



Beginners' Explorers



A letter from the Headmistress

I could not be more proud of the Godstowe community this week. As you will know, we have welcomed the ISI Inspection Team in from Wednesday and Thursday and have worked with them all week on our Regulatory Compliance Inspection, which has been due for some time. We look forward to publishing the report once it has gone through its official next steps and we will know more in the coming weeks. Needless to say, this has been a huge community effort with everyone pulling together to showcase Godstowe at its very best. I look forward to seeing you all again from Monday and do rather feel like I am emerging from a week in my office, which has been unusual, as you know I like to be out and about with you all!

Thank you for being so responsive to the Parent Questionnaire we sent out on Monday and it has been very useful to read all responses which were gathered and shared with us by the team. The Positive Parenting Workshop on Tuesday morning was so well attended in the Sports Hall Gallery and it has been a joy to read your enthusiastic feedback on the session run by Mrs Moore and Mrs Hornett. We look forward to hosting the next one on Wednesday 1st February at 8.15am. Our recent netball and swimming matches have been very well-attended, which has been lovely to see and it was a delight to welcome Mr Marr-Johnson to Main School Assembly on Wednesday this week who spoke to the Form I to Fourths in his role as a distinguished geologist about energy sources. It is a pleasure to be the Head of Godstowe and as each week passes, our school community becomes ever stronger. Have a good weekend and see you for another action-packed week next week.

Kate Parky

Key Dates for next week

23rd January

- 13+ Common Entrance exams week
- International Week
- James Shone to speak to Main School pupils
- 4.30pm James Shone to speak to parents
- 4.30pm U8-U11 Swimming vs Maltman's Green (away)

24th January

- U10-U12 Swimming vs Lambrook (away)

25th January

- Orchestral Collaboration at Queen Anne's School
- 4.50pm U12A-D Netball vs Wycombe Abbey (away)
- U9 and U10 Swimming at St George's Ascot (away)

26th January

- Lodge and Main School Mufti Day
- 3pm U9-U11 Swimming Div 10 at St Helen's, Northwood (away)

27th January

- 2pm U9 Netball vs Lambrook (away)
- 4.30pm Student Recital

28th January

- 9am U10A Netball Tournament at St George's (away)
- 9am U13A Lacrosse and U12A-C Netball vs Abbots Hill (away)
- 10.15am U12A and U13A-C Netball vs Abbots Hill (away)



Lodge have been very excited this week about the arrival of our worm farm, situated between Nursery and the Beginners building. We have been learning a great deal about what the worms need to be fed and have been giving them some of our leftover coffee grounds, tea leaves, bread, pasta, vegetable peelings and fruit skins (but no citrus!).

Transition, Kindergarten and Beginners enjoyed an assembly this week on being resilient. We looked at the example of a swallow, who travels for thousands of miles each Spring from Africa to return to her nest in Scotland. We learnt that even when things are tough, we need to keep trying, stay calm and ask for help if necessary.

This week we have continued our Space theme in Nursery. The children enjoyed making 'm' for moon sponge paintings, making name rockets and exploring the story of Whatever Next to role play. In cookery we made banana and apple oat cookies (moon rocks). The Number Zoo character of the week was Tiger Ten and the children enjoyed making some paper cup tigers. We have also been thinking about our hopes and dreams and have recorded these in our special magic envelopes to display in the classroom.

In Beginners, we have been enjoying our learning about Chinese New Year this week. We especially enjoyed listening to Angelina's mummy who came to speak to us all about the Chinese calendar and the special celebrations. We have made cards, lanterns, lucky red envelopes, and we have painted dragon pictures too. We also used our phonics skills to do some writing about the animals in the Great Race, and we used our ordinal number skills to describe the order they came in the race. Happy Chinese New Year, everyone.

Kindergarten started on their new topic, Antarctica, in Geography. As a cross curricular activity with Science, the children undertook an investigation into how blubber enables the animals living in this region to survive the cold weather. We concluded our Literacy 'Handa's Surprise' book review with an introduction to conjunctions.

Transition have been working hard at their division topic in Maths, learning how to group and share different amounts, using their times tables to help them. In Science, we have been looking at the seven different processes that all living things can do. We braved the cold weather to go on a Science walk around the grounds, identifying things that are living, dead or which have never been alive.



Main School



Well what a busy week!

