



# Godwin Newsletter - 4th November 2022

preparing pupils for lifelong success



## Head Teacher's Message

At Godwin there are so many fantastic things happening that we want to share with you. We firmly believe in providing as many high-quality opportunities for our children as we are able to, rather than feel constrained by the National Curriculum. Our integrated approach to the curriculum and commitment to enrichment activities underpins teaching and learning here.

If we are to prepare our children for lifelong success, we need to give them the knowledge, skills, experience and confidence that will equip them for this.

Each week in our newsletter, we will focus on one area - letting you know what the children have been doing and how it contributes towards developing our school to be an even better place to be a pupil. We hope that this will give you an insight into life at Godwin, and make you as proud of the school as we are.

This year, the governors and Senior Leadership Team have agreed that our priority areas are as follows:

- To further improve teaching and learning so that our children do even better at school
- To support underachieving groups of children to attain well
- To ensure that children with additional needs make good progress
- To develop our Subject Leaders
- To support the health and wellbeing of children and staff
- To further develop our community links

Obviously, we will continue to work on numerous things at the same time, but our strategic vision will centre on these aspects.



# Gardening at Godwin



We're very proud of our garden and the excellent learning our pupils do there. An important part of our school vision is 'to seek and encourage talent'. Perhaps a child here is a future Chelsea Flower Show winner; maybe they'll simply enjoy having an allotment as an adult. Unless we give our pupils a chance to explore, we'll never know where their skills and passions lie. The mental and emotional benefits of working with nature and endeavouring to grow things are also well documented. We were thrilled that the Royal Horticultural Society recognised our work in this area with a five star gardening award. This week, we'd like to explore what happens in this much-loved corner of the school.

## Taking Care of the Garden

Our Year 3 and 4 children collaborate to keep the garden in good working order. So far this year, they have cleared, weeded, and raked the beds, digging peat-free compost in to nourish the soil sustainably. Working as a team, they continuously pick up leaves and bag them to create leaf mould which will feed our plants next year. Additionally, pupils gathered green (decaying plants and food waste) and brown (leaves and twigs) material for our compost heap. They built the heap using a 2 parts brown: 1 part green layering system to get the right mix of carbon and nitrogen – the bin is now almost full!



## Planting

Our pupils sowed a perennial wildflower meadow using a grid system and will observe the first cotyledon leaves and then the first true leaves of each plant; the seeds used were poppies, California poppies, cornflowers, nigella (love-in-a-mist) and calendula flowers. To make room for this project, pupils first had to clear our mint shrubs and replant them elsewhere. All the children love smelling this herb and it's a great talking point when discussing how we experience using plants in our everyday lives.

Each class has also made 'bulb lasagnes' by planting layers of early, mid and late spring bulbs including crocuses, snowdrops, grape hyacinths and narcissi 'Thalia' and 'tête-à-tête'. They also planted softneck garlic, alliums, purple and red pansies and tulips.

The garden will be a riot of colour next spring – we can hardly wait to see it!



# A Rich Curriculum

Our students benefit enormously from the expertise of their gardening tutor, Ms Patel-Ellis. This means the children are growing to understand the theory behind the actions they take during the gardening session. For example, the children learned about compost and types of soil (such as sand, clay, loam and silt) in order to better understand what plants need to grow and how nature recycles nutrients. Pupils looked at different types of seeds and discovered how they come in all different shapes, sizes and colours, as well as how a seed forms after blooming and pollination. They found out how we can make new plants by collecting and resowing these seeds, as well as when in the year to do so.

Children also talked about why we are planting flowers – to attract pollinators and make a green corridor with local spaces such as West Ham Park, Wanstead Flats and Epping Forest plus neighbourhood planters and gardens.

**Each class has also discussed:**

- pollen, nectar and how bees make honey
- how plants and flowers make us happy
- how to read key information on seed and bulb packets
- folklore and mythology linked to the harvest moon
- how herbs are used for recipes and remedies, as well as their uses through history
- how root cuttings work
- the creatures living in the garden (caterpillars on last year's cabbages, ladybird eggs, spiders and worms)



## Supporting Other Subjects

Real learning does not confine itself neatly in a box, which is why we love working across the curriculum here at Godwin. Gardening naturally supports our pupils in their science lessons.

