

Dear Parent/Guardian

You will be aware from the October newsletter that TWGGS girls did extremely well in last year's GCSE examinations, a real credit to themselves and their teachers. We now have the national progress measures for 2015, which indicated that the school truly excelled, in terms of value-added scores and progress made from KS2 to KS4, even from the high points attained by all of our girls on entry to the school. The value-added score of 1,049.1 places TWGGS in the 1st percentile range nationally (as in 2014), which is no mean feat when girls arrive with such strong prior attainment.

New this year in the Department for Education league tables is "Progress 8"; this is mandatory from 2016, but TWGGS, along with many other schools, chose to opt in early. This score reflects the progress made from KS2 to GCSE across 8 subjects, in comparison with similar pupils nationally, with English and Maths counting double, and there being a requirement to include at least three further "English Baccalaureate" subjects (which are languages, sciences, History and Geography) in the eight subjects counted. Progress 8 gives an indication of whether, as a group, pupils in a school made above or below average progress compared to similar pupils in other schools; for all mainstream pupils nationally, the average Progress 8 score will be 0.

Our Progress 8 score is 0.82: the greater the Progress 8 score, the greater the progress made in comparison to the national average of pupils with similar prior attainment. A score of 1 reflects a complete grade's progress above the national average for pupils of similar ability, therefore our Progress 8 score really is an exceptional achievement for girls and their teachers. Many congratulations.

Deputy Headteacher – Mrs Wybar

Sadly, Dr Brimsted retires from her post at TWGGS at the end of this academic year, and I am delighted to inform you that, after a competitive selection process, Miss Parkinson has been appointed Deputy Headteacher from September 2016 onwards. We wish both every happiness and success.

TWGGS Babies – Mrs Wybar

I am delighted to inform you that both Mrs Davis and Mrs Murray have given birth during this half-term, and all are happy and thriving. We wish Marmaduke Robert Davis and Eden Charlotte Murray long, happy and successful lives!

Outcomes of Parental Consultation on Reports - Mr Smith, Assistant Headteacher

In Autumn Term 2015, parents were asked to take part in a survey to review what they would most like to see in their daughter's reports. Surveys were conducted during the Tutor Information Evening for Year 7, the Lower Sixth Information Evening, and the Assessment Information Evenings held in October for Year 8, 9, and 10 parents.

Over 430 responses were received, and the following five categories stood out as by far the most important to parents:

1. The depth of knowledge and understanding your daughter has of topics studied.
2. The effort and motivation shown by your daughter.
3. Your daughter's initiative and problem solving.
4. The resilience your daughter shows when presented with difficult tasks.
5. The quality of your daughter's independent study.

From September 2016 onwards there will be a progressive change in reporting to parents, with particular reference to interim reports. The outcomes from this survey will play a key role in the structure of these new reports, and I thank all of you who took part in the feedback.

TWGGS Governing Body: Co-opted Governor Vacancies – Mrs Rosie Serpis, Chair of Governors

You may recall from Mrs Wybar's message in her last TWGGS newsletter that we are looking to appoint two Co-opted Governors to the governing body (ideally from the parent/guardian body), with appointments to take effect from April. I will send a separate Parent Mail shortly after next week's school holiday giving full details of the application process and timetable. As a flavour of the type of work we are involved in, over the last year we have undertaken monitoring visits in school, reviewed the School Development Plan, contributed to, reviewed and approved multiple school policies, undertaken training on and reviewed Safeguarding procedures, approved and monitored the 3-year operating budget, carried out detailed reviews of school examination results and the school's statutory performance monitoring reports/evaluations and been part of the appointments panels for key leadership roles within the school. The work is interesting, busy and very rewarding. I do hope you will give consideration to applying.

Georgina Grant, U6T, Sports Star of the Year – Mrs Wybar

Georgie won the prestigious Sports Star of the Year Award from The Courier, recognising an outstanding year that saw her represent Great Britain at the World Junior Championships in Rio, testing out the Olympic venues for 2016. She is now aiming to get to the junior world championships again in Holland, in 2016. Many congratulations to Georgie.

