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Message from Miss Talbot

Super Sports Day

Thank you to everyone who turned out to support our Sports' Day last week; it was lovely to welcome you all to this annual event.

The day started with the children taking part in the competitive element of the day, with flat races and relay races held for each year group out on the field. Rochester House saw victory in these races, amassing 250 points, 223 ahead of second place Leeds.

After a picnic lunch on the field, the children took part in a carousel of ten different activities, in mixed year group teams, designed to challenge different skills such as balance, dribbling, hand-eye-coordination and throwing skills. Each of the activities enabled the children, from Year R to Year 6, to have a go at their level and gave them the opportunity to be engaged throughout the afternoon. It was lovely to see so many of our older children supporting our younger children in each activity and to such good sportsmanship. We have added up the points awarded to each house during Sports Day afternoon and these will be added onto the morning scores. The winning house will be announced in school next week.

Well done to all the children for doing so well—we were very proud of you.



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Year 6—Preparing for Moving On

By this point in the academic year, the transition arrangements for our Year 6 children are well under way. This year sees our Year 6s heading off to 9 different secondary schools:

Towers School: 20

The North School: 4

The Lenham School: 1

Wye School: 2

John Wallis Academy: 7

Homewood School: 3

Chilmington Green: 8

The Norton Knatchbull Grammar School: 10

Highworth School for Girls Grammar School: 5

Whilst immensely exciting, this can also be a daunting time and so a range of activities are put in place to help with this next, important step in the children's education.

Most secondary schools have now come over to Godinton to visit the children. These visits are important as they provide an opportunity to meet key staff and to ask questions. The children then have the chance to visit their new schools over the coming weeks for taster sessions, experiencing a range of lessons and activities in their new environments.

In school, we have also made arrangements to help support the children with moving on. Transition workshops and class discussions have been set up to explore different elements of transition and the children have taken part in an online workshop delivered by Kooth (an online mental health organisation designed to support young people). This week the children will have a session in school led by Ben Vidgen, a PCSO from the Child Centred Policing team based in Ashford, which covers topics such as safety at school, age of criminal responsibility and general safety. This links with the Safety in Action morning the children attended in Folkestone last week. This countywide workshop helps support transition to secondary school by exploring making good choices and peer pressure.

We hope that this support will help to give all our Year 6 children the very best start to their time at their new schools.

Year 6—Activity Week



Two different options were open to Year 6 this year for their Activity Week. Whilst some children opted to take part in a two day residential to Bewl Water, others took part in a series of different activities at school and around Ashford.

For those who ventured off to Bewl Water, the children experienced a range of activities both in and out of the water—this included raft building, archery, axe throwing and campfires.



Those who remained closer to home, enjoyed experiences which included, a survival skills day led by the team at Black Wolf and a visit to Wagamamas to see how a restaurant kitchen works.

Whether the children opted for the residential visit or the non-residential visit, all the children also took part in a trip to Chessington World of Adventures which was very much enjoyed by all.

A huge thank you goes to all our staff who helped to give the children a brilliant week and lots of long lasting memories.



Year 2 Visit Leeds Castle

To bring their Learning Adventure topic to life, Year 2 visited Leeds Castle earlier this month, for an amazing day learning about castle life. Their experience included a drama workshop which explored the different animals that can be found in the castle grounds and a tour of the castle itself. The children were able to identify the different features of the castle and found out about the type of activity that took part in different parts of the building. The visit was finished off with a trip to the adventure playground.



The children thoroughly enjoyed the day and were engaged and interested throughout the visit, asking lots of good questions and developing their knowledge about castles. If you ask the children, they will probably tell you that the best bit of the day was the coach, the play park and having lunch—but that's all part of the school trip experience!



Karate and Salsa Demos

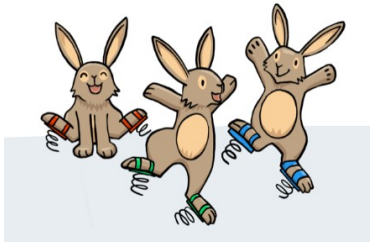
It's always lovely to welcome visitors into school to deliver different sporting workshops to the children. These act as a great taster session to inspire the children to take up a particular sport or activity either in school or out.

Recently we have had a salsa dance demo from the head coach of 793 Dance School, a Latin American dance club based in Ashford. This resulted in an after school club being set up on a Monday after school in which potential Strictly dancers of the future, have had the opportunity to learn some Latin American dances.

Most recently, we welcomed, an ex-Godinton teacher, Lisa Collins, (or Sensei Lisa as she is now known), back to school to deliver a karate taster session to children in Years 3 to 6. Sensei Lisa is a representative of Canton Martial Arts and teaches classes to all ages and ability levels. We were very lucky with the weather and she was able to work with each class for half an hour out on the school field, talking to them about the purpose and values of karate, as well as putting them through their paces. The children all listened well to her instructions and had great fun participating in the activities; some of the children even got to have a go with the pads too. Mrs Crowfoot received a lovely email from Sensei Lisa after school that day, saying that she's had a lovely day with the children.



New Phonics Scheme



It is good practice for all schools to adopt a systematic synthetic phonics (SSP) programme, chosen from a number of accredited providers approved by the Department of Education to use in school. SSP is a proven strategy for developing essential reading skills in children. As the name suggests, it follows a structured and sequential way of showing learners how to read by linking letters and sounds.

