



Parent Handbook

September 2024

It is a pleasure to welcome you to Godinton Primary School. We are very pleased that your child will be joining our school community. We try to foster a family feel at Godinton and we have written this guide to provide you with all the information you will need about how our school operates.

Our staff are very happy to help if you have any further queries or questions not covered by this handbook – please just ask.

www.godinton.kent.sch.uk

Section One – The School Day

School Times

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| School gates open and children start coming into school. | 8.35 am |
| Classroom doors close – children should be in by this time | 8.50 am |
| Playtime – whole school | 10.10 – 10.25 am |
| Lunchtime: | |
| Lower School (Years Reception and 1) | 11.30 – 12.40 pm |
| Middle School (Years 2 and 3) | 12.00 – 1.00 pm |
| Upper School (Years 4,5 and 6) | 12.30 – 1.30 pm |
| Playtime – Year 1 | 2.00 – 2.15 pm |
| End of School | 3.20 pm |
| Reception children are released from class at | 3.10pm |

Coming to School in the Morning

There are two pedestrian gates, via which the school site can be accessed. One is located at the bottom of the footpath, which leads from opposite the Chimneys pub on Loudon Way. The other is at the bottom of Lockholt Close.

The school site is open to pupils attending Breakfast Club from 7.50 a.m. For all other children, the site is open from 8.35 a.m and we encourage all children to arrive at this time. Parents may accompany their children onto the school site but

should then say their goodbyes at the main playground gate, which is supervised each morning by Miss Talbot (Headteacher) and Mrs McGibney (Family Liaison Officer FLO). Our reception teachers are also on duty in the morning to meet and greet the children. Children make their way straight to their classrooms once they arrive at school.

Should you wish to discuss any minor issue with Miss Talbot or Mrs McGibney, please feel free to talk to them on the playground. If you have a more major issue to discuss with any member of staff, please make an appointment at the school office.

The gates close and the site is secured at 8.50. Any children arriving after this time should report to the school office where they will be expected to sign the late book, stating the reason for being late. Parents are expected to sign them in. This will be recorded as late on the register. The school website has further information for parents about attendance and punctuality.

There are gate supervisors at our two pedestrian access gates; the main gate at Lockholt Close, the side gate leading to Chimneys. The supervisors ensure that once a child has walked onto the school site, they do not turn around and leave again for any reason. The supervisors are there to support the safety of our children and to offer assistance if need be.

End of the School Day

The schools gates open at 3.05 and from this time, parents may make their way onto the playground to await collection of their children. Children will be released from class by their teachers at the end of the school day. Reception (Year R) and Year 1 children will be released directly from their classroom doors and teachers will not let them go until they have seen a parent or whichever other adult is collecting them. It is helpful for your child to know who is collecting them each day and if this arrangement changes unexpectedly, please let the school know. Year 2 and Year 3 children are brought onto the playground (near the giant pencils) by their teachers who wait with the children until they have been collected. All other children are released from their classrooms in the Upper School part of the school building. All children in years R to 4 must be collected from the site by an adult.

Children in Year 5 and 6 may leave the site unaccompanied if parents have completed the online form giving permission to do so.

Safety Before and After School

Parents are responsible for the supervision of their children at drop off and pick up. We have climbing apparatus in the school playground but ask that this is not used by the children at these busy times.

Cycling To and From School

Children are encouraged to cycle or scooter to school. However, in the interests of safety, we must insist that children dismount before entering the gates and push their bikes or scooters through the school grounds.

Covered bicycle racks are available at the main entrance to the school. Children must lock their bicycles up before leaving them. Unfortunately, the school cannot accept responsibility for any loss or damage which may occur to the bicycles whilst they are on school property. However, any incident involving a pupil will be dealt with thoroughly.

Parking

There is severe congestion around the school at the beginning and end of the school day, especially in Lockholt Close. If at all possible, please refrain from using your car to transport your child to school. If that is not possible, please try to car share, if you can.

If you must use a car to get your children to school we would respectfully ask all parents to park in the public car park adjacent to the Chimneys pub, and to then walk your child down the path and into the school.

