



# ***Otford Primary School- September 11th 2026***

**Dear Parents and Carers,**

**A very warm welcome to a new school year! We hope you have all had a wonderful and restful summer break. It has been lovely to welcome the children back, and we would like to say a huge thank you for such a fantastic start to the year!**

**We are delighted to see how many children have already settled so well into their new classes, routines and learning. For those children who may need a little more support as they settle in, please do reach out to your child's class teacher, or to myself or Mrs Williams. We are always very happy to listen and support you and your child in any way we can. We will also be available daily in the school playground should you wish to have a quick chat.**

**We are looking forward to an exciting year filled with learning, laughter and new experiences. Our aim is to ensure that every child feels happy, safe, valued and confident as they develop their independence and curiosity.**

**Over the next few weeks, we very much look forward to welcoming you into school for our Meet the Teacher sessions, which will take place in your child's classroom. This will be a lovely opportunity to see your child's learning environment, meet their teacher and find**

out a little more about their classroom and the year ahead. We really hope you will be able to come along.

We will also shortly be sending out dates and further information for our Open Classroom and Parents' Evening, which will take place at the beginning of Term 2. We look forward to welcoming you back into school for these important opportunities to share your child's progress and learning.

As we have started the year so positively, we would kindly ask that we continue to support the children by ensuring they arrive at school on time each morning. Being in school on time makes such a difference to the start of the children's day. It gives them the opportunity to settle calmly, get organised and begin the day alongside their friends. Your help and support with this is greatly appreciated.

Thank you once again for your continued support and for helping us to make such a positive start to the new school year. We are very excited about all that lies ahead and look forward to working closely with you throughout the year.

Here's to a happy, successful and memorable school year!

Very best wishes

Mrs H Roberts

## School Site Access

Gates open in the morning at 8:45am and in the afternoon at 3:10pm.

For the safety and security of all our children, we kindly ask that parents/carers and children do not enter the school site before 8:45am in the morning and parents before 3:10pm in the afternoon. Prior to these times, staff are not in a position to safely supervise children on the school site, and it is therefore essential that these timings are observed.

We appreciate that families may sometimes arrive a little early; however, we must respectfully ask that everyone waits outside the school site until the gates are opened for the school at 8:45am. As Nursery starts earlier we appreciate that this may be a little confusing, your help with this is greatly appreciated.

Can we please ask that the school gates are not stood on or pushed, unfortunately this is causing some damage and may result in these breaking which would be a great inconvenience to our school community.

Thank you very much for your understanding, cooperation and continued support in helping us to keep all of our pupils safe.

## Free School Meals

The Department for Education has expanded FSM eligibility so that all children in households receiving Universal Credit may now qualify, subject to the updated eligibility criteria.

### How to apply in Kent

Applying is confidential, completely free, and takes just a few minutes online. Kent County Council provides an instant eligibility check. To apply, please visit the official Kent County Council Free School Meals Portal<sup>1</sup> to start your application.

If you would like to read more about the criteria or alternative support options first, you can visit the Kent County Council Free School Meals Information Page<sup>2</sup>.

If your application is approved, the system will notify us automatically, and we will update our records straight away.

For full details, please refer to the official government guidance. Pupil Premium Government Guidance & Overview<sup>3</sup>

Apply for Free School Meals<sup>4</sup>

## School Uniform

Please note: We're now wearing **Winter Uniform**. That means ties on, please!

For convenience, the link below will take you to the uniform information on our school website:

School Uniform<sup>5</sup>

\*\*\*Can we please ask that **all** items be **labelled**-coats, and water bottles included. It will make it that much easier to return lost property\*\*\* **Can we also politely remind all parents that children should only bring water into school rather than juices, these can be consumed during lunchtime only if children are choosing to have a packed lunch.**

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<sup>1</sup>[https://www.google.com/goto?url=CAESYgHrOzAVUILAQZ82ETyY6SmJlBsKlyyIS\\_I2vWOOb033A-KvYkGbfAgLA6pW3tmSm2h1mfYXusbxHT9NiHwISwIEAUPqJWviwrzDHGRI0dQmJf6mYLhYyH5xxwGhKGInFat0](https://www.google.com/goto?url=CAESYgHrOzAVUILAQZ82ETyY6SmJlBsKlyyIS_I2vWOOb033A-KvYkGbfAgLA6pW3tmSm2h1mfYXusbxHT9NiHwISwIEAUPqJWviwrzDHGRI0dQmJf6mYLhYyH5xxwGhKGInFat0)