On Monday Mrs Sweeney led her first assembly and spoke to the girls about Generosity and her 6T's of Generosity. See how many your daughter can remember! It was a fantastic assembly with a little cameo performance from Mrs Lee-Metcalf, Mrs MacDougall and Miss Palmer.



On Tuesday we held our first "Positive Parenting" course on Motivation. Thank you to all of you who took time out of your busy schedules to come and support our Wellbeing Team. Congratulations to Mrs Moore and Mrs Hornett, and the rest of the Wellbeing Team, on such a fantastic session. One parent even commented on how motivated they felt to go on with their day. The next course is on Wednesday 1st February and we can't wait to find out more!

On Wednesday we welcomed Mr Marr-Johnson into Main School assembly. He spoke to the children about his role as a geologist and finding a source for copper. He also spoke to the girls about energy usage in the world and different types of renewable energy. The girls found it very interesting with a couple saying, "We had no idea that type of job existed, it was really interesting."



Friday was back with our celebration assembly. Congratulations to all those girls who were awarded Sports Star, Boarders' of the Week, Typing Certificates, Accelerated Reader and Friday badges. The boarders' video always gets a giggle so make sure you watch that!

We hope you enjoy your Exeat and we wish our runners good luck this weekend!



A couple of new additions to the corridor next to Miss Bennett and Mrs Humphries' office. Lower School and Upper School "Worry Boxes" have appeared for girls to post their worries in to.

You don't have to put your name, but we might find it difficult to help you with your worry if we don't know who you are! Remember you can always talk to your Form Tutor or any member of staff about your worries.

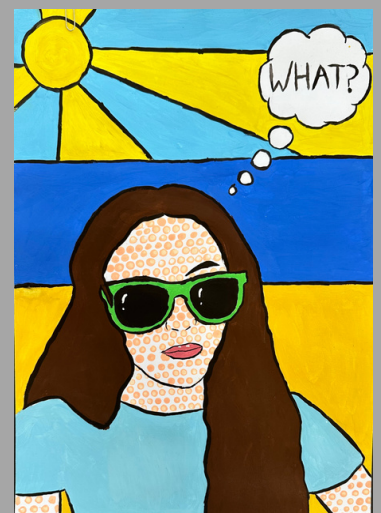
Name:	Tutor Group:
My worry is:	

Artwork of the week



Congratulations to India B and Florence M on their amazing pop art paintings!

The girls were presented with their certificates in our Main School Celebration assembly and everyone was very impressed.



Boarders' Corner



On Friday evening, Walker and Highlands joined together to celebrate the first week and a half back with some tasty Treatz and a movie night. We love visiting our senior house neighbours!

On Saturday, we started our day with super delicious breakfast to get us going. In Highlands, after breakfast, we finished off our prep ready for Monday and then we went into the music school to practise our beautiful music. After our hard work in the morning, we replenished our energy with some lunch before the much-anticipated Teams Calls. After speaking with our loved ones, off we went to our international weekend rehearsals, which are looking good so far and we cannot wait to share it with others! While the Lower's and senior houses were rehearsing, Form I and II were painting rocks with beautiful designs and things they are grateful for this year. We had so much fun that the time seemed to pass us by and in no time at all it was time for our supper. As it was Moana's birthday, she had an amazing time surrounded by her friends on her birthday table. For the Highlands movie night, the choice was...Moana!!

Our Sunday was a little bit different to normal, we started off by having the most important meal of the day...breakfast! And very soon we were in the coach off to Guildford. To start our fun day, we had an enjoyable and competitive game of bowling...the winner was Elizabeth with 121 points!! We then made our way to the Guildford shopping centre where Highlands enjoyed a scrumptious McDonalds. In no time at all, we went off with our adults and the shopping mania began! The most popular shop was Flying Tiger, where we brought lots of fun stationery and tuck. At supper we had a Sunday roast to finish off our exciting day.



[Click here to watch the Boarders' Video](#)



Poem of the Week

A Gorilla In A Shopping Mall
(Inspired by The One and Only Ivan based on a true story)
by Freya J

A gorilla in a shopping mall,
It does not seem right,
The space is so tight,
I am stuck on this page
A gorilla in a shopping mall
Trapped in a cage
Meant to be free
But forced to stay behind the door with a key
Lonely, desperate
Moaning, for freedom

Little girls and boys come
One hand on the window the other holding their mum
Staring deeply into the sad gorilla's eyes
Outside people shout
While the owner counts
How much money he has earned from the show

'Free the Gorilla' is what they yell
The enclosure is starting to smell
For no one will come
All you can hear is a hum
Of the gorilla singing for freedom.

