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### Message from Miss Talbot

Dear Parents,

It's that time of year again when the threat of snowy weather is on the horizon. I hope that we don't have a repeat of last year's snow which whilst wonderful for the children, brought a fair number of headaches with regard to school opening.

In the event of heavy snow every effort will be made to ensure that the school remains fully or partially open in order to minimise the impact on parents. In order to prevent closure, the usual curriculum may be altered or alternative arrangements made such as children completing activities in larger groups in the school hall. The school will only close if the site is hazardous or if insufficient staff are able to make it into school to ensure that the children can be adequately supervised. In these circumstances, parents will be notified via ParentMail, as soon as possible, as to any full closure of the school or if the school will be closed to certain classes or year groups. An alert will also be put on the KCC Closures Website which can be found at [www.kentclosures.co.uk](http://www.kentclosures.co.uk). Parents can also sign up for an SMS/Email alerts on the Kent Closures website; this service will send an SMS or email alert to let parents know if our school is closed. This alert will trigger announcements on local radio stations (KMFM, BBC Radio Kent or Heart FM) as well. The school website will also be updated with any announcements.

We hope that we will not have to put these arrangements into action this year but of course it is always best to be prepared for the worst.

As weather patterns can be so changeable at this time of year, please ensure that your child comes to school with a warm coat and suitable shoes. The children will be expected to wear their coats at playtime. In the event of a good downfall of snow, providing it is safe to do so, we would allow the children the opportunity to play on the school field as long as they have wellington boots in school. If it therefore looks like snow is likely or in the event of snow please ensure that your child has boots to bring or wear to school – this is an essential requirement for building snowmen and making snow angels! Whilst we won't be taking the children out for PE in the event of snow we do have outdoor PE lessons at this time of year. Again please ensure that your child has suitable PE clothes in place (tracksuit, extra pair of socks etc.) for these sessions.

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## Class News...

### Sensational Starts to our new Learning Adventures



We have had some amazing starts to this term's new Learning Adventures. Year 6 started their Evolution and Adaptation topic with an archaeological dig and Year 2 by investigating smells that evoked the time of the Great Fire of London. We have also seen real tortoises in Year R and the children exploring wet fish from the fish counter (sardines, plaice and seabass) in Year 1. Year 3 have had a crocodile in their classroom whereas Year 5 have been creating monsters of a different kind. Year 4 have been transported into the world of Dr Doolittle. Feedback from the children about their Learning Adventures has been very positive. They like the integrated approach to topic work and the opportunity to extend writing opportunities in other subject areas is having a positive impact on writing across the school.



We are looking forward to other exciting events as children work their way through their Learning Adventures. For further details of the curriculum content for this term and next, please see the curriculum section on the school website.

## Assembly News

Thank you to those parents who have joined us for their child's class assembly so far this term and congratulations to Magpies, Cuckoos and Falcons for putting on such lovely assemblies for us all to watch. We are looking forward to Ladybird's assembly on Friday 1st February and Butterflies on Friday 8th February. Parents are welcome to come along and watch their child at 2.40 p.m.

During STAR week this term we welcomed the Fire Kent Fire Brigade into school to lead assemblies on fire safety. The assemblies helped the children to reflect on what they would do in the event of a fire and fire prevention.



### Year 6's Big Dig



For the introduction to their new Learning Adventure, 'Whose genes are these?', Year 6 became Palaeontologists for the afternoon. In teams, they uncovered, researched and identified fossils – the children were gripped by this exciting reveal and were enthused to find out more. Eagles and Falcons have gone on to learn how fossils are formed and then make their own version of a 'mould and cast' fossil using plaster of Paris, plasticine and a shell. Next up is Charles Darwin and the theory of Evolution.

## Online Safety



This term's **STAR** week focused on the topic, 'Stay Safe, Speak Out', in which the children explored issues surrounding bullying and how we treat others as well as online safety. Our children show a good understanding of these issues and enjoyed engaging in debate and discussion around relevant issues. A highlight of the week was our Year 6 children leading lessons in other year groups to guide younger children through PowerPoint presentations they had designed themselves about bullying and friendship issues. They enjoyed taking on the role of 'teacher' and their work positively supplemented the work being undertaken in class.

Many of our older children (but also worryingly, some of our younger children) talked during the week about being actively involved in social media groups such as Instagram, WhatsApp and gaming sites and how sometimes other children can make unkind comments through these channels. Many of these platforms have age restrictions and we would urge parents to ensure that they are monitoring the social media groups their children are accessing. As a school we can help to teach the children about online safety but we can't monitor their personal accounts or out of school internet use. The Internet can be a wonderful learning tool with information resources which provide new opportunities for learning and sharing of information. However, parents should be aware of the potential dangers posed to their children on-line and take measures to ensure their children can enjoy using the internet safely.

In order to help support you in keeping your children safe online we would like to draw your attention to the resources accessible through the school website (online safety page accessed via safeguarding page link). Here you will find links to useful websites which provide a wide range of resources for parents and children of all ages.

Current areas of concern which parents should be aware of:

- Children posting personal details such as their full name or address online.
- The number of social network sites being accessed at home . Some children conceal from their parents, sites which they use on a regular basis and which often have a recommended age of 13+.
- When accounts are created for any purpose online, it is always safer to use a screen name rather than your real name. Do you know what login name your child is using for their accounts?
- Children posting inappropriate comments about other children online (cyber-bullying). Nationally this is becoming an increasing problem. Do you see the messages that your children post online or send via text or instant messaging?
- The high number of followers or friends which some children claim to have on social network sites or through gaming, most of whom are unknown to the children. Do you know who your child's online 'friends' are?
- Children creating fake accounts for people they know. This is something which can have serious consequences. If parents are concerned that a fake account may have been created in their child's name they should contact the provider directly and ask for it to be removed.
- Home filters. Do you set filters on all devices to ensure that children can only access appropriate content?

