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Message from Miss Talbot

Traffic on the estate

I've had cause to be out on the local roads around the school at both ends of the school day over the past term and have seen first hand some of the difficulties encountered with dangerous driving and inconsiderate parking. This has ranged from cars parking almost on top of the road crossing patrol in Loudon Way and across the junction of Lockholt Close and Springwood Drive and cars speeding down Lockholt Close and then trying to turn round at the bottom where a number of cars are already parked. It is a miracle that someone hasn't been seriously injured as a result. Please can I ask, that for the sake of the children's safety, consideration is shown when driving or parking on the estate. Use Chimney's car park and walk down the pathway if you must drive onto the estate. Incidents will be reported to the police if cars are parked illegally or if dangerous incidents are observed. Thank you for your help with this.



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Class News

Year 5 – Bridging Knowledge

Do you know the difference between a truss bridge and a beam bridge? Can you tell the difference between an arch bridge and a cantilever?

Term 3 saw Year 5 learning all about bridges. The children learnt about different types of bridges around the word including, truss, beam and arch bridges and analysed how and why they are built in the way they are. Looking more specifically at truss bridges, the children then created their own truss bridges from spaghetti using the same triangular design. They used electrical tape to bind strands of dried spaghetti and connect triangles and beams together. Following this, the next step was creating wooden truss bridges using wooden lengths and triangular card to add structural strength. The children built on their year 4 skills of using hacksaws safely and efficiently and progressed to using mitre boards to cut the exact angles needed. Using wood glue, the children fixed the wood together. They then tested each bridge until destruction, adding incremental kilogram weights. The children discovered they had built their bridges so well, that they ran out of weights to add to destroy them! Looks as though we've got some budding architects of the future.



Year 3 – Wild Weather



As part of the Wild Weather topic, Year 3 have had a great time exploring and experimenting. Discovering all about Sir Edmund Hillary and Sherpa Tenzing Norgay's historic journey to the summit of Mount Everest has been really interesting, as well as finding out all about Nepal, where it is in our world and the differences between weather systems and landscape and those where we live. The children have also been working together to make their own kites so they could investigate wind speed, force and direction. The children worked with a partner to saw and cut materials to size, ensuring that they used materials light enough to enable the kites to fly and had attached these together securely so that the wind didn't break them. As soon as we get a really windy day, the children will be putting their kites to the test!

Homework Trails

Congratulations to everyone who went the extra mile on the Term 3 Homework Trail. We saw some amazing pieces of work at the Homework Showcase and we could see how much hard work had gone into these. New trails will be sent out this week and need to be returned to school on the Tuesday after the Easter break (Tuesday 18th April).

Year 2—London's Burning

Year 2 have enjoyed the start of their new topic, learning about the Great Fire of London. The children found out about the history of the city in 1666, what houses were made of then and how the fire spread so quickly. The children explored how cardboard boxes are joined and used that knowledge to build their own box-based Tudor houses. Year 2 were excited to attach their houses together and build their own Pudding Lane. The climax of the project was to take the model onto the playground and have our own Great Fire of Godinton! Later this term, Year 2 will be heading off to London to explore the city from a boat down the River Thames.



House Points

Congratulations to Leeds House who were the house point winners for Term 3. The children enjoyed squash, biscuits and an extended playtime to celebrate their victory!

We have also given out the first of our silver badges to Perryn B and Ella S, both in Rochester House. Well done!

Reception—It's Cold Outside



Term 3 was a chilly one for Year R, as we enjoyed exploring our topic "It's Cold Outside". The weather did not let us down, as we ventured into the school grounds to investigate the frost and

ice. We have spent the last few weeks exploring winter in more detail, examining ice and how it changes, finding out about polar animals and discovering how beautiful and magical 'cold' can be. We were able to answer lots of the children's "I Wonder" questions which included Nate asking, "How strong is ice?" and William & Amelie questioning "Why is the ice melting and where will polar bears live?"