After many weeks
The authorities speak
And take the gorilla away
To the zoo
Everyone knew
Once a gorilla is taken from the wild
It cannot be put back in the wild.

Run around
Play on the ground
In the trees
Or on the big mound
It has found a home
There are so many places to roam
A gorilla in a shopping mall is not right,
Finally the gorilla sees light.

Sports Snippets

The weather has not been in our favour this week and we have had to postpone a number of fixtures and practices but despite this we have managed to play the following matches:

Friday 13th January

U8 Netball

On Friday 13th January it was a Godstowe first with the U8 girls playing in a fixture! Our Red, Blue, Green and Yellow teams played against Lambrook with our Purple and Black teams playing against each other. It was a super event with the girls having their first taste of a fixture and hosting another school. Well done to all the girls involved - we are very proud of you!

Monday 16th January

Indoor Athletics

On Monday 16th January a small U12 and U13 squad went to Wycombe Abbey to compete in an Indoor Athletics Competition with the hope to qualify for the Buckinghamshire team! All the girls did so well competing in the various events on offer. A special well done to India who has been asked to join the Buckinghamshire team to take part in the Southeast Regional SportsHall Championships in February.

Swimming vs Crosfields

The U12s and U13s travelled to Crosfields School to take part in a gala on Monday. It was a great opportunity for some of the girls to have their first gala of the academic year. After some excellent races and some competitive swimming the girls came out victorious. Well done to all that swam!

Thursday 19th January

U8 and U9 swimming

The U8 and U9 girls hosted their first gala tonight and what a fantastic performance by all involved. It was lovely to see so many of the girls swimming so well and showing true grit and determination to succeed. After a closely fought gala the opposition pipped us to the post and came out victorious. Well done to all that swam!

U11A vs High March

Our M11's played a fantastic match against High March. They have been working so hard on their versatility these last few months and being strong all over the court. It has certainly paid off with them winning the game by over 20 goals! Well done girls.

Sofiya's book review

This year 6F are taking part in the Godstowe Book Awards. As a class they are reading one book each term and through doing so they are covering a variety of genres. Our Autumn term book was *Vote for Effie* by Laura Wood and the girls thoroughly enjoyed it. Each member of the class wrote a book review and Sofiya's was judged the best. Towards the end of the year, 6F will present the books to other children in the school and reveal which book they felt was the best.

I absolutely loved this book by Laura Wood and would 100% award it 5 stars!

I would award the first star for the amount of humour there is in this story. I really enjoyed how comedic Effie and the rest of her group are.

The second star is for how Laura Wood has given Effie and her peers some unique personalities to match their unique selves. I love how Effie is so passionate about her school and for fighting for what is right. I also love that Effie's friends are very supportive and encouraging.

The third star is awarded for all the mixed emotions such as: happy, angry, upset, and more. I really enjoyed reading this book. It was like riding a rollercoaster full of mixed emotions.

The fourth star is for the protagonist, Euphemia (Effie) Kostas. She is a flawless lead role due to her resilience, motivation and her strong self belief. For me as a young girl, I really enjoyed her ability to keep going.

The fifth and final star goes to how inspiring this story is, it really motivates girls to make a noise. The message I received from the book was, ' Even if you have lost a small competition you haven't really lost in your heart and mind because you keep going and don't stop' I really loved reading this book and I hope you do too.



What Parents & Carers Need to Know about

TWITTER

AGE RESTRICTION
13+

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Twitter is a social media network which allows users to post short messages ('tweets') of up to 280 characters. Tweets can consist of text, photos, videos, audio, links, polls and GIFs – often linked by hashtags if they share a common theme or message. Hashtags receiving high levels of interest are said to be 'trending'. Twitter users can engage with other people's posts by liking, retweeting (sharing) or tweeting back (commenting on). Since the entrepreneur Elon Musk acquired Twitter in October 2022 for \$44 billion, he has implemented several major changes to the platform.

INTERACTION WITH STRANGERS

Tweets are public by default, meaning that anyone can view and interact with posts, follow someone and send direct messages. The concern here is that young people may therefore connect and communicate with strangers. Some individuals may follow a young person's Twitter account simply because they have similar interests; however, others may turn out to have more sinister intentions.