In September 2022, we adopted the Monster Phonics programme. At the time we felt that this would be an exciting and engaging way for phonics to be taught at Godinton. Our team have worked hard to implement this scheme in the classroom but over the past two years, we have continually felt that the scheme has fallen short of our expectations. In particular, we have had concerns about the resources which form the basis of the scheme, as these have had spelling errors or other inaccuracies and in the quality of the reading materials which accompany the programme. These are limited and in our opinion do not provide the stretch in comprehension which our children need. Monster Phonics seems to be trailing behind other phonics providers and I have not had adequate reassurance that this will improve.

Rather than continuing with Monster Phonics, we have decided that the time has come to cut our losses and to implement a new phonics scheme for Year R and 1 from September. This is the Little Wandle scheme which nationwide is the most commonly used school based phonics scheme. As a well established scheme, we believe this will be far better suited to meet the needs of our children. One of the main draws of the programme is the lovely, high quality reading books which accompany the scheme. These will be used in class as part of a restructuring of our guided reading sessions and will be taken home by the children to read with you at home (a far better option than an e-book) along with their reading for pleasure book. The scheme has come at considerable expense, with an investment of about £15,000 into new books but we believe that this will be money well spent.

With two years of Monster Phonics under their belt, heavily supplemented with additional input from our teachers, children in Year 2 next year, will continue with the final part of the Monster Phonics programme. We will ensure that this meets their needs and secures their phonetic understanding as they reach the end of Key Stage One.

We will be giving you more information about Little Wandle as we head towards the end of term and at an information session in September, but in the meantime you can find out more by visiting the parent page on their website:

<https://www.littlewandlelettersandsounds.org.uk/resources/for-parents/>

Staff News

We have two teachers to say goodbye to at the end of this academic year. Firstly Miss Marsh will be leaving Godinton to work for a reading charity. Miss Marsh has been part of the team for 10 years and has provided valuable support to our Reception children – getting their time at Godinton off to a flying start. We will very much miss working with Miss Marsh and wish her well for the future. At the other end of the school, Mrs Pemberton will also be leaving us to spend more time with her family. Mrs Pemberton has been a key member of our Year 6 team and we very much thank her for all she has done for our school.

We will be letting parents and children know shortly as to who their next class teacher will be and telling you more about the new teachers who we will be welcoming to the team.

PTFA Update

Thank you to everyone who turned out, despite the weather, to support our Summer Fair last Saturday. It was lovely to see so many children, past and present, and their extended families, enjoying all that the fair had to offer.

A huge thank you goes to our PTFA for all their valiant efforts in putting on such an amazing event. We will be looking for a new Chair next academic year (although Lynsay has said that she will still be around to help). Please come and have a chat if this is something you think you could help with.

See how they've grown!

It's good to know that our fluffy chicks are flourishing at Mrs Jury's house and are now looking considerably different!



Welcome to our New Starters

It has been lovely to start to get to know all the children who will be joining us in Reception in September as well as their families, at the transition events we have had taking place this term. So far, our children have come into school with their parents to enjoy our Stay and Play sessions and will shortly be coming in to have lunch and to meet their teachers again at the Story time sessions.

To access the Powerpoint with information for new parents on starting school, please click on the link below: <https://godinton.kent.sch.uk/welcome-to-godinton-early-years-foundation-stage-eyfs-reception-2024/early-years-foundation-stage-eyfs-reception-2024-information-for-parents/>

When we come back in September we will be publishing dates of school tours and information sessions for children due to start school in September 2025. Please keep an eye on the school website for further information.

Other News and Reminders...

- The end of term will shortly be upon us. This year, the last day of term for the children is **Tuesday 23rd July**. In September, all children (apart from our new starters in Year R), return to school on **Tuesday 3rd September**.
- Please can I ask that parents refrain from drinking take away coffees, alcohol and energy drinks on the school site at drop off and pick up. This will help to avoid any hot drink spillages in a crowd and any used cans being picked up by the children. Thank you again for your cooperation.
- Traffic enforcement were back in Lockholt Close this week and tickets were issued. I have been told that they will continue to pay regular visits to the estate so please avoid parking in Lockholt Close and use the Village Hall car park instead.

Caught on camera this month...



Sports Report– Rapid Fire Cricket

The sun shone down on Mersham cricket field yesterday morning as ten children from across Years 1 and 2 arrived to take part in a Rapid-Fire Cricket Tournament. For those unfamiliar with the sport, the aim of the game is for teams to score as many runs as possible by each batter hitting three consecutive balls, which are balanced on top of three batting tees (a cone placed over a tee, upon which the ball rests). Once all three balls have been hit, ideally sending the batting tees and balls far and wide, it is then the fielders' job to reassemble them as quickly as possible. It could perhaps be the only time when children are legitimately encouraged by the adults to literally 'make a mess!' The batter then attempts to make as many runs as they can in the time it takes the fielders to replace the batting tees to their original positions, and return to their fielding line.

A total of twelve teams from across the Ashford area took part in the tournament. Team Godinton tried very hard in both their batting and fielding skills. By the afternoon, the heat had taken its toll and the pace of play was much gentler, although the children still fought on. They demonstrated great resilience, teamwork and sportsmanship throughout the event to achieve a tenth-place position. Many congratulations to all the children that took part – they represented the school brilliantly.