Miss Talbot is the school's designated safeguarding Lead, and Mrs Stein the Deputy Safeguarding Lead. Any concerns about pupil welfare should be brought to their attention.



## Congratulations and Success...

### Year 6 Buddies

Congratulations to our Year 6 children who have now completed their training to become playground buddies. They will be helping our younger children to join in with games and activities on the playground at morning breaktime. Our Year R children have also been assigned Year 6 buddies who will work with them on different activities during the year. It is always a real pleasure to see how wonderfully our older children look after and support our younger children.



### House Point News

Congratulations to Rochester who were our House Point winners in Term 2. They enjoyed an additional break time with squash and biscuits at the start of this term. More than half the children in the school have already gained their first House Point badge of the year and 20 children have secured their bronze badges. Congratulations to all these children.



## Gold Cards and Star Awards

Our new 'gold card' board by my office has also been full with the names of children who have come down to see Mrs Stein, Miss Collins or I with a piece of wonderful work that they have produced. It is also a pleasure to talk to the children about these stand out efforts.

You will also notice that we have a new Star Award Tree in our entrance foyer. This tree displays the names of those children who have achieved a Star Award and have joined me for our weekly tea party. Well done everyone.



## World Book Day

This year we will be celebrating World Book Day on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> March. The children will be engaging in book related activities on this day and we are encouraging everyone to dress up as their favourite book character.

## Staff News

With Miss Brooker taking maternity leave at the end of Term 4, we are delighted that Mrs Norman will become Nightingales class teacher from the start of Term 5. Mrs Norman is well known to the children and the school and she regularly undertakes supply teaching across the school.

We are also very pleased to be welcoming Mrs Wood back to Godinton. Mrs Wood will be re-joining our teaching assistant team after Easter, working in Year 2 and Year 6.

## Other News and Reminders...

### A Non-Smoking Site

Please can I take the opportunity to remind everyone that the school is a no-smoking site. This includes the pathways and entrances to the school. Our no-smoking policy applies to tobacco based products, e-cigarettes and other vaping products. We would kindly ask parents to respect this school policy and to make anyone else aware who may collect or bring children to school.

### Parking

Ensuring the safety of our children when they come to school or go home is of absolute importance. Unfortunately I have had several reports of parents jeopardising this safety through inconsiderate parking and driving around school access points. This includes parents parking inconsiderably in Loudon Way, close to our road crossing patrol and a stone's throw away from the Chimney's car park and parents parking up on the zig zag lines at the Springwood Drive pedestrian entrance. Some parents have even been observed driving onto the school site through the out exit. It isn't acceptable for parents to pose risks to our children in this way and I would ask that they desist in doing so.

### The Godinton Coffee Hub

We are delighted that the Wednesday Coffee Hub is proving successful with parents and would love to see other mums and dads coming along for a coffee and a chat. This is a great opportunity to get to know other parents or to catch up with our FLO, Jacqui.



## SATs Parents' Meetings

We are pleased to have had such a positive uptake to the SATs information sessions for parents which take place next week. Places are still available for anyone else who would like to attend. Please contact the school office if you are interested.

Tuesday 5th February – KS1 (Year 2) SATs Information evening at 6.15 p.m.

Tuesday 5th February – KS2 (Year 6) SATs Information evening at 6.45 p.m.

Wednesday 6th February – KS2 (Year 6) SATs Information evening at 9.15 a.m.

Wednesday 6th February – KS1 (Year 2) SATs Information evening at 2.30 p.m.

At the meeting there will be the opportunity to purchase revision practice packs. These are produced by CGP at a discounted rate for parents with £1 from every purchase going to the school. They provide useful practice tasks which will supplement homework being set by the school.

### Attendance

Thank you to everyone for arriving promptly, ready for the start of the day when the register is taken at 9.00. Please remember that any attendance below 95% is considered to be low. We know that this is the season of coughs and colds and children shouldn't attend school if they are unwell. Parents will be informed of their child's current attendance percentage with their term 4 report. Congratulations to Year 5 who currently have the best attendance in the school. Attendance percentages for term 2 are below:

Year R – 95.8%	Year 4 – 96%
Year 1 – 95.9%	Year 5 – 97.3%
Year 2 – 97.1%	Year 6 – 93.4%
Year 3 – 96.9%	

## Other News and reminders...

- Thank you to everyone who joined in with our American themed lunch. The additional numbers of children having lunch on this day will assist the school budget.
- With water maintenance work taking place in and around the estate, please can I remind parents to ensure that they leave a little extra time for their journeys once temporary traffic lights and road work is in place.
- Could we please remind you that breakfast club needs to be paid in advance of the sessions that your children attend. Payments can of course be made on the day, but accounts should not fall into arrears. All payments are to be made through Parentmail, thank you.

## Caught on camera this month...



## Sports Report

### New Gymnastic Equipment

We are using some of this year's Sports Premium Funding from the Government to purchase new gymnastic wall bars for the school hall. These will provide an exciting addition to our gymnastic lessons and enable us to deliver a broader PE curriculum for the children. We hope that these will be in place by Easter.



### Benchball

Congratulations to our Sports Leaders for all the support they are giving to Year 3 and 4 at Benchball club on a Wednesday after school. Miss Brooker has plans to use their skills for a whole school benchball tournament next term—watch this space!

Please view the school's club timetable for Term 3 which provides further details of the range of clubs on offer across the school.