<sup>2</sup>[https://www.google.com/goto?url=CAESgAEB6zswFReET-Rh3allgO76cCKVtHQjilU6uT\\_f9CkqcT1wtXhadqchPJN9pRamXQbADSPgKBoS4obOdoNMjxLFxViAS2YgnzQO7A2oI4Rty6Q6m7jqvPmt\\_sORsTqkN36uBTAAaSQTjCuppwmF9l0oVRW1idjw3T8sAz9Z4Hq3j1w](https://www.google.com/goto?url=CAESgAEB6zswFReET-Rh3allgO76cCKVtHQjilU6uT_f9CkqcT1wtXhadqchPJN9pRamXQbADSPgKBoS4obOdoNMjxLFxViAS2YgnzQO7A2oI4Rty6Q6m7jqvPmt_sORsTqkN36uBTAAaSQTjCuppwmF9l0oVRW1idjw3T8sAz9Z4Hq3j1w)

<sup>3</sup><https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pupil-premium/pupil-premium>

<sup>4</sup><https://apply.cloudforedu.org.uk/ofsm/kent>

<sup>5</sup><https://www.otford.kent.sch.uk/school-uniform>

## Water Bottles

No juice in water bottles, please! Only water.

Thank you!

## Year 6 Community Ambassadors Term 1

- Lucia
- Jake
- Zara
- Jackson
- George T
- and Arlo

## School Catering

INDEPENDENTCATERING | EDUCATER LIMITED

# FREE SCHOOL MEALS ARE CHANGING



**CHECK IF YOU NEED TO RE-APPLY FOR SEPTEMBER 2026**  
**MANY MORE FAMILIES WILL QUALIFY  
WITH THE CHANGES FROM SEPTEMBER 2026**  
**APPLYING COULD SAVE YOUR FAMILY  
UP TO £500 PER CHILD, PER YEAR**  
**APPLY NOW AT**  
**[gov.uk/apply-free-school-meals](https://gov.uk/apply-free-school-meals)**

WE ONLY USE



INDEPENDENTCATERING.CO.UK  
EDUCATERLIMITED.COM

## Sevenoaks Counselling & Kent Family



### Annual Open Meeting: Raising Teens in a Digital World: How can we support our teenagers' mental wellbeing ?

You are invited to a thoughtful and supportive panel discussion with local counsellors, young people and wellbeing professionals. Together we'll explore how technology can affect emotional wellbeing and family connection, while sharing compassionate strategies to help you stay connected with your teen.

This isn't about banning screens—  
it's about giving you fresh insights,  
and greater confidence to navigate  
the digital world together.

There will be plenty of opportunity  
to ask your questions. Young  
people welcome!



**22nd September at Otford Methodist Hall : 7.00pm**

Sevenoaks Counselling offers professional and affordable counselling to the community, please visit our website to find out more. Registered Charity 288191 Limited Company 1764440

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



**NHS**  
Kent Community Health  
NHS Foundation Trust

# Kent Family

is here for your child's growth,  
happiness and health.

[family.kentcht.nhs.uk](http://family.kentcht.nhs.uk)

(we care)

## From Bennett Memorial for the Attention of Year 6



# BENNETT MEMORIAL DIOCESAN SCHOOL

SEMPER TENAX: HOPE, WISDOM, LOVE

**BELIEVING IN YOUNG PEOPLE**  
Bennett is a Church of England school with a record of providing outstanding education, rooted in tradition and preparing young people for the future. Our distinctive Christian identity and ethos inform our approach to living and learning. We are academically highly successful and we set great store by the formation of character and values.

**ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE**  
Outstanding teaching and impressive results are at the heart of Bennett's success. We are rightly renowned for the excellent results Bennett students achieve at GCSE and A Level. This is because our teachers are experts in their subjects, and because we expect hard work, exemplary behaviour and a positive approach at all times.

**TEACHING FOR SUCCESS**  
At Bennett teaching is rigorous and demanding. It is relevant and engaging, with high expectations in class and at home.

**CARING AND THRIVING**  
As a Christian school, we place particular emphasis on caring and supporting young people as they grow up.

**TAKING PART AND ENJOYING**  
Learning outside the classroom is a central part of Bennett life. Music and sport, travel and adventure, all play an important role in the life of Bennett students.

**BENNETT SIXTH FORM**  
The vast majority of Bennett students choose to move into the Bennett Sixth Form after GCSE. Our large and vibrant Sixth Form is characterised by an atmosphere of aspiration and excellence.

## OPEN EVENINGS

**Tuesday 22nd September**  
**Thursday 24th September**

For open evening booking details and how to apply please check the school website [www.bennettmemorial.co.uk](http://www.bennettmemorial.co.uk)



**CONTACT US**  
[admissions@bennett.kent.sch.uk](mailto:admissions@bennett.kent.sch.uk)  
01892 521595



## From St Gregory's for the Attention of Year 6

**Join us for our Open Events and discover how we support your child's journey through enrichment and opportunity.**

### **OPEN DAY**

Saturday 27 June – 11.00am to 1.00pm

*An opportunity to meet our staff and have a tour of the school*

### **OPEN MORNINGS**

Tuesday 7 July & Friday 18 September – 9.00am to 10.30am

*Headteacher talk at 9.00am; tours at 9.15am*

### **OPEN AFTERNOON**

Wednesday 7 October – 1.20pm to 2.45pm

*Headteacher talk at 1.20pm; tours at 1.35pm*

### **OPEN EVENINGS**

Wednesday 16 September & Thursday 15 October – 5.00pm to 7.30pm

*Headteacher presentations at 5.15pm and 6.45pm*

**Find out more about our Open Events, Sports and Dance Academies.**

**Scan the QR code or visit:**

[sgschool.org.uk/open-events](https://sgschool.org.uk/open-events)