Vacancy for a School Direct Trainee in Geography, September 2016 – Miss Smith

We have an exciting opportunity for a committed and enthusiastic person looking to enter the teaching profession. There is a vacancy for a trainee teacher in the Geography department to start in September 2016; applicants will need to have a Geography degree at 2:2 level or higher. The application process for School Direct is through UCAS and more information about eligibility, bursaries to train and applications can be obtained from Miss Smith by emailing itt@twggs.kent.sch.uk, telephoning the school or by visiting www.kaizentsa.org/221/initial-teacher-training.

Debating Congratulations – Mrs Johnstone

It's been a great few weeks for the senior TWGGS debaters. On 19th January, Eve Drysdale and Mariam Ahmed won the King's School competition in Canterbury in great style against much tough local opposition. In the local round of the Debating Matters competition, a rather gruelling affair involving three rounds of debating, our team also emerged victorious: congratulations to Mariam Ahmed, Harriet Bunnett, Rosie Judd, and Lauren Whitfield, who debated the future of the BBC and the morality of sex selective abortion. We now go on to the regional round, in which each school fields three teams, each of whom has to win all its debates in order to progress. We have a very strong field of Lower Sixth debaters, and look forward to a good battle!

Eve and Rachel have also won through to Finals Day of the prestigious Oxford University competition, after a tough competition at Cranbrook. They continue a long tradition of TWGGS participation at Finals Day, and we wish them all the best. Finally, Eve and Charlotte Martin have continued their success in the English Speaking Union's Mace competition, having won through their first two rounds, debating whether voters should have to pass a current affairs test before being entitled to vote.

TWGGS Debate with Lingfield School – Mariam Ahmed, L6G

In December Rachel Weatherly, Charlotte Martin and Mariam Ahmed from Year 12 debated with Upper Sixth students from Lingfield School on the motion "This House Believes That The Government Should Fund Critical Infrastructure". We were excited to have the opportunity to debate some of the key economic issues at the moment, and we chose this motion as it was highly topical due to the Chinese President Xi Jing Ping's recent visit to the UK. It was a tough challenge and raised some very interesting questions as the audience, which included four economics teachers, were also allowed to put forward any questions they had to either side. It became apparent very quickly that the motion was indeed a broad one, as there were issues surrounding the idea of investment from private and foreign firms. In the end it was concluded that our lively discussion, which covered a large range of ideas surrounding this topic, was a draw. Finally many thanks to Mrs Johnstone for chairing the debate.

Year 9 Visit to Rhokett Dessert Factory - Abigail Colley 9I, Kim Dawson 9T and Julia Talbot 9I

On 19th January, seven Year 9 TWGGS girls were lucky enough to travel to the Rhokett Dessert Factory after winning our group's 'Christmas Bake Off' in our Cooking & Nutrition lessons. We were able to tour the two factories - Hawkhurst and Cranbrook. In the Cranbrook factory we saw Bakewell tarts, cheesecakes and lemon drizzle cakes being made, from the piping of the mixture to the industrial freezers at around -35 degrees! In the Hawkhurst factory we saw the production line in action, from the mixing to the packaging of luxury Valentine's Day desserts for Marks & Spencer and Waitrose.

Our tour guides, Amy and Annika, explained to us about the high risk and low risk areas. Whilst touring the factory we had to pay constant attention to our hygiene and safety; it was very important that we did not contaminate the desserts. This included wearing multiple coloured hair nets, shoe covers and coats. Every cooking utensil had to be meticulously washed by hand, every cleaning product was colour coordinated to each zone and we washed our hands every time we entered a new room. We also found out about different ways of preserving foods. For example, crisps and biscuits are frozen before being sent to their different customers, such as Marks & Spencer and Sainsburys. Overall it was a very enjoyable trip and we even got to try and take home several desserts. It was a great experience and one that we thoroughly enjoyed!