The school car park is a staff car park only. There are electronic gates across the vehicular entrance and exit which are closed for the majority of the day. Visitors should press the entry button to alert the school office of their arrival. Parents may only drive onto site to drop their children off at Breakfast Club or to pick up from the After School Club. No other parents, apart from those in current possession of disabled blue badges, or those experiencing exceptional

circumstances, such as having a child with a broken leg, are able to drive onto the site following discussion with Miss Talbot. Only staff and authorised visitors are allowed to drive on site. If you are collecting your child from an extra-curricular activity, please walk onto the school site.

We have a regular lollipop lady, who escorts the children across Loudon Way. Please cross the road where they operate.

Section Two – The Extended School

Breakfast Club – Early Birds

We offer a breakfast club for those parents who require supervision for their children before school opens in the morning. The club is run by members of the school staff. Each session costs £3.50 and the club is open from 7.50 in the morning. Children must be dropped off at Breakfast Club by 8.15 a.m. which is when Breakfast Club registration closes. The children receive a comprehensive breakfast, including toast, cereal, fruit and yoghurt and have the chance to participate in a range of activities, before being escorted to their classrooms for the start of school. Please contact the school office, or see the school website for further details.

After School Child Care – Night Owls (Godinton After School Club)

‘Night Owls’ is our after school childcare and operates from 3.20pm to 6.00 pm (new end time from September 2024). Children are able to enjoy a range of activities and are provided with an early evening snack. From September 2024, the cost of each session is £11.50 per child, (regardless of whether your child attends until the end of the session). Should you require after school child-care for your child, please email our Night Owls team at afterschoolclub@godinton.kent.sch.uk or contact the school office.

Extra-Curricular Activities (Clubs)

We believe that it is extremely important for children to have every opportunity possible to participate in extra-curricular activities. Hence, the staff at Godinton Primary give up a great deal of their time to run a wide range of activities.

A termly list of clubs is sent out to parents providing details of the activities on offer and information on how to apply for a place. The clubs on offer generally include a range of seasonal sports, including high five (netball), athletics, rounders, cricket and football. A range of additional activities are then also offered to different year groups, these may include clubs such as art, paper craft, choir, and science. These are augmented by activities run by external providers for which a cost is charged. Activities vary from term to term with different clubs being offered to different year groups. Clubs are often over-subscribed and some activities operate a waiting list.

PTFA (Parent, Teacher and Friends Association)

The PTFA raise a phenomenal amount of money each year and these funds have supported a wide range of projects within the school. The financial support afforded by the PTFA is crucial to the development of the school.

Through a wide range of activities and events, such as children's discos, summer and Christmas fairs, Easter Bingo, Breakfast with Santa, the PTFA plays a valuable role in strengthening our school community.

We would welcome your involvement in the PTFA. It is a very friendly group and meetings are held regularly. All are welcome to attend.

The Godinton Coffee Hub

Every Wednesday morning, parents are invited to come into the staff room from 9-10am, for tea and coffee. The Coffee Hub provides an opportunity for parents to get to know each other and have a friendly informal chat. Our Family Liaison Officer Jacqui McGibney is also in attendance.

We also offer an additional coffee morning for parents of children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) every term

Section Three – School Organisation and Curriculum

Term Dates

The school operates 6 terms a year. Full details of term dates for this academic year and next are available on the school website.

Staffing

A full list of all school staff can be found on the school website.

Mini Schools

At Godinton, we organise our children into three mini schools. We have a Lower School which comprises the Reception and Year 1 classes; a Middle School which includes Years 2 and 3; and an Upper School of Years 4-6.

Each mini school has a teacher who leads it, forming our middle management team. Whilst the school has regular whole staff meetings, which allow us to focus on the larger issues we face, we also have regular mini school meetings, which allow the staff to focus specifically on the issues, which are pertinent to their children. We believe that this system allows us to focus our efforts more effectively on developing the school at every level.

Curriculum

We offer a rich curriculum for our children. At the core of the weekly timetable are lessons, which develop the children's skills in reading (phonics – using Little Wandle Phonics), writing and maths. This is supplemented by science and computing, history and geography lessons which form 'Learning Adventures', cross curricular teaching units which change 3 times a year. A range of arts activities including visual art, drama and music, as well as sporting opportunities are also incorporated into our timetables. Our 'Star Weeks (Showing Tolerance And Respect) teach aspects of RE (religious education) and PSHE (personal, social and health education) throughout the year. Children are expected to fully participate

in all aspects of the curriculum. If parents wish to withdraw pupils from RE lessons, due to religious reasons, they should make an appointment to discuss this with Miss Talbot.

