



Erasmus trip to Poland

Our children have just returned from our first ever Erasmus trip. Miss Talbot led a party of 8 children, who flew out of Heathrow, to spend a week in the Polish town of Tychy, working in our Polish partner school alongside 8 children from our Belgian partner school. Miss Talbot was accompanied by Miss Ricketts and Mr Cook.

Godinton is the only primary school in Kent which has chosen to take part in the Erasmus programme. We have been incredibly lucky to have Mrs Walby, Charlotte and Matthew Davies' grandmother, whose job is to initiate and lead Erasmus projects. She knew that our desire to offer our pupils the widest and richest education possible would mean that we would jump at the chance to be involved in Erasmus.

What makes Godinton so special is our desire to enrich the education we offer to our pupils. Ofsted and LEAs place schools under a lot of pressure to focus solely on SATs results, as these are the headline figures craved by politicians. A great many schools do just this and consequently do indeed achieve very high results in the SATs exams. But at what cost? Our governors should be applauded for believing that education is about developing every aspect of a child, and that creating such things as self confidence, social

confidence and a fully rounded character can only be achieved if we value a wide, enriched curriculum, which includes the arts and travel.

Can I say how lucky I am to have colleagues who work tirelessly to organise and run these extra activities. Mr Cook and Miss Ricketts were both shattered after spending a week away with the pupils. But they would recognise that the work which Miss Talbot and Mrs Keller put into planning every single aspect of the trip was incredible. They both spent hours ensuring that every detail was organised to make the trip as safe and enjoyable as possible for the children. Despite what I and the governors wish to deliver to our pupils, if we didn't have staff as committed and professional as Miss Talbot, week long stays in Poland would simply not be possible.

And can I finally say that if our children were not so well behaved, we wouldn't contemplate flying them to Poland for a week! However, Daniel, Viktoria, Naranj, Katie, Josh, Victoria, Isabelle and Toby were a credit to the school, themselves and their parents! Well done to all.

Buildings Issues

The reception area extension should be completed in August. We will then need time to fit it out and to move our existing office into the new build, but we aim to have it open for use early in the new academic year. It will be very rewarding to finally have

a medical room and disabled toilet after 8 years of campaigning, as well as an entrance foyer which is actually fit for a school this size.

Once we have moved the school office from its current location, we hope to use the area as a new library. Our current library is tucked away at the back of the Reception classroom and isn't accessible to pupils. Relocating it to the area of our current foyer and office will provide sufficient space to create a large and accessible library. This will be our project for 2015-16.

Our architects are now drawing up plans which include an extension to the hall and kitchen, and a second small hall, in the area where the After School Club mobile currently is. Once the plans are completed, we will submit for planning permission over the summer break so that we can then apply for DfE funding in November of this year. We need planning permission before we can apply for the funding. Whilst there are no guarantees of success, we stand a very good chance of receiving the funding we require. And if we aren't successful this time, we will just keep trying until we are.

Godinton is a fantastic school, with the most committed staff any headteacher could wish for. The main issue affecting the quality of education we deliver to our pupils is the limitations of the building. As an academy, we can access the funds to address these buildings issues and I promise that we will do just that.

Year 3's French Invasion

On Thursday 18th June, 37 of our Year 3 children will be getting up before 5am to catch a coach and then a ferry to France! We will be spending the day at L'Ecole St Anne, our partner school in Hazebrouck France. We've never taken such young children abroad before. I know they are going to have an amazing day and a fantastic adventure.

Sports Days

Sports days approach! The parents of our children in Year R and 1 are able to follow their boys and girls as they compete in the different activities, because they take place in grids close to the running track.

For those with children in Middle and Upper School, you will be asked to sit on one side of the track whilst we have the children on the opposite side. Each year, some parents always come across to talk to their children about various things. Can I ask you to please stay on your side of the track and if there is something of desperate importance which you need your child to know, please just pass it on to the teacher and let us deal with it. I hope you can appreciate that controlling nearly 200 children and making sure they all get to the start point for their races in good time is made immeasurably harder if we have parents wandering amongst the pupils

CBeebies

CBBC have decided that they would like to include our school in the programme they are making about school dinners and hence they will be in our hall, filming during the lunch break on Tuesday 16th June!

This week we will be sending out to parents the official BBC release forms. If you are happy to have your child filmed, you must complete the form and return it to us. That doesn't mean that your child *will* be filmed. I can't guarantee stardom or a solo spot for a song and dance. But if your child doesn't have a signed consent form, they won't be anywhere in shot when the filming takes place.

The presenters will want to talk to some of the children, as well as to Hazel, so there is the possibility of actually appearing on the programme.

During the lunch service, a food critic will sit with the children and eat a meal. The critic will then score our cooking and the whole dinner service, in front of an assembly of the children in the afternoon. Tuesday 16th is also Upper School sports day, so the assembly may only involve Years R-3. Once I have the exact details I will let you know!

Louden Wood Official Opening

You may be aware that the Kentish Stour Countryside Partnership have recently undertaken improvement work in the Louden Woods play area. One of their development officers came into our school last year and worked with some of our children to identify the type of play equipment they would like to see in the woods.

KSCP plan to have a formal opening of the new facilities at 2pm on Tuesday 23rd June. Some of our children will be attending and they will be the first children to try out the new facilities. KSCP have invited any parents and preschool aged children to come along to the opening as well. The KM will be there taking photographs. If you wish to see the new facilities head to Louden Woods play park on the 23rd.

Young Voices

Miss Ricketts and Mrs Fagg have completed the auditions for the Young Voices choir and the successful children will find out very shortly. If your child is lucky enough to be selected to participate in this event, I REALLY STRONGLY suggest that you keep Friday 29th January 2016 free. This is the provisional date for the choir to perform at the O2 arena. I know from experience that this will be one of the most memorable events your child ever participates in. Don't miss it!