Book Swap - Mrs Mattheus-Ratcliffe, Librarian

World Book Day (March 3rd) is just around the corner and we always try to think of ways to get our girls to read more. It is the also the time of the year where many of you might be thinking about a spring clean..... It seems therefore a great opportunity to help you with your clear out AND celebrate reading, by hosting another one of our popular Book Swaps in the TWGGS Library. From Monday, 22nd February to Friday, 26th February the TWGGS Library will be the place to be if the girls want to donate their old

books and find new books. So, feel free to clear out your book shelves, collect any books still in good condition and have your daughter bring them into the Library all week after half-term. We will accept appropriate fiction (adult and teen), non-fiction, and graphic novels, but no small children's picture books or old textbooks, please.

Once your daughter has dropped her books in the Library, she can choose something new to read from the pool of donations. As we are trying to encourage an interest in books, and start conversations about books amongst the girls, we are not limiting the operation to the usual "one in, one out" system; this means that even if your daughter only brings in one book she could gain several in return. Any books left at the end of the week will be donated to Better World Books, the book charity we work closely with. I look forward to receiving your donations.

Advance Warning for Year 7 World Book Day Fancy Dress Competition – Mrs Mattheus-Ratcliffe, Librarian

As a parent myself, the words "Mum, I need a costume for the fancy dress competition" make my heart sink as they are usually casually mentioned the night before, or even the morning of, the event in question. However, we at TWGGS think ahead and you deserve some advance warning: To celebrate World Book Day pupils and teachers from Year 7 are invited to come to school on **Friday, 4th March** dressed as a character from a favourite book. Though it is not compulsory, all girls are encouraged to take part in what always proves to be a fun event, with prizes for the best dressed class, individual in a class, individual in a year group, and group costume. Girls who genuinely don't wish to dress up should come to school in school uniform as normal. It is usually a highly creative and competitive event and I am sure the girls will want to start planning their costume over half-term. We look forward to seeing many inspired costumes on the day.

Careers Department – Mrs Vallely

Mrs Bridget Elinson, Independent Careers Advisor, has been coming into school every Tuesday, continuing with the one to one interviews with Year 11 girls, and speaking to other girls during drop-in sessions at lunchtime. Any pupil who would like to see Mrs Elinson, or to have a chat with me, is very welcome to drop in and/or make an appointment at any time.

Mrs Elinson has also continued to take the Year 9 PSHE sessions introducing the software, Fast Tomato, which is an excellent resource for researching careers. She has also begun Year 8 PSHE sessions using the Steps Workbook which encourages the girls to understand more about themselves through some self-development exercises, and teaches them where to look for useful information, and start to think about planning their future. At the PSHE lesson each girl is given a workbook of her own to keep, and is encouraged to bring it home to show you. We would be pleased if your daughter would take care not to lose the book, and to look at it in her own time. We hope there will be opportunities to work on it further in tutor times.

The Lower Sixth PSHE lessons have included a very good and amusing talk from Graham Withers, from Rathbones, on Managing Personal Finances; an excellent, interactive presentation from Alice Reilly from Pearson College, London, on Employability Skills; and presentations from Jane Woodhead and Grace Olugbodi, both employers of apprentices, giving some excellent advice and tips about applying for, and what it is like doing an Apprenticeship.

The Upper Sixth have had a PSHE session from Mrs Field about the dangers of radicalization, and an excellent presentation from two speakers from the Citizen's Advice Bureau giving advice and guidance about employment contracts, tenancy agreements, the benefits system and the like, thereby trying to prepare the girls for life after school.