We want our children to be well-rounded learners and to explore the world around them with curiosity, interest and enthusiasm. Teachers and Teaching Assistants (TAs) challenge and support all children, meaning that work is pitched appropriately for all abilities. Further information about the curriculum for each year group can be found on the school website.

Forest School

We are immensely fortunate to have beautiful school grounds including our wonderful woodland where we can take learning and discovery outside. Forest School sessions are offered as a block of sessions to each class, every year and help to build children's resilience, self-confidence and love of being outdoors. They have the opportunity to use a range of tools, build dens, play in the mud kitchen and toast marshmallows on our fire pit. Further details can be found on the school website and are sent out to parents in advance of their child's sessions.

Early Years Foundation Stage (Reception) Classes

The EYFS (Reception) and Year 1 class rooms are located together, at one end of the school and are known as our Lower School.

Before children start in the Reception classes, Reception staff complete home visits, calling in at the homes of every child who is joining our school. They will discuss the child's needs with the parents and start the process of getting to know the child and the family. Our teaching team will also visit pre-school settings and talk to your child's key-worker. These are valuable opportunities, which help with your child's transition to school.

In order to ease the transition to school, new reception children are invited in for story time and activity sessions in the summer term before they start. There are also information sessions for parents during which you will be advised about key issues connected with your child starting school. Further information about starting school in the reception classes is available on the school website www.godinton.kent.sch.uk.

We form our reception intake into 4 small class groups of 15. They remain in these groups for their entire Reception Year. Our teachers each register and supervise two of these class groups, which join together to make a class of 30. By the end of the academic year, we know the children fully, and only then do we form them into two distinct classes of 30 children, if appropriate, ready for the start of year 1 containing a mix of children from the 4 different reception groups. We want to protect friendship groups as much as we can, whilst also separating children who do not bring out the best in each other, and providing each class with a similar make up regarding gender and ability.

Further information about EYFS at Godinton can be found on the school website.

Guiding Stars

Our 'Guiding Stars' focus children on the key learning skills needed to be successful learners. Children are given the opportunity to develop these skills during class-based activities.

Our Guiding Stars are: independence, perseverance, team work, communication, problem solving, creative thinking, motivation, self-confidence, risk taking and personal best. Further information about our Guiding Stars can be found on the school website.

Our School Values

Our school values define the ethos of our school and highlight the expectations we have of all our children.

- We respect and listen to each other's views, opinions and ideas
- We love how we are all different
- We look for the best in each other and ourselves
- We are kind, friendly and thoughtful
- We are honest and take responsibility for our actions
- We help and look after each other, ourselves and our environment
- We always try our best
- We make sensible choices in our work and play
- We show good manners
- We are proud to be part of the Godinton family

Section Four – Information About Pupil Progress

Year Group Welcome Letters

At the end of each academic year, parents have the opportunity to informally meet their child's new teacher during Open Afternoon. We continue this introduction in the autumn term when all teaching staff are available after school on the playground for the first few weeks so that parents can introduce themselves and say hello. At the start of the autumn term, Parents are also given a copy of the Year Group Welcome letter, which contains lots of useful information about their child's new year group. Information covered includes the Learning Adventures studied and more specific arrangements such as how spellings are taught, when homework will be set, on which days the children will need their PE kit etc. These letters can also be found on the school website.

Reports

Parents are provided with three reports spaced over the course of the academic year. These provide you with information about your child's level of achievement, their progress and the effort they are putting into their schoolwork. You receive a simple target setting report in November; the main written report is given to you in March and you receive a simple concluding report in July. Reports are accompanied by information about the next steps that teachers would like your child to work on.

We prefer to provide you with the main report in March and not at the end of the academic year as is traditional. By doing this, we are able to make you fully aware of any issues, which need to be addressed, such as a problem with learning or progress, or the need for a child to improve their attitude, whilst there is still time to do so.

By highlighting issues in March, we still have half the academic year to work towards an improvement. Similarly, it is a boost to children to be praised for their hard work and progress then, and not make them wait until the end of the academic year to share this news with you.

Book Viewing

After receiving each of the written reports, parents are able to come into school to view their child's work and to look around their classroom. These Book Viewing evenings occur three times a year in terms 2, 4 and 6.