For example, the children learned about bulbs and compared different storage organs such as edible bulbs i.e. onions and garlic, potatoes (tubers), sweet potatoes (tuber roots), ginger (rhizomes), and dahlias (tubers). They discussed dormancy (how bulbs go to sleep for periods) and how bulbs have 'clocks' inside that tell them when to 'wake up'. This helps to prepare pupils to learn about life cycles in Year 5.

Each class talked about which way up we plant bulbs and thus where the roots and shoots grow from and why (pointy side up for the shoots towards the sun, air and rain, roots down to find food and water in the soil). This contributes hugely to their understanding of what plants need to live, which children study during Year 3 science lessons.

Additionally, finding out how flower markings and leaf shapes can be used to identify and group plants together in families and by genus and species introduces a key 'working scientifically' skill: classification.



## What do the children think?

We asked Years 3 and 4 what they thought about gardening. 90% of pupils told us they liked helping in the school garden. 33% of children count gardening as a current hobby, while a further 35% would like to take it up in the future.



"I feel so excited when I'm in the garden; it's always really fun." *Maryam* (Year 3)

"I like to feel the moisture of the dirt and help things grow." *Inayah* (Year 4)

"What I've learnt about herbs could be really helpful in the future." *Ruben* (Year 4)

"I've learnt there are so many different types of seeds in the world." *Anashe* (Year 3)

## Funding the Garden

We received a £200 voucher from the Royal Horticultural Society and this has enabled us to buy peat-free compost and bulbs. Ms Patel-Ellis kindly donated gardening gloves, a greenhouse and some seeds.



If you are in a position to donate items such as gardening tools, bulbs, seeds, plants, bird feeders, watering cans with roses, netting to protect beds or a hosepipe and spray gun we would be incredibly grateful.

Alternatively, if you have the skill to help us fix our greenhouses, this would be a huge help.



## Odd Socks Day

Anti-Bullying Week 2022 will take place from 14 to 18 November 2022 and has the theme *Reach Out*.

The week will kick off with **Odd Socks Day** on **Monday 14th November**, where adults and children wear odd socks to celebrate what makes us all unique.

Children and staff are encouraged to wear their favourite odd socks (yes this means picking a pair that doesn't match).

It's to symbolise that we are all different and that children should be themselves, accepting of one another and celebrating differences.



## Year 2 and Reception Tours

We will be welcoming and touring the school with prospective parents and carers of Year 2 and nursery-aged children over the next few weeks. This will give them the opportunity to see at firsthand what a fantastic experience Godwin children have.



Please share the following dates: 15th November, 29th November, 13th December and 10th January.

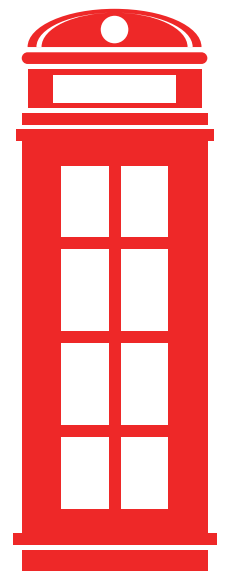


## COATS

The weather is now becoming very cold with rain showers impossible to rule out. Please make sure your child always brings a coat to school so that they can enjoy their time outside - a hoodie is not sufficient.

## WRITING COMPETITION

Do you love London? Do you like to write? If so, you could win £500 from The London Society. Enter their writing competition this month. You can write up to 500 words on any part of London's past, present or future - the theme is 'making connections'. It can be a report, an historical essay, a 'think piece', an imaginative story or even a poem. Visit <https://www.londonsociety.org.uk/page/loveletters> for more details.





# Get Caught Reading

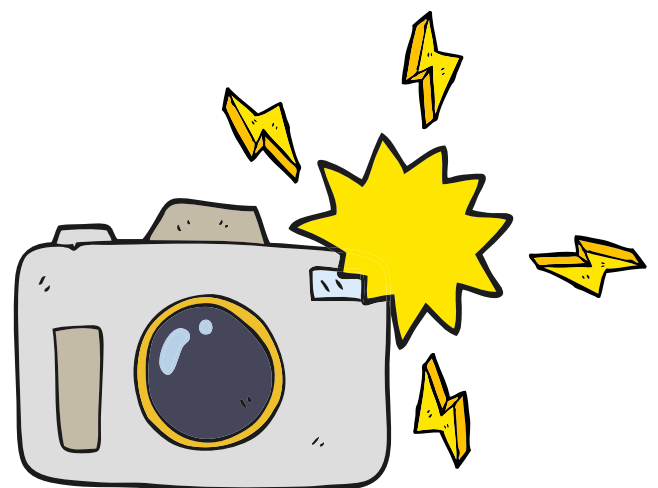


Thank you for all your entries so far! This week's winner is Maryam from 3B who used books to pass the time on a recent hospital visit.