We have also continued with the programme of lunchtime talks in a busy January: Mrs Horobin, who was one of the first women at Pembroke College, Oxford, reading Modern Foreign Languages and Philosophy, gave a lively talk about her career in The City, where she still works as a lawyer for a firm of asset managers. She gave some very good advice about planning your career ahead, as far as possible. We were pleased to welcome Husnara Begum, who gave her lovely talk about her career as a lawyer, and told the girls exactly how to become a solicitor or a barrister; and Helen Percival, working at present for a news agency, gave us a fascinating insight into the life of a video journalist, including showing us some clips of her work. She was at pains to point out how very useful it is in life to be able to speak at least one foreign language. She herself was, until recently, living and working in Paris, for France 24 – a French news channel, where she necessarily spoke French almost all the time.

Attendance at lunchtime talks has dropped off again somewhat, which is very disappointing. I would ask you to encourage your daughters to come along, even if they think it is not a subject which they want to pursue as a career themselves. Invariably, they will find something interesting and new to learn. Further talks and events are planned before Easter, particularly during National Careers Week, March 7th – 11th 2016.

CCF Tonbridge – Sgt Eleanor Goad, L61

On the weekend of 16th-17th of January our cadets had the opportunity to play enemy for the Tonbridge CCF. On Friday and Saturday morning the girls polished their drills and skills, re-familiarising themselves with ambush methods and section attack procedures. Their superb teamwork paid off when they were presented with a challenging navigation exercise and the girls managed to get themselves from the camp to the training area with only a map and compass. Saturday evening was used to gain enemy intelligence through careful patrols around the area and the cadets were able to put into practice their training on camouflage and concealment and displayed excellent communication. Sunday consisted of eight encounters with the enemy and to each of which TWGGS responded with control and discipline; gauging from what angle a position should be assaulted- and acknowledging when the best option was to withdraw, reassemble and plan for another attack. The style of the camp was not something that the girls, younger cadets in particular, were familiar with, but they adapted to harsh conditions and physical demands of the exercise admirably and certainly gave the boys a run for their money.

CCF Senior Black Cat Weekend, 29th – 31st January – LCpl Reed

We arrived late Friday afternoon at Crowborough Camp. It was full of strenuous yet fun experiences and was a steep learning curve for all of us. As soon as we had unloaded our kit we were thrown into revision for weapons handling tests later that evening. Fortunately, everyone passed so we could continue with the training. Very early the next morning we got ready quickly so that we could leave in time to complete our navigation exercise. We managed to get through this difficult challenge without getting too lost along the way and we are all very proud of the Year 10s that joined the seniors. They kept up very well without complaint. A big well done to Cdt Jacob, Cdt Beaumont and Cdt Champion. This was their first weekend out in the field and it was very tough. They were strong and stayed cheerful. Good on them! That evening we returned to camp to learn basic fieldcraft techniques. We were tested on these with a small quiz provided by LCpl Rhoden. After the test, we were thrown into a First Aid scenario with one minute to prepare. This was difficult but rewarding, as we all did very well.

Finally, in Sunday morning we partook in the final stages of our weekend. This included an observation in which we spied on an “enemy” for information. At the end of this we had to evacuate a casualty onto a “helicopter” so that they could be rescued. We then had to take an alternative route back to our base to avoid enemy forces. After this our tiring, but enjoyable, weekend was over. Many thanks to the officers and staff who organised and ran the weekend; we are very grateful. Thanks also to the girls in our section who made the weekend at least ten times better with all their jokes – Sgt Wood, Sgt Billett, Sgt Goad, Cpl Miles, LCpl Trebino, LCpl Holstead-Vallejo, LCpl Rhoden and Cdt Trebino Jnr (who joined us on Sunday morning).