Parent Consultation Meetings

Parents then have the opportunity to meet the class teacher on a one to one basis, to discuss anything further. We run parents' evenings in the school hall to facilitate these meetings. Your child's report will indicate whether a teacher wishes to meet with you to discuss a particular issue. Even if a teacher has not requested to see you, parents may still make an appointment with their child's teacher on parents' evening. We do however ask that parents do not ask for a one to one meeting with the teacher, unless they have a specific concern, which they wish to discuss. If both you and the teacher are happy with your child's progress and attitude, and you have consequently received a written report to that effect, and you are happy with the work you have seen in your child's books, please do not request a meeting. This will free time and allow the class teacher to offer longer consultations to the parents of children who need it most.

Appointments are booked online and details of how to do this accompanies your child's report. We are only able to offer one appointment per child and therefore kindly ask that children with parents who are separated liaise with each other regarding who will attend or come together.

Our team are always happy to help so please remember that you are free to make an appointment to see your child's teacher **whenever the need arises** – you do not have to wait for a scheduled consultation evening if you wish to discuss a concern. You can speak to your teacher directly at the end of each day. Teachers in years R-3 will either be on the playground after school finishes, or at the doors of their classrooms. Teachers in years 4-6 will be in their classrooms. They may not be free to discuss an issue straight away, as many of the teachers run after school clubs. However, they will always arrange a time when they can speak to you.

Alternatively, you can make an appointment to see your child's teacher by contacting the school office on 01233 621616. The office is staffed from 8.00 am to 4.00 pm Monday to Friday during term time.

Section Five – Supporting Your Child

Special Educational Needs, Disability and Emotional Wellbeing / Children's Mental Health

Mrs Stein is our Assistant Head for Inclusion and arranges any provision for pupils with special educational needs or disability (SEND). She manages the work of our Teaching Assistants (TAs), who work alongside the teachers to provide additional support to our pupils. She will be involved with you, should your child have a specific issue affecting their progress within school. This may include special educational needs, medical difficulties, social or emotional concerns, or English as an Additional Language (EAL). Mrs Stein also oversees provision for academically more able pupils. Further information about how the school supports pupils with special education needs can be found on the SEND pages on the school website.

The school has a team of exceptional teaching assistants who support the children's learning and development. Support is provided in class in the mornings, with teaching assistants implementing focused intervention groups in the afternoon to support the children's needs. Some children with more complex special educational needs may have 1:1 support.

Our school has a Family Liaison Officer, Mrs Jacqui McGibney, who is available to help parents in supporting the well-being of their children and family. Mrs McGibney may offer help and advice with issues such as behaviour, separation, bereavement or anxiety. Support may be offered on a 1 to 1 basis or through some of the parenting workshops available. Mrs McGibney is also able to signpost parents to other agencies who may also be able to assist.

The wellbeing of our children is of paramount importance. Our children's pastoral needs are supported by our teachers and TAs. All our children are encouraged to discuss their feelings in school and to let staff know of any concerns or worries that they might have. Additional provision may be arranged to support children with their emotional or social wellbeing. The school has two specific rooms dedicated to children's wellbeing these are safe and comfortable spaces where 1:1 or small group sessions can take place. Our 'Squirrels' room is the base for nurture provision delivered by Mrs Ellis and 'The Den' is where Miss King delivers pastoral support.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding children's well-being is a crucial part of a school's role. The safeguarding pages on the school website contain useful information relating to pupil safety and wellbeing. Miss Talbot, Headteacher, is also the Designated Lead for Safeguarding (DSLs). Any concerns regarding pupil welfare or potential abuse should be brought to her attention, or in her absence, the Deputy DSLs Mrs Stein (Assistant Headteacher) or Mrs McGibney (Family Liaison Officer). A copy of the school's Safeguarding (Child Protection) policy is on the website, please look at the safeguarding section of the website for further information. The website also includes information about online safety.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility so if anyone ever has a concern about a child's welfare please contact one of the school's DSLs. headteacher@godinton.kent.sch.uk

Section Six – Rewards and Sanctions

Positive Praise and Gold Cards

Our school ethos very much centres around celebrating our children's achievements. It is important that they have recognition for the things that they have done well – whether this is a kind word or feedback from their class teacher, house points or a sticker.