If your child would like to enter, simply snap a photo of them reading in an unusual place and email it to: [info@godwin.newham.sch.uk](mailto:info@godwin.newham.sch.uk)

All entries will be uploaded to twitter, and the winner will receive a book of their choice.





As you can imagine, school budgets are very squeezed but at Godwin we firmly believe in providing a rich learning experience with lots of opportunities to make our curriculum 'come alive'. We desperately need to raise additional funding to ensure that we can continue to do this.

We would love to have an active PTA, with people giving as much or as little time as they are able to. Please don't feel that you need to make a huge commitment – many hands make light work and everything makes a difference.

# WE NEED YOU!

## Could you help with:

- selling cakes?
- designing fliers?
- selling raffle tickets?
- asking for raffle prize donations?

All help would be greatly appreciated – our children deserve the very best and we want to give it to them! Please email [info@godwin.newham.sch.uk](mailto:info@godwin.newham.sch.uk)



*People of all faiths, cultures, and backgrounds come together at memorials to honour the people who fought for our democratic freedom and way of life.*

*Armistice Day has been celebrated in the UK for a long time. It is a day to remember that fighting stopped at 11 a.m. on **November 11, 1918**, ending the First World War.*

***Article 38** says that governments can't let children younger than 15 fight in wars or join the military. Governments must do everything they can to protect and care for children who are hurt by war and armed conflicts.*

*Why is it important to remember and commemorate those who have fought in wars?  
How does this link to **Article 38** of the Convention?*

# Reading Volunteers

Do you enjoy reading?

Do you like to read with children?

Do you have a couple of hours free each week?

We would love members of our local community to help us with our reading volunteer programme. Reading with a volunteer each week helps develop our children's ability to read, their confidence and their comprehension skills. It also promotes a love of reading for pleasure. If you are able to dedicate time each week, please email: [info@godwin.newham.sch.uk](mailto:info@godwin.newham.sch.uk)



## EasyFundraising

Help raise funds for the school.

All you have to do is sign up to support us using the link below. Then every time you shop online, go through the Easyfundraising website or App and we'll receive a % of your spend as a free donation, at no cost to you to us. These donations really mount up and make a BIG difference! You can find our Easyfundraising page at:

[https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/friendsofgodwinpta/?  
utm\\_campaign=raise-more&utm\\_content=en-e1](https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/friendsofgodwinpta/?utm_campaign=raise-more&utm_content=en-e1)

# Well Done!

## Lining Up Cup

This week's winners are:

3B and 5M

Congratulations!

## Punctuality Cup

This week's winners are:

3B

Great effort!



# Mindfulness Corner

Every Friday this half term we will be sharing with you a link to a different group or organisation that have resources for mental health and wellbeing.

(Please Note: we are not endorsing any particular site nor are we ambassadors for it - but we are merely providing pointers towards sites that might be interesting/helpful).



This week we feature:

[www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk)

“Your well-being must never become an afterthought. It must be your first act.”

*Rasheed Ogunlaru*



# Achievement Awards

3B – Frankie: for persevering in her maths learning this week and embracing her mistakes

3K – Najah: for persevering in maths when adding 3-digit numbers

3I – Adam: for working collaboratively with his Learning Partner.

3Z – Minha: for persevering with her reading

4K – Maheen: for persevering with his learning in maths when subtracting with renaming

4T – Andreea: for demonstrating perseverance and increased confidence during swimming lessons

4Y – Ayesha: for her enthusiasm and perseverance in class

4Z – Saifan: for persevering with subtraction word problems

5J – Nathanael: for choosing to be brave and collaborate with his Macbeth drama team.

5M – Mason: for really thinking about his choices and producing a fantastic collaborative performance of a Macbeth scene.

5V – Nathan: for persevering in all areas of the curriculum this week.

6B – Jasmine: for considering her choices and being an excellent ambassador for Godwin.

6K – Rayan: for displaying excellent learning behaviours across all subjects.

6O – Mihran: for considering his choices and being an excellent role model at the Debate Mate launch.

6W – Isabelle: for consistently considering her choices and setting an excellent example for others.