough Junior School to participate in the annual ADSSPA tournament. Schools are grouped for this tournament according to the size of their school, so we were placed into 'Middle Schools' with Victoria Road, St Teresa's, Hamstreet and Ashford Oaks. Each match was only 7 minutes long and, although the High 5 Gods were not on our side, all of our matches were very close. The children worked their socks off, with some impressive individual performances, including some children who scored their first competition goals for Godinton. Our results were:

Godinton v Victoria Road was a 0-0 draw.

Godinton v Ashford Oaks was a 1-3 loss.

Godinton v Hamstreet was a 1-2 loss.

Godinton v St Teresa's was a 1-2 loss.

Mrs Ellis and Mrs Crowfoot were extremely proud of the children's perseverance and outstanding sportsmanship throughout - Harry, Poppy, Lina, Malachi, Jack, Dylan, Emily, Grace and Imogen, you represented our school brilliantly.