Children may have their efforts and achievements recognised by the class teachers, who will award them a gold card. When they receive a gold card, the children visit the Head and/or Assistant Headteachers, who praise their work and award them a gold sticker. It is a lovely opportunity for the children's special individual achievements to be shared.

If the children do something amazing outside of school, we love to hear about it. Encourage them to bring in certificates or photos of achievements so they can be displayed on their 'proud pegs'.

School House System

At Godinton we operate a very successful School House system where the children throughout the school (from Year 1 upwards) are divided into four House teams (Leeds – green, Dover–blue, Rochester–red and Walmer–yellow).

Children receive individual house points for good work and good behaviour and these contribute to overall House Totals, which are announced in assembly each week. They work towards earning house point badges (25 – coloured, 50 – bronze, 75 – silver, 100 – gold) which are awarded throughout the year. Those children who earn 100 house points receive a special reward at the end of the year.

Each house is led by House Captains who are elected from children in Year 6.

Inter–house competitions, such as our annual sports days in the summer are run throughout the year.

Celebration Assembly and Tea Parties

Celebrating children’s success is important to us. Every Thursday, we have a celebration assembly. Teachers select children from their class who deserve to be recognised for either good work or good behaviour and certificates are presented. Some children are also recognised during our celebration assembly as having achieved a ‘Godinton Star Award’ – these are children who have shown themselves to be particularly kind, caring and thoughtful members of our school community and who have upheld our school values. All of the children then join the Head in the Headteacher’s office, for a tea party involving biscuits and juice on a Friday afternoon. It’s Miss Talbot’s highlight of the week.

Red Cards

Should your child misbehave, they will receive a warning from a member of staff and then a yellow card. If the poor behaviour persists, or if the child is verbally or physically aggressive towards another child, they will receive a red card. They will then be sent to either the Head of their school, one of the Assistant Heads or Headteacher if the offence is sufficiently serious.

You will receive a call detailing what your child has done and they will serve a playtime detention. If the poor behaviour persists, there are a range of increasing

sanctions, culminating in a fixed term exclusion or, ultimately, expulsion from the school. These are set out in our behaviour and discipline policy, which is available online in the policy section of the website.

Bullying of any kind is not tolerated at Godinton Primary School and swift action is taken to address any issues

Section Seven – The Wider Curriculum

Educational Visits

We supplement our usual lessons with numerous offsite visits, as well as having visitors to our school. It is important that children gain first-hand experience of what they are studying. This can include trips to castles and museums, dressing up days, visits from dancers, actors and bands of all nationalities. Parents are asked to make a voluntary contribution to the cost of these activities.

Residential Visits

We run annual residential trips for those children in the Upper School at activity centres in the UK.

These trips are activity based and aimed at developing the confidence and social skills of our children. They may involve activities such as abseiling, rock climbing, raft building, fencing, team games, orienteering and no doubt many nights of the children staying up chatting long after they are supposed to be asleep!

Section Eight – General Information

Absence and Attendance

100% attendance at school is encouraged in all pupils. Parents are regularly updated on their child's attendance throughout the year and meetings will be arranged with the Headteacher or Family Liaison Officer where attendance becomes

a concern or when persistent absence arises. Certificates are awarded throughout the year for excellent attendance.

It is the responsibility of parents and carers to contact the school whenever their child is absent stating the reason for the child's absence using the school absence reporting line. Parents should inform the school of their child's absence on each day thereafter. This should be followed up with a letter upon a child's return to school.

In September 2013, the government introduced a new policy regarding term time absences, which means that parents may be fined if they take their children out of school during term time. Term time absences are only granted for what are classed as exceptional circumstances. Holidays during term time will not be authorised. The full details of the government's measures are outlined in our school attendance policy, which can be found on our website. Please also look at the attendance page on the school website for further information and to see a copy of our attendance policy and attendance leaflet for parents.

Academy

Godinton Primary School is a stand-alone Academy School and is not part of a multi-academy trust. Further details about the Governing Body of the school can be found on the school website.

Administering of Medicine / Medical Needs

In the event that your child requires medication during the day we would, in the first instance, suggest that dosages be taken before or after school. In the event that this is unworkable, we would ask that parents complete a form available at the school office, in order for school staff to administer medicines to your child. However, please note that only prescription medicines can be administered by school staff. Parents are asked to complete a medical needs form for their child. This is a confidential form, which asks for information about existing medical conditions and allergies, allowing us to ensure that any needs for your child are accommodated. Please ensure that any severe medical needs are also discussed in advance with school staff.