U19 Netball Regional Finals – Sunday 24th January by Yasmin Absolon and Mrs Freeman

The TWGGS U19 netball team represented Kent at the London and South East Regional Finals, having qualified in second place in the County Final rounds, facing tough competition from all the teams that were involved. The first match appeared to be a daunting prospect, against the renowned netball academy Barking Abbey School. It proved to be one of the toughest matches of the day for the team. It was a thrilling match, with the TWGGS team fighting back from a 4 goal deficit at half time to achieve an excellent draw (8-8). St Paul's Girls' School, in the next match, managed to hold on to their early advantage, defeating TWGGS 16-11. In the third match, TWGGS faced local rivals Maidstone Girls' Grammar School (who had won the County Finals). Mrs Freeman heard high praise from neutrals in the crowd as the TWGGS team's unbelievable work-rate and teamwork overwhelmed their talented opposition. The final score was 20-4 to TWGGS. Another impressive performance against North London Collegiate School secured an 11-6 victory for TWGGS. However, in the final matches, facing Lingfield Notre Dame and St George's School, TWGGS lost out, despite continuing superb performances from the TWGGS team. Each team contained a number of England squad players and the TWGGS players exceeded the coaches' expectations.

Congratulations to the whole squad: Captain Yasmin Absolon, Vice-Captain Bethan Moriarty, Kath Taylor, Elissa Moon, Elisha Goldring, Margot Roberson-Leech, Katie Exall, Sophie Morris, Katie Nunn and Emma Wadsworth. Special mention goes also to Eleanor Durr, who was unable to play due to a clashing netball commitment, for providing additional coaching and tactical advice to the team. Mrs Murray was rooting for the team all day from home (on maternity leave). The team are extremely grateful to her and to Julie and Mo Mesher for their coaching expertise and assistance on the day. Mrs Freeman (as First Aider and TWGGS teacher representative) was impressed with the whole team and thoroughly enjoyed watching their outstanding performances. Thanks too are sent to the many parents and supporters who attended and supported the TWGGS team throughout the day. Mrs Murray was delighted with the final result of 5th in the region for the squad. The girls should be extremely proud of their performance and their dedication to the TWGGS netball team for the last 7 years; it was an excellent farewell for the U6 players.

Kent Schools' Cross Country Championships - Mrs Field, Cross Country Coach

We are very proud of the runners, from across the school, who represented our local district at the Kent Schools' Championships in Hythe in January. Competing against the best in the county, on a very muddy and challenging course, the girls really did give of their best! A well-deserved congratulations to: Martha Jones, Christabel Balcomb-Nevill, Ellie Cohen, Romane Balcomb-Nevill, Imogen Ellis, Alice Ralph and Emilia Hope. We wish Imogen, Alice and Emilia, who have been selected to run for the county, all the very best of luck when they compete in the national races next month. Could we please thank all the parents for getting up early on a Saturday morning to take their daughters to Hythe for the event.

Milano Team Sequence – Miss Manklow

On Sunday 24th January the Gymnastics Squad competed as two teams in the Milano Team Sequence in Guilford, Surrey. Each team competed in the disciplines of floor, vault and a group sequence. The teams trained exceptionally hard in the weeks leading up to the competition and there was a noticeable improvement in their performances on the day. The individual routines were well timed and all performers completed their routines. The vault was scored highly too, with judges positively commenting on the girls' flight in their take off. Again in the team sequences both teams completed their performances holding both balances for their allotted time. Unfortunately no medals were won, but all girls should be extremely proud of their performances. Well done!

Regional School Team Gymnastics Floor and Vault 2016 – Miss Manklow

On Sunday 7th February, TWGGS U19 and U14 gymnastics squad competed in floor and vault at the Regional School Team Gymnastics Competition. After a great start, with the girls' vault scores much improved from previous competitions, the teams competed with their individual floor routines. The girls' individual skills had been the focus of training sessions leading up to the competition and this was evident in their performances on the day. A few nerves didn't stop all girls completing their routines and making it through some tricky tumblers with good execution. The presentations at the end of the day saw the U14 team place 3rd and the U19 team place 1st. Well done to all girls involved!

