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### Message from Miss Talbot

## The Wonderful World of Books

World Book Day earlier this month was a lovely opportunity to celebrate books and to encourage children to read at home. I can't tell you how important it is to develop the children's skills in this area. Reading opens up learning and gives children the power to develop understanding across the curriculum. Just 10 minutes of reading practice every day at home makes a huge difference. It gives children the opportunity to develop their fluency and to practice their decoding skills and when combined with the opportunity to discuss the book and answer questions about what they have read, can accelerate reading progress significantly. Life is busy for everyone but if you are able to find time every day to read or explore books with your child, you will see the difference that it makes. Encourage them to ditch the technology for a bit and to pick up a book.

For World Book Day this year, our children had the opportunity to read with children from a different year group. It was lovely to see our older children reading stories to our younger children. We hope that your child also enjoyed the opportunity to swap a book with a classmate and to bring home something new to read. Thank you for the wonderful costumes that your children came dressed in and for all your support with reading activities at Godinton.



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## Getting out and about

We are always looking for ways to enhance our children's curriculum experiences by offering opportunities to take part in off site visits. As the weather starts to improve again, our programme of educational visits picks up, with two years having completed school trips over the past few weeks.

Our Year 4 children had a brilliant time exploring the village of Chilham as part of their geography field work comparing features of a village with those in the town of Ashford. The children even had the opportunity to visit Chilham Primary School—a tiny village primary school with just 80 children, to see how that differed from Godinton. The children carried out a town trail around the village learning more about the features and history of the village.

Year 1 visited Godinton House where they learnt about plant growth—visiting the greenhouses and exploring plants growing around the estate. They also had the chance to plant some seeds of their own. The children did a fantastic job of walking there and back—we are so lucky to have such a fantastic resource so close to the school.

This week we have the Kingswood residential trip for Year 5 taking place and in the first few weeks back after Easter, Reception will be visiting the Rare Breeds Centre and Year 3 are off to Maidstone Museum.



## Shiver Me Timbers!!



Year 1 was overrun by an unruly bunch of pirates last week as the children enjoyed a special pirate themed day as part of their Ocean Explorers topic. The children, who were all given a special pirate name for the day, played pirate games, hunted for treasure and made pirate sandwiches. Thankfully no one had to walk the plank and a fun time was had by all. Thank you to parents for decking the children out in such brilliant costumes.

## Bikeability

Year 5 took part in Level 2 Bikeability cycle training last week which saw them cycling on local roads to develop their skills. We are hoping to be able to offer further cycling sessions this year—this time to children in years 3 to 6 who are at the early stages of learning to ride a bike. Further details have been sent out.





## Mini Cadets

Our Mini Police Cadets have been completing their community project this week—a litter pick around the estate. The children have worked exceptionally hard at their cadet training which has included learning first aid as you can see in the photos below. The children conclude their programme with a visit to Folkestone Police Station next week to find out about the work of the police force. A huge well done to all the children involved in the project.



## Easter

Well done to everyone who has made an Easter decoration for our beautiful Easter tree in the foyer. It looks amazing. Don't forget that we have our Easter Bonnet Parade on Friday 4th April. We're looking

t o  
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## Forest School



After such a wet winter, our woodland has started to dry out and signs of spring are all around. Over the past couple of months, Year 2 have been enjoying their forest school sessions which has included making potions, whittling sticks and making crafts out of natural materials. The mud in the forest was an added bonus and provided plenty of material for use in the mud kitchen!

It is lovely to see the children enjoying the natural world and having experiences which develop their resilience, creativity and teamwork skills.

Next term sees the turn of Year 4 for their forest adventure.

## Maths Success

Well done to Perryn and Ben in Year 5 for their success in a recent maths competition against other Ashford schools. Our mathematical duo came second in the event out of the 12 schools taking part. Congratulations to them both!



## Opal Update

Our Opal journey continues to develop as we introduce more zones and equipment onto the field and playground. The impact that this has already had on the children is considerable—we have seen far less playtime squabbles and are seeing many happy children being creative and imaginative in their play.

Last week we introduced the start of a water play area on the playground and this will be added to in coming weeks with the purchase of large pieces of water play equipment including 5 water tables.



As we head into next term, we will be introducing scooters onto the playground and Mr Rowson is looking at building a stage area and a large mud kitchen.

As ever, we are grateful to parents for all your help and support with this venture and thank you for all the donations that have come into school. Keep your eye out for Mrs Carr's Opal newsletters which outline our latest requests.



## Staff News

This term, Mrs Maher (Butterflies class teacher) left Godinton. We very much thank Mrs Maher for everything she has done for our school and wish her well for the future. Mrs Maher will be replaced by Miss Rossiter who will teach Butterflies class through to the end of the academic year. Miss Rossiter qualified as a teacher last year and has been working at Godinton since September in various capacities so she is already very well known to the children.

Miss Rossiter's move to class teacher means that Mrs Drake will be acting as the temporary manager at Night Owls.

We have also started to see Mrs McGoldrick back in school. Mrs McGoldrick has been recovering from a knee replacement operation and has then had a period of compassionate leave. We have missed Mrs McGoldrick and hope to see her a little more over the coming weeks.

Mrs Ellis is also off work at the moment as she too recovers from knee surgery.

## Environmental News

We have been working hard to fulfil new National recycling expectations for schools and as of this month are now recycling all card and paper waste, food waste, plastics and metals. As all plastics and metals for recycling have to be rinsed before being placed in recycling bins, we do not have the capacity to do this for recyclable materials in children's lunch boxes. This waste will therefore be returned home in the children's lunchboxes for recycling at home.

We are in the process of working with the organisation 'Let's Go Zero' to put together a Climate Action Plan for the school. This will outline further measures to be taken in order to improve our environmental credentials and looks at areas such as utility consumption, purchasing and environmental education.

## Other News and Reminders...

- Come and find us on our new Instagram account. **Godinton\_Primary\_School** We will be using the platform to provide information about school and to promote school events so please spread the word to friends and family. If you are happy for us to use photos of your child on Instagram you can update your consents on Arbor.
- The club timetable for Term 5 has been sent out. Please complete the links to the online forms to express interest in a place for your child.
- The following school policies have been updated and can be found in the policy section on the school website: Educational visits, extra curricular activities, **SEND**. We also have a new Communication with Parents Policy which outlines the school's approach to managing communications with parents.
- Thank you to everyone who helped us to raise almost £400 for Comic Relief.
- Don't forget that we break up for Easter on Friday 4th April and return to school on Tuesday 22nd April.

## Caught on camera this month...



## Sports Report

Year 3 and 5 have enjoyed active and exciting Thursdays this term as we have been working with the charity **Chance to Shine Cricket**, who have provided cricket coaching to the children. Led by Tom, our coach, the children learnt lots of skills including how to be a 'cool catcher', a 'super striker', a 'brilliant bowler' and a 'ferocious fielder'. Alongside learning the specifics of cricket, the children also had the opportunity to develop life skills such as concentration, awareness, resilience and teamwork- all of which will help them inside and outside of the classroom.

The Ashford Netball Youth League has now started and we have a team of 9 children entered into this. So far, the children have given their all across four matches. We are very proud of the children's commitment to the sport and the way in which they are supporting each other as a team. We look forward to seeing how they progress.