Please refer to the schools medical needs policy for further information. This is available online.

Assemblies

Assemblies form our daily act of collective worship. During assemblies, children may listen to stories with moral themes, some from different world religions including Christianity, or find out about world events such as an environmental issue. Visitors are also often invited into assemblies. Singing also forms part of assembly time and children may sing hymns or other songs with a meaning. Assemblies finish with a short period of reflection.

Every Friday, the whole school meet for assembly. Sometimes different classes will lead the assembly by showing the school what they have been working on in class. Parents are invited to join us to watch their child's class assembly.

We are pleased to have a well-established relationship with St Mary's Church, Great Chart. Our Upper School carol service is held there at Christmas and representatives from the church lead harvest and Easter assemblies in school.

Parents may have particular religious or social reasons for wanting their child to be withdrawn from all or part of assembly. If this is the case, please arrange to discuss this with Miss Talbot.

British Values

As of November 2014, all schools have a duty to actively promote the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

The British Values promoted in our school are:

- Being part of Britain
- Democracy
- The rule of law
- Individual liberty
- Mutual respect for and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs and for those without faith.

Further details of the British Values promoted in school are available on the school website.

Our school values are displayed in our classrooms and are the core principles we encourage all children to uphold.

Change of Contact Details

Please keep us informed of any change to your address, email address, telephone numbers, work place or the details of your 'emergency contact'. All children must have at least two emergency contacts, ideally three or four.

Communication

Communicating with parents is an important part of what we do. At Godinton we use the electronic ParentMail system to communicate to parents on a regular basis. Details regarding ParentMail and how to verify your account are contained within your information pack.

The school also produces a monthly newsletter, in which we endeavour to provide parents with as much information as possible about what is happening within the school.

The school has its own website. The address is www.godinton.kent.sch.uk. All newsletters are posted on the web site. In addition, it also contains a school diary, to keep you abreast of forthcoming events.

The school website is also an excellent source of information about many other areas of school life. Here parents can find key school policies, new lunch menus and find out how they can help their children at home.

Parents who are divorced and separated can receive copies of key school documents such as school reports. Please contact the school office for further information.

Each year group has a dedicated email address via which parents can contact class teachers. This is yearxparent@godinton.kent.sch.uk where x is the name of the year group. Please allow 48 hours for a member of the team to come back to you.

Queries of an urgent nature should go through the school office office@godinton.kent.sch.uk

Complaints

We hope that any issues or concerns you may have can be resolved quickly through meeting with or talking to the relevant member of staff. We are always happy to help. However should you wish to raise a formal complaint the process for doing so is outlined in our complaints policy, which is available on the website or from the school office.

Equipment

We encourage children in the Upper School to bring their own equipment to school in addition to that which we provide. Useful items are pens, pencils and coloured pencils in a pencil case which should all be named.

Food Allergies

The school has a food allergy policy, which outlines the schools procedures in relation to managing food allergies and intolerance. This is available on the school website. Godinton is a nut free school, meaning that nuts and nut based products (e.g. nut bars or Nutella and peanut butter sandwiches) are not permitted in school.

Head lice

Please regularly check your child's hair for head lice. If you do find lice in your child's hair please treat them and inform the school office so that a general note can be passed on to parents in that class.

Healthy Eating and Drinking

Pupils are encouraged to bring a bottle of water to school with them. They are allowed to keep the bottle on their desks, during lessons, to drink from as they wish.

They are also allowed to bring healthy snacks for morning break times. This should be a piece of fruit or vegetables. Chocolate and crisps are not allowed. We participate in the 'Fruit and Vegetables for Infants' scheme, in which every child from Reception to Year 2 is provided with a free piece of fruit or vegetable daily.

Helping in School – Parent Volunteers

We welcome parents into the school. We are happy to have you come in and help. Parents fulfil a variety of roles from helping in class, to listening to readers, to helping with displays. Some parents help run clubs. If you feel that you have a special skill, or you just feel that you could help generally, please contact the school office who will explain the application process for volunteer helpers. Please note that this process will include a criminal records check and the taking up of references. Generally, we do not place parent volunteers within their own child's class.

Homework and Reading at Home

The school's homework policy is available on the school website. It outlines the expectations for homework in each year group.

