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Message from Miss Talbot

Opal: Going for Gold

It's hard to believe that we have been running OPAL lunch playtimes for almost two years now. Over that time we have seen a dramatic change to the lunchtime provision for our children, offering a huge range of engaging activities including amongst other things, role play, wheeled play, digging areas, water play, craft area, a stage, music, den building, climbing opportunities and sand pits—there really is something for everyone.

A huge amount of our resourcing has come from donations—this has been a phenomenal help. So thank you for the flower pots, drainpipes, log cuts, buckets, tyres, cable drums, dressing up clothes, cones, crash barriers and pallets—we are truly grateful. Please keep these coming in—we can always make use of your unwanted items and turn them into play based opportunities!

As part of our participation with OPAL we have a final assessment of our provision in July—we are aiming for at least a gold award—to reflect the hard work that has gone into transforming play opportunities at Godinton. To help us on the last part of our journey we are looking for some further donations—a rubble chute (which the children can crawl through), extra large cable drums (which the children can climb on) and we can't get enough dressing up clothes.

We will be sending out an OPAL parent survey after Easter as we are keen to see your views on how you view the changes to lunchtimes. Your engagement with this would be much appreciated.



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Getting Out and About

This term has been filled with adventure and hands-on learning as our children ventured beyond the classroom to explore new places, make connections with their curriculum, and enjoy time together in the fresh air.



Year 2 had a truly memorable visit to our capital city. After travelling to London on the coach, the excitement really began when the children boarded the Uber Boat for a journey from the O2, along the River Thames to Westminster Pier. As they sailed down the river on a beautiful sunny day, the children spotted many of the famous landmarks they have been learning about during their Great Fire of London topic, including St Paul's Cathedral, Big Ben, the Tower of London, and the Monument.

Seeing these iconic places in real life brought their history learning to life, and it was wonderful to hear the children making connections between the sights before them and the stories they had explored in class.

After disembarking at Westminster, the group enjoyed a picnic lunch in Jubilee Gardens, right next to the London Eye, before finishing the day with a well-deserved play in the park. The behaviour of the children was outstanding and we had so many lovely comments from other passengers onboard the boat. We were really proud of them all.



As part of their geography fieldwork, Year 4 visited the charming village of **Chilham** to carry out a village study. The children spent the day comparing life in Chilham with that of their hometown, Ashford, observing differences in buildings, facilities, transport and community spaces.

A real highlight of the trip was meeting pupils from **Chilham Primary School**. Our children had the chance to ask questions, share experiences and discover what daily life is like for children growing up in a village setting. This personal connection helped deepen their understanding and made their fieldwork even more meaningful.



We are so fortunate to have **Godinton House** right on our doorstep—it provides the perfect location for all sorts of learning experiences. Year 1 enjoyed a beautiful day

exploring the grounds of **Godinton House**. The trip began with a walk through the surrounding fields, as they made their way from school, through the **Godinton Park Estate** and up to the house.

When they arrived, the pupils explored the gardens and visited the greenhouse, discovering different plants and learning about how they grow. After a relaxing picnic lunch in the grounds, they set off on their return walk to school—tired but happy after a day full of fresh air and discovery.

Wonderful World Book Day

Day



This year's World Book Day was a wonderful celebration of stories, imagination and the joy of reading. Instead of dressing up, our children took part in a range of creative and engaging activities that brought books to life in new and exciting ways.

The day included a book buzz session all about graphic novels. Children explored how pictures and words work together to tell a story, comparing different styles of illustration and discussing what makes this format so engaging. Many discovered new authors and genres they hadn't tried before—a brilliant way to broaden reading horizons.

Another highlight of the day was our paired reading sessions, where older and younger pupils came together to share books. It was lovely to see children reading aloud, listening carefully and chatting enthusiastically about their favourite stories.

Year R also enjoyed a very special offsite visit to the Gulbenkian Theatre in Canterbury to watch a performance of the Gruffalo's Child which they thoroughly enjoyed. For many this was the first time they had experienced live theatre and they sat mesmerised throughout.

Although we didn't dress up this year, the creativity on display was just as impressive! We had so many amazingly creative toilet roll book characters, inspired by well-loved stories. From colourful animals to brave heroes and spectacular villains, the results were imaginative, unique and a real celebration of the characters we treasure in children's literature.

Give a Book a New Home

To continue the reading excitement into Term 5, we are planning to create our very own Book Swap Shed. To help us fill it, we invite you to have a clear out of any unwanted books you might have at home which your children no longer read. Donations of good-quality children's fiction and non-fiction books can be brought into school and placed in the collection boxes in the foyer after Easter. Some books will go into our Book Swap Shed and others will go into our class libraries.