In Expressive Arts and Design, we created chalk pastel drawings of the Aurora Borealis and collages of Jack Frost using 'cold' colours. We read lots of books including 'The Story of Jack Frost' and 'Lost and Found' where we heard lots of exciting new vocabulary such as 'temperature', 'Antarctica' and 'Inuit'. We wrote about what we would do if we got stuck inside a snow globe with Jack Frost for the day and sent a postcard home to tell our families how we had travelled to the South Pole and what we could see there. During the last week of term, we planned a party for our friend, Dragon! We learnt lots of facts from a non-fiction text about the Lunar New Year. We used what we discovered to make lucky red envelopes filled with coins, ate noodles with chopsticks and danced authentic dragon dances. It was great fun! Our Forest School sessions were a big hit with the children where they were able to explore the woods and find as many uses as for a stick as they could! We had tickle sticks, rainbow fairy sticks, proud sticks and many more!

Year 6—A Busy Term

Whilst running around a muddy school field in the depths of winter may not be everyone's cup of tea, for the children in Year 6, this sounds like a very appealing prospect. During terms 3 and 4, both classes have enjoyed taking part in a series of Orienteering exercises in their PE lessons. Orienteering is an outdoor sport that challenges the body and mind. The aim is to navigate between a series of points around a map and complete the course in the shortest time. These sessions not only require the children to use their speed, agility and collaborative skills; they also put their map reading abilities to the test.

The outdoor theme continues into terms 3 and 4 through the children's participation in Forest School. For one afternoon every week, each child is encouraged to take part in this child-centred approach towards learning. Forest School is an educational program that promotes play, exploration and supported risk-taking in a natural environment. During the six-week course, the children have the opportunity to build dens, make bird feeders, learn fire safety, amongst many other exciting activities. As with Orienteering, resourcefulness and teamwork are a must!

Step over the threshold of the classroom door, and it's a different story, as the children continue their topic of Paradise Found, which looks at life in the Caribbean. The cold, grey skies of the UK seem a far throw away from the clear blue, sunny skies of the West Indies. Over the last two weeks, the children have been tasked with the job of creating luxurious Caribbean resorts. They have designed webpages to persuade guests to visit their retreats, and have let their imaginations run wild with all the comforts that their havens have to offer. Probably most people would require little persuasion to hop on board a plane destined for the Caribbean islands at this time of year, so the final question remains: where do we sign up?

Year 4—Chilham Trip



Year 4 have had an exciting start to the Spring Term. In Geography, the children have spent time learning all about The British Isles and how to navigate around the UK using compass directions. Once the children's brains were full of excellent geographical knowledge, they set off to Chilham to complete a local study. The children had a brilliant time, despite having to walk up very steep hills—a little bit different from Godinton Park. As the children navigated their way around the quiet village, they completed map studies, filling in physical landmarks (including a house where elephants used to live!) and began comparing Chilham with Ashford town.



Year 1– Ah ha me hearties!

Ah ha me hearties! If you saw 60 pirates in school last week, your eyes weren't deceiving you, it was only Year 1 enjoying a pirate party day as a highlight of their learning adventure topic.

In the morning the children used their Design and Technology skills to cut, spread, chop and mix the ingredients to make cakes, fruit skewers and sandwiches for a pirate picnic. They played pirate games on the playground and of course had time on the pirate ship. The children even learnt some pirate songs and a pirate dance which Otters then performed in their pirate assembly last week. The children all had a brilliant time. Thank you to all the Year 1 parents for the fantastic efforts in getting the children dressed up for the day. They all looked amazing.

Buddies



Congratulations to all our Year 5 and 6 children who have served as Playtime Buddies since the start of the year. Having done an amazing job, they will now be handing over to our next group of buddies who will take on the role of helping to support our younger children at playtimes.

Club Focus– T-Shirt Design Club

T-shirt Design after school club is run by Mrs Gilbert and started last term. The children in Year 3 have become Young Fashion Designers. The theme for the designs is 'Stars' and the children have been working hard creating mood boards, sketching and making their chosen designs themselves. Armed with new skills and knowledge, they produced amazing sketches and created some excellent t-shirt designs using a range of different materials showing their creative flair. This group will continue in term 4 where they will complete their chosen designs and have a fashion showcase.