The school uses an online homework system called **Mathletics** for maths homework. Login details are provided for parents to set up the system at home.

Each term, the children will be set a 'Homework Trail' – this is a grid of activities from which the children select which ones they would like to complete (minimum of 3). Homework is returned to the school on the first Tuesday of each term where a class 'Homework Showcase' is held during which time the children look at each other's efforts. For those who go 'the extra mile' and complete more than six challenges the children will earn a special sticker. If they collect three of these stickers during the year, they will receive a special end of year reward.

Parents of children in Lower and Middle School should read with their children at home every day. The children will bring home a decodable reading book which matches the phonemes being taught in their Little Wandle Phonics session each week and which the children will have already practised reading in their guided reading session. They will also bring home a book to read for pleasure – this may not be a book that they can read themselves but rather a book that you can share together. Any reading at home can be recorded in your child’s contact book. Class teachers will explain the process of bringing reading books home and changing books in the ‘Welcome letters’ produced at the start of each year. This information can also be found on the school website. The school website also has a useful information section for parents, which focuses on how you can help your child at home. All Upper School children are asked to read at home daily.

Lost Property

Please ensure that all items of clothing or equipment brought to school are permanently named. With over 420 children in school there will be times when property goes astray, although measures are taken to avoid these. Lost property boxes are located in the front entrance.

Lunchtimes

We have three sittings for lunch in order to limit the number of children in the hall at any one time. Midday Meals Supervisors help support the children with their lunch.

All children in Years R–2 are entitled to a free school meal under the Government’s Universal Free School Meals Scheme. Children in Years 3–6 may also be entitled to a free school meal if parents are receiving certain benefits. If you believe that your child may be entitled to free school meals, please contact the school office.

The school kitchen is run by ‘Independent Catering’. They provide a very good meals service with an emphasis on providing fresh food. Pupils are able to choose whether to have a packed lunch or a school dinner on a daily basis. During morning registration, those children who would like a school dinner are able to choose their selection from the menu. The menu is available in advance on our school website,

so you are able to look with your child whenever you wish. Parents pay for the meals through an online payment system only – cash payments are not accepted.

If children choose to have a packed lunch, we would ask parents to supply a lunch which is healthy in nature and which reflects a good dietary balance. Please do not overload lunchboxes with lots of unhealthy snacks and include fruit or vegetables if possible. Sweets are not allowed in lunchboxes. Nut based products are not permitted (e.g. peanut butter, packets of nuts), due to the number of children we have at school with nut related allergies.

Children are only allowed to drink water during the school day. Water bottles can be refilled as required at school, as drinking water is available from taps in the classroom. Water bottles must not be filled with squash or juice.

Milk is available to all children in the school at lunchtime whether they have a school dinner or a packed lunch.

Lunch playtimes are supervised by our outdoor team of mid-day supervisors.

Medical and Dental Appointments

Medical or dental appointments should be made out of school hours, although we appreciate that this is not always possible. Parents must accompany their child to the school office after their appointment for them to be signed in.

Online Safety

It is important to us that our children learn how to use modern technologies such as computers and the internet safely. Both parents and children are informed about our online safety rules and full details of the school's approach to online safety can be found in the safeguarding section on the school website.

The school takes part in special activities to celebrate National Online Safety Day each February.

Our Digital Images Policy outlines the protocol involving the taking and use of pupils' photographs by the school and by parents at school events.

Opal Play

In September 2024, we will be embarking on some exciting changes to our playtimes through the Opal Play initiative. This will see the children being able to play on both the playing field and the playground at lunchtimes, in all seasons. Different play activities will be set up, over time, to engage the children and to develop their creativity and imaginative play skills – this will include activities such as water play, digging activities, role-play, performance skills and small world play.

In order to ensure that the children can fully participate, they will need to keep a pair of wellies in school every day. The children should also have a waterproof jacket and may bring waterproof trousers or a puddle suit. Having a spare change of clothes to keep in school is also useful.

P.E.

The children must wear P.E. kits for all activities. Children in Years R to 2 should come to school dressed in their PE kits on their PE days (for children in Year R this is in term 6 only). We encourage children to wear a PE t-shirt in their house colour. Many parents choose to purchase a t-shirt with the school logo from County Print and Embroidery <https://www.countyprintandembroidery.co.uk> Children in Years 3 to 6 change into their PE kits at school. Appropriate arrangements are made for this.