We will update you on our Book Swap Shed plans after Easter but we hope this new space will give children the chance to choose stories freely, swap books they've enjoyed, and share the love of reading with one another throughout the summer term.



National Year of Reading

This year is the UK's National Year of Reading—an opportunity for schools and parents to show our children the importance of reading and to create a life long love of books and literature.

Check out the following article which talks about the important role that parents have in developing their child's reading interest and the impact this can have.

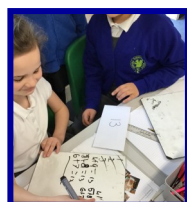
<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/parents-urged-to-read-more-to-boost-childrens-life-chances>

World Maths Day

We were excited to celebrate World Maths Day on Wednesday 25th March. This year's theme, "United by Numbers," highlighted the belief that every child can learn and thrive in mathematics when given the right support and provided a wonderful opportunity for our children to explore their mathematical thinking.

Throughout the day, some of the children also had the chance to take part in live, worldwide maths competitions hosted by Mathletics – a fun and engaging way to connect with learners across the globe.

As part of our school's ongoing focus on developing reasoning and problem-solving skills, each year group delivered a special maths session linked to the theme of number. These activities were designed to be hands-on, enjoyable, and accessible for all.



Multiply your Skills this Easter

Why is learning multiplication facts so important?

When children know their times tables, mental arithmetic becomes easier. Learning and practising times tables also helps children to understand number and number relationships, and to see patterns in numbers. These skills will help them to master key concepts and enable them to solve maths problems with confidence.

Multiplication Times Table Check (MTC) – An Easter Challenge for Years 3–6

The MTC is a statutory assessment check that Yr 4 children sit in June. The MTC has 25 questions across all times tables, up to 12×12 . The check is completed on an iPad and children must enter an answer within 6 seconds. There really isn't time to count on fingers so speedy recall is essential. This Easter, we challenge parents and children to complete an MTC style check. Who will score highest? Who can make the greatest improvement? Click here to start the challenge <https://urbrainy.com/mtc/test>



Burst Pipe Update

I am really pleased to tell you that the final repairs and redecoration have now been completed in our five Upper School classrooms impacted by burst pipes back in January.

I am immensely grateful for everyone's patience and flexibility over the past three months as we navigated our way through temporary classroom spaces and lots of timetable changes. The children have taken the changes in their stride and our staff have been very patient but I know everyone will be pleased to get back to normal after Easter.

All five classrooms have been recarpeted and Eagles room has been redecorated. We still have some items of furniture to replace but everyone will be back in the right classrooms after Easter and we will have full use of the hall and IT suite once again.

Pedal Power

It's been a busy term for our cyclists with both Year 1 and Year 5 having cycling activities in school. For Year 1 this was an opportunity to develop cycle confidence on the playground and for Year 5 the chance to engage with Level 2 Bikeability training which takes place out on local roads.



Last week, our cycling training partners, Cycle Circle, introduced pupils in Years 4 to 6 to an exciting new immersive learning experience. Using iPads and a specially designed app, the children were able to simulate real-life cycling scenarios without ever leaving the classroom.

The interactive programme guided pupils through a variety of road situations—junctions, crossings, traffic lights and potential hazards—encouraging them to make safe decisions just as they would on a real bike. As they navigated each challenge, the children had to think carefully about road signs, traffic flow, the behaviour of other road users, and the safest actions to take.

This innovative activity proved to be an excellent way to strengthen road safety awareness, decision-making skills, and confidence as future cyclists. It complemented our practical cycling training brilliantly, offering the children a safe and engaging environment in which to develop their understanding of how to stay safe on the roads.

We are grateful to Cycle Circle for providing this opportunity and for continuing to support our pupils' cycling education in such creative and meaningful ways.

New Starters 2026

On Thursday 16th April (during the Easter holidays), parents will be told if their child has been successful in gaining a place in our 2026 Reception cohort.

Once we return to school after Easter we will be sending out further details to new starter parents, including the dates of all our transition events taking place over the summer—this includes our parent information evening, Stay and Play and Storytime Sessions, and an invitation to come and join us for lunch.

Our Reception team will be starting visits to nurseries in the summer in order to start to get to know the children and find out more about them from their key workers.

Please let us know if there is anything specific we need to know about your child before they start with us, such as any particular special educational needs, so that we can start to plan accordingly.

Comic Fundraising

We loved seeing everyone come into school in crazy clothes to raise money for Comic Relief. Our children walked through the gates in clashing colours, with clothes on backwards and as pensioners, bananas and clowns. We even had our very own dinosaur on the field at lunchtime. Everyone's amazing efforts helped us to raise £443 for the charity. Well done!