U12A and B Netball – Miss Manklow

This term both the A and B team have competed in several matches, giving the girls as much practice as possible leading up to the District and County Tournaments next term. The first match was our U13B vs St Gregory's and the girls were on fire! A 22-2 victory really boosted the girls' confidence and was well deserved, putting into practice all the skills developed in training. The second matches were played by both A and B teams against Bennett. The U12s pulled away in the last quarter with a 5-2 victory, helped by superb turn overs in defence coupled with strong shooting from the attack. The B team did well to hold Bennett off in the last quarter, giving them a draw in this game. Again the defence worked really hard to pull in all the rebounds but unfortunately their defence too were strong, which made it difficult to move the ball down the court. The final game was the A team against Tonbridge Grammar School - again another tough match for the girls with both teams displaying terrific shooting. With the whole team pulling together and working off each other, we managed to pull it away with an 11-8 win. Well done girls!

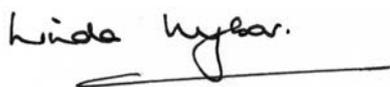
U13A and B Netball – Miss Michaelides

Since the start of the new term the U13 A and B netball teams have had many matches. They have played extremely well and worked very hard as a team. They have played against St. Gregory's, Claremont, Bennett and TGS. The U13B played amazingly well against St. Gregory's and won their first match of the term 41 – 1!! This really inspired them to win their next match against Claremont 28 – 0. The defence in this game was particular strong. They worked hard to get all the rebounds and the shooters were on point throughout the whole match, leading to a 28 – 0 win. Their final game was against Bennett, which they enjoyed immensely. They worked very hard on their centre passes and on their attack and this lead to a win for the U13B 9-5 and the U13A 5-3. The girls have worked very hard this term. Well done.

PTA News

Please see the update attached at the end of this document.

It only remains to wish you all a pleasant half-term break. With best wishes,



Mrs L Wybar
Headteacher



PTA UPDATE

Facebook and Twitter

We have recently started up a closed school PTA Facebook page (search for **TWGGS PTA** as a Facebook group or go to <https://www.facebook.com/groups/twggspta/>) which we would invite you all to join. It will have a calendar of events as well as general and social information about the PTA and school. It is for parents/guardians only and you may be messaged a question before your request to join is approved so please check your messages. We also have a twitter feed (**@twggspta**) for those of you who use that. In the next fortnight there will be a draw to randomly pick a new Facebook joiner and Twitter follower. Prizes have been kindly donated by No.6 Shop and Clinic (www.no6clinic.co.uk) of St. John's Road and Pure Beauty and Hair Workshop (www.hairworkshopsouthborough.co.uk) in Southborough.



PTA Support

Over the past 12 months we have had to cancel a number of events that we normally support due to lack of parent helpers e.g. carol service, new parents evening, careers evening etc. Volunteer local (<http://twggspta.volunteerlocal.com/volunteer/?id=10593>) is the tool that we use to organise and allocate resources for events. If you can spare as little as half an hour a year then we'd really appreciate your support and you are free to choose an event convenient to you. Even if this is not possible, could you look to register on here and we can keep you updated with events and appeals.

Xmas and Spring Raffle



The Xmas raffle was drawn at the very successful bring & buy sale and chocolate tombola at the school in December.

1st prize - Ipad won by A Pelaez - ticket sold by a pupil in 7I

2nd Prize - Bose Soundlink Speaker won by C Platten - ticket sold by pupil in L6G

3rd prize - Amazon Kindle won by M Norris - ticket sold by pupil in 10S

The top three classes in the inter school competition were 8T, 7W and 8W.

We are now seeking prizes from companies and individuals for the spring raffle. Any support you can give please email pta@twggs.kent.sch.uk – your company can have a free mail drop with the raffle tickets and coverage out to all parents via ParentMail, letter, Twitter and Facebook

Quiz night

Our highly popular quiz night is going to be on Friday 18th March at the school. Tables of 8 @ £12 per person including fish and chips. Please put it in your diaries – a ParentMail will be out closer to the event.



2nd hand uniform

We're running out!!! Please drop any spare uniform you have in to reception for attention of "Claudia Williamson/Thomasine Dowding – 2nd Hand Uniform" - uniform@twggs.kent.sch.uk