The children must remove earrings before any activities begin. If the children are not able to remove earrings please do it for them on the days that they have P.E., before they come to school. If they are unable to remove earrings, then they should be taped over with micropore before the children come into school. If your child is considering having their ears pierced then please do so at the start of the summer holiday – this will allow sufficient time for ears to heal so that earrings can be removed for PE at the start of the year. Please see the uniform section on the school website for further information about jewellery.

Policies

Please see the school website to access an online copy of key school policies. A hard copy can be obtained from the school office on request.

Privacy Notice and GDPR

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and The Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA) is the law that protects personal privacy and upholds individual's rights. It applies to anyone who handles or has access to people's personal data. Godinton Primary School is a data controller for the purposes of these acts and as such collects information about the children and may receive information from previous schools, Kent County Council or the Learning Records Service. Full details are outlined in our GDPR and Data Protection Policy and in our privacy notice, both of which are available on the school website.

PPA (Planning, Preparation and Assessment) Time

Teachers' contracts require that 10% of the teaching week be set aside for planning, preparation and assessment (PPA). We employ a reliable and committed team, who cover classes when teachers have PPA on a regular basis.

Pupil Premium

The school is able to obtain additional funding for pupils whose parents are in receipt of certain benefits. Please contact the school office if you believe that you may be entitled. The school receives additional funding for children in receipt of pupil premium.

Relationship and Sex Education (RSE)

RSE is built into our PSHE (personal, social and health education) curriculum. In Year 5 children are taught about changes at puberty and in Year 6 about how babies are made. Parents are fully informed as to the content of these sessions, and Year 6 parents have the opportunity to view the video materials used. Parents are also informed about how they may withdraw their child from certain aspects of this curriculum. Further information can be found on the PSHE page on the school website.

School Closure

In the event that the school has to close due to bad weather, parents will be notified via ParentMail and an alert placed on the school website. The school will do all it can to remain open but will not compromise the safety of staff and pupils.

Sun Protection

In sunny weather we ask that parents put sun cream on their children before school if they so wish. You may send sun cream in with your child if they are able to apply it correctly. Staff do not have sufficient time to do this for them. We ask that you impress upon your child that it is for their use only.

Sunhats or caps should be worn for protection.

Smoking

We have a 'smoke free' policy in school. Smoking is not permitted inside the school building or in the school grounds. This includes the use of e-cigarettes and vaping products. We would kindly ask that all visitors to the site respect this policy.

Swimming

Swimming currently forms part of our curriculum for Year 3 with a block of swimming lessons taking places at Ashford Prep School led by instructors from the Prep School.

As part of our curriculum, all children are expected to take part in the lessons, which are conducted depending on ability.

What to wear and bring to school

- The children should wear school uniform to school. A list of school uniform is provided separately and can be obtained from the school office. The school does offer items of uniform bearing the school logo but non-logo items can also be worn.

- The school offers opportunities throughout the year for second hand uniform to be purchased.
- A new school logo was launched in March 2017, which features in green on items of school uniform. Uniform showing the previous yellow squirrel logo can still be worn.
- The children may not wear coloured trainers in school. They are allowed black training type shoes, provided they are not covered in coloured stripes/markings of any description.
- Please ensure that all clothing is clearly labelled.
- Children may wear stud earrings, but if you are having your child's ears pierced, please do it during the summer break, as children are not permitted to participate in PE activities whilst wearing earrings. In addition, we are not allowed to remove earrings for children, so please do not have their ears pierced until they are of an age when they can remove and replace the jewellery independently.
- Children should wear no other jewellery.
- Children are not allowed to bring toys to school, apart from when joining the Reception year. Class teachers will advise regarding this.
- Please do not send your child to school with expensive or sentimental items.
- Children may not bring mobile phones to school.
- Large hair bows are not permitted

A full list of uniform expectations is outlined on the school website. Uniform with the school logo can only be purchased from Emporia, who offer an online service <https://www.countyprintandembroidery.co.uk> as well as having a shop in Chapel Mews, North Street in Ashford town centre. Orders can be delivered to the school office for collection or to your home address.

Website

Please see the school website www.godinton.kent.sch.uk for further information about the school.

We hope that your child will be very happy at Godinton Primary and we look forward to working in partnership with you during the course of your child's time at school.