PTFA Update

It's been a hectic term for our PTFA who have been busy fundraising for a new sound system for the school hall and for some additional resources to extend our Forest School provision.



Easter Bingo last Saturday was a lovely afternoon with many families going home with bags of Easter eggs and some children, with very large cuddly toys! Thank you so much to everyone who brought in a donation and to all of you who came along to support.

This term also saw the return of our children's talent show—'Godinton's Got Talent'. It's been over 10 years since we've run this event at Godinton but talent certainly hasn't waned during this time as we were treated to 18 spectacular acts. This included a magic act, comedians, musicians, dance acts, singers and gymnasts—the children were utterly amazing and we were very proud of them all. Congratulations to Freddie who was the winner in the dance category, Lucy and Poppy our variety act winners, Perryn who won in the singing category and Oakley and Noah who were our winning music act. Start practising now for next year's event!



Saturday 13th June is our next event—our Summer Fair. The more helpers we have, the more stalls and activities we will be able to offer. If you are able to help at this, or any other event, please contact the PTFA at ptfa@godinton.kent.sch.uk

£20.26 for 2026

This initiative has got off to a great start with so many creative ideas taking place for fundraising for our PTFA. Our total is already up to an amazing £800!

The idea is really simple—the challenge is for every child to raise £20.26 between now and November. How they do this is up to them. It could be a sponsored event or donations in return for helping others.

Getting set up to join in with this campaign is simple...

Follow the link below to the Godinton Superkind page. Click on the 'Join this Campaign' button at top of the page. Create an account as a 'Child/Parent' (you are primarily creating an account as your child so please use their name). As parent or guardian you will then need to approve the account and fundraiser via email.

<https://superkind.org/campaign/godinton-primary-ptfa-20-26-for-2026>

Our children have made a brilliant start to their fundraising efforts. Kiera has raised £243 by litter picking—her aim is to collect 26 bags of litter,



whilst Ivy has been very busy completing a sponsored scooter around Canterbury—originally planned as a 26 minute scooter and ending up covering over 4 miles!



Isabella M has also been busy, having raised nearly £200 and Lucas and Sophie have raised £50 each. Amazing!!

Certificates will be handed out once children meet the £20.26 target and anyone who exceeds the target will be entered into a draw with the chance to win a prize. Badges for all participants will be handed out in November and there will be a special treat for the class that raises the most money.

Other News and Reminders...

- We were really sorry to say goodbye to **Buster Gibbons** who has taught guitar lessons at **Godinton** for the past 10 years. **Buster** was a fantastic guitar teacher bringing out musical talent in around 50 children each year. We are pleased that **Mrs Kelleher** will be picking up **Buster's** strings and delivering guitar lessons on a private basis on **Mondays** during the school day. Parents of those children who currently have guitar lessons have been contacted to see whether they wish their child's lessons to continue with **Mrs Kelleher**.
- Our school attendance remains high—well done everyone. 104 children had 100% attendance in terms 3 and 4 which is amazing. Certificates are coming round this week.
- Thank you to everyone who completed our social media survey—we had 73 responses which provided some useful feedback for us to consider, especially around the possibility of a school Facebook account.
- Please can I ask everyone to avoid bring hot drinks or energy drinks onto the school playground at pick up. We have recently had a near miss, scalding incident with a take away coffee.

Caught on camera this month...



Sports Report

Infant Agility and Year 4 to 6 Football Tournament



Mrs Ellis and Mrs Spain were delighted to take a fantastic group of children to the recent Infant Agility event at the Stour Centre. From start to finish, the children represented our school brilliantly, showing enthusiasm, determination, and wonderful team spirit. Throughout the afternoon, the children took part in six different activities designed to test their agility and coordination. They threw, jumped and ran with great energy, cheering one another on and giving each event their very best effort. The excitement reached its peak during the final relay races. Their hard work paid off as they secured an impressive 8th place overall among the competing schools. We are incredibly proud of every child who took part. Well done, team!

Last week, ten pupils from year 4 – year 6 took part in the A&DPSSA 2026 Football Tournament. The boys played excellently throughout, taking part in five matches across the afternoon. They showed great sportsmanship and played brilliantly as a team, missing out on a place in the semi-final only due to goal difference. There were stand out performances from Elliott who controlled the game well from central midfield, Reggie who defended well at the back and Ben W who showed skill on the wing. Our top goal scorers from the tournament were Ben TR who was calm and confident in front of goal and Henry who crossed the ball into the goal with superb accuracy scoring an incredible goal from the corner flag. Overall, the boys played very well and should all be proud of themselves for their performances and positive attitude.