Staff News

This term we are welcoming three new Teaching Assistants to our team. Miss Dowling, who already supports our children at Breakfast Club, Miss Bushell and Miss Gurung. These new TAs will provide support for the children in Year R, 1 and 3. I'm sure that you will join me in wishing them well in their new positions.

PTFA News

Thank you to everyone who donated a gift for the Mother's Day Present Shop. If you have any other items lurking in cupboards at home that you would like to donate, these can be dropped off at any time. Don't forget that if you would like your child to take part and buy a gift at the shop, then you need to send the slip and money into school by Friday 10th March.

We also have two other events to look forward to in the next few weeks. Our Easter Bingo afternoon takes place on Saturday 25th March and we have our adult quiz night on Friday 21st April.

Friday 24th March is a non uniform day in return for donating an Easter egg to the Bingo event.

Our next PTFA meeting will take place on Wednesday 29th March at 6.00 p.m.

World Book Day

We are looking forward to seeing our children dressed up in their World Book day costumes on **Thursday 9th March**. Please note that we have changed the date of our World Book Day celebrations which will now not take place on 2nd March.

We would also like the children to bring in a favourite story book on that day. Please make sure that this book is marked with their name.

There will be book related activities taking place in class to celebrate books and reading and we will be launching our World Book Day 2023 reading challenge.

Children's Mental Health Week

Don't forget to encourage your child to take part in our activity to celebrate Children's Mental Health Week in which the children have been asked to draw a picture or write about an important person in their life.

Entries need to be returned to school by this Friday (3rd March). All children who take part will be awarded a certificate.

My Community Voice



Kent Police have introduced a new messaging system which allows members of the Public to receive messages directly from their local Police station and PCSOs.

All that sign up to the system will receive updates on various things such as community events; latest scam alerts; crime prevention advice as well as personal messages from your PCSO.

You can reply to messages to offer assistance with CCTV or information you may have about the message you received.

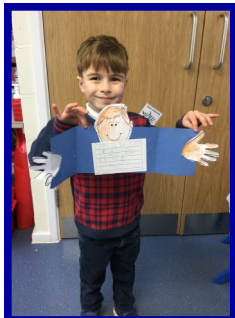
Please sign up online on the 'My Community Voice' Kent website to start receiving updates.

www.mycommunityvoicekent.co.uk

Other News and Reminders...

- Please remember that we don't allow smoking (including vaping) on any part of the school site. We would kindly ask that cigarettes are extinguished and vaping products put away before you come through the school gates.
- Year 6 parents will have heard this week as to the secondary allocations for their children. In the event of any disappointment, which is resulting in you considering making an appeal, please get in touch with either Miss Talbot or the Year 6 team as we may be able to offer advice and provide up to date information about your child's attainment, progress and engagement that could be submitted with appeal paperwork.
- It has been an absolute pleasure to get our class assemblies back up and running again. To allow Mrs Fagg time to settle in, Ladybirds assembly will not take place on Friday 3rd March. This will be rescheduled for later in the year. Butterflies assembly will take place on Friday 10th March.

Caught on camera this month...



Sports Report

Year 3 Swimming

We have been pleased to once again secure swimming lessons for our Year 3 children at Ashford Prep School. Swimming is an immensely valuable skill to have – being able to swim can save lives as well as being an excellent form of exercise which can remain a recreation for life.

All children from classes Bumblebees and Dragonflies attend a weekly swimming lesson over an 8 week period. The children are taught in small groups, appropriate to their swimming ability, each led by qualified swimming coaches (also lifeguard qualified) from the Ashford Prep School.

The children are really enjoying their lessons—those who are proficient swimmers have had the opportunity to extend their skills and those children who lack confidence in the water or who were unable to swim have made great progress.

We hope to be able to continue this arrangement with the prep school next year.