FIXATION ON VIEW COUNT

Twitter has recently introduced a 'view count' feature – telling users how many people have seen their tweet (even if they haven't reacted to it). Previous research has found that unfavourable comparisons with other social media users can cause young people to experience feelings of insecurity, jealousy and low self-esteem – leading to an obsession with increasing their numbers.

TROLLS AND BULLYING

The anonymity offered by fake profiles encourages some users to send tweets designed to provoke a reaction; to disrupt conversations; to spark an argument; or to harass the recipient. Such trolling and bullying can impact the mental wellbeing of both the target and anyone who witnesses it. Encourage your child to come to you if they experience such behaviour on Twitter, or if they see it taking place.

PAID-FOR VERIFICATION

Previously, if a Twitter profile displayed a blue tick icon, it meant that the owner – usually a celebrity or a major organisation – had been verified as genuine. Now, however, anyone can pay for a Twitter Blue subscription to receive the tick, with the platform carrying out limited checks on the account's authenticity. This could easily lead to more fake accounts impersonating real people or companies.

CONTENT MODERATION CHANGES

In late 2022, Twitter stated that their 'policy enforcement will rely more heavily on de-amplification of violative content: freedom of speech, but not freedom of reach'. No policies have changed yet, but this wording suggests they may limit who can see posts rather than removing them. While supporting free speech, this could encourage an environment where some toxic content remains online.

HIJACKED HASHTAGS

The hashtag (#) is one of Twitter's most recognisable facets, allowing users to find specific trends or topics. But the sheer volume of tweets each hour can rapidly distort a hashtag's meaning: an initially innocent search term can quickly end up returning inappropriate results. This is common with 'trending' hashtags, as people know that using them will get their tweet seen by a larger audience.

Advice for Parents & Carers

SET ACCOUNTS TO PRIVATE

To reduce some of the fear of your child's tweets being seen and shared by anyone, you can always make their account protected. This means that your child has to give approval for another user to view their posts. You can change Twitter's privacy settings so that your child can't be messaged directly by other people on the platform and their geographical location won't be shared.

EXPLORE THE NEW SETTINGS

Previously, any user could reply to anyone else's tweets. However, the new conversation settings let your child determine who can reply to their posts – either by selecting everyone (the default option), people they follow or only people they mention (using the @ symbol). This improvement has given users extra control, providing them with more protection from trolls and online abuse.

FOSTER CRITICAL THINKING

It can be difficult for anyone to ascertain if something online is real or false, but particularly for young people. Encourage your child to check several reputable sources to determine if a story they've seen is true; remind them to watch out for scams and think about the message's possible motive. Emphasise that it's not a good idea to retweet something if they aren't sure it's correct.

PAUSE BEFORE POSTING

It's important that young people think about what they're about to post and whether they might regret it later. Twitter has developed 'nudges': little prompts which appear if someone is about to tweet using harmful or offensive language. These nudges promote more positive online behaviour by giving users an opportunity to pause and consider their words before they post something.

ENGAGE SAFETY MODE

When Safety Mode is activated, Twitter checks for abusive or spammy behaviour such as hurtful language or repeated negative replies. The platform then flags these suspect accounts and blocks them from responding to your child's tweets. The autoblock function then prevents these accounts from interacting with your child's again for seven days.

BLOCK, REPORT OR MUTE

If someone is upsetting your child on Twitter, you can block and report them. Blocking stops them from messaging or following your child, while reporting an account alerts Twitter to investigate possible misuse. The 'mute' feature, meanwhile, keeps tweets from a specific account (or which include certain words) out of your child's timeline. The other user won't know that they've been muted.

BE CAREFUL WHO TO FOLLOW

As accounts are no longer being as rigorously verified under the 'blue tick' system, it's essential that young Twitter users understand what this means, in terms of people not necessarily being who they claim. Anyone who your child only knows online is still a stranger, regardless of how long they've been communicating for. Remind your child never to disclose personal information on social media.

Meet Our Expert

Dr Claire Sutherland is an online safety consultant, educator and researcher who has developed and implemented anti-bullying and cyber safety policies for schools. She has written various academic papers and carried out research for the Australian government comparing internet use and sexting behaviour of young people in the UK, USA and Australia.



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