**St Gregory's**



**CATHOLIC SCHOOL**

Reynolds Lane, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN4 9XL

**01892 527444**

[office@sgschool.org.uk](mailto:office@sgschool.org.uk) | [sgschool.org.uk](https://sgschool.org.uk)

## Policy Update

Please note that an updated **Pupil Allergy** policy has been added to the school website

## Otford Community News

### **Destruction of the beautiful countryside around Otford for housing developments.**

Developers want to build houses on the beautiful green fields behind Sidney Gardens in Otford. This is on top of the huge developments proposed between Otford and Bat and Ball.

The children at Otford Primary spend time exploring nature in these fields during their forest school sessions and with the proposed housing development they will be lost forever.

There is a petition out in the village to show support against this development. There are already 700+ signatures on it but the aim is to reach over 1000. If you would like to sign you can find the petition in Otford Post office and also on the gatepost at the entrance of the footpath to the fields at the end of The Old Walk.

## In The Sevenoaks Community



Kent Fire and Rescue Service has launched a brand new YouTube Kids mini-series, *'Be Safe with Us'*.

We know children love watching their favourite programmes and videos, so we've created something that's both fun and educational!

Our short videos are designed to help teach children important safety skills including understanding fire engines, what to do in an emergency, and the importance of smoke alarms.

They're a great way for the family to learn together about staying safe at home. We hope you enjoy them!

You can watch the videos here: <https://www.kent.fire-uk.org/besafewithus>

## ***The Library Summer Reading Challenge- let's do this!***

Otford is in 3rd place!!

The library summer reading challenge will be finishing on the 12th of September .

Otford Library has said that Otford Primary School are again doing very well in terms of participation and are currently 3rd place in the Sevenoaks District School league table!!

70 children have registered and 34 children have completed the challenge. They would love to give out medals and certificates to the remaining 36 children at Otford library ! So please do finish the reading challenge!!

## Message from Kent Libraries

*2026 is the National Year of Reading, and Kent Libraries is encouraging families to get a head start on summer reading by preparing early for the Summer Reading Challenge.*

*Families can join the library, borrow books, and enjoy free eBooks and audiobooks using the library's eLibrary apps. Getting started early helps children feel confident and excited about reading ahead of the summer holidays.*

*Libraries are great places to enjoy time together. Families can discover new books, take part in free events listed on the Kent Directory, and explore libraries online through virtual tours.*

*Parents can also join the Kent Libraries Book Chat Facebook group<sup>6</sup> [<https://www.facebook.com/groups/KentLibrariesBookChat/>] and follow Facebook<sup>7</sup> [<https://www.facebook.com/KentLibrariesArchives/>] and Instagram<sup>8</sup> [<https://www.instagram.com/kentlibraries/>].*

*All you need to get started is a free library card.*

*Go all in and get a head start on summer reading at [kent.gov.uk/libraries](https://kent.gov.uk/libraries)<sup>9</sup>.*

**THE READING AGENCY Summer Reading Challenge**

**Kent Libraries and Archives**

**Get a head start on Summer Reading**

**Join the library, borrow books, and explore our eLibrary apps**

Build the fun to Go All In for the National Year of Reading

**Children's Books** **Free eBooks & Audiobooks** **Free events & activities**

**GO ALL IN.**

For more information about library offers and services head to [kent.gov.uk/libraries](https://kent.gov.uk/libraries)

National Year of Reading 2026

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<sup>6</sup><https://www.facebook.com/groups/KentLibrariesBookChat/>

<sup>7</sup><https://www.facebook.com/KentLibrariesArchives/>

<sup>8</sup><https://www.instagram.com/kentlibraries/>

<sup>9</sup><https://kentcountycouncil.sharepoint.com/sites/GTGCLRASummerReadingChallenge/Shared Documents/General/SRC 2026/Marketing and Communication/Assets, Creatives and Deliverables/1. Getting ready for the Summer Reading Challenge period/Material for Schools/kent.gov.uk/libraries>

## Attendance Insight

www.PSDgraphics.com



We know that consistent school attendance is so important for your child; the benefits for them are immeasurable! However, sometimes, the numbers can seem vague. Therefore, to put attendance percentage into perspective, we have converted percentages into their weekly equivalent and, even one step further, to express percentage in terms of lessons missed:

- Attendance of **95%** for the year equals **10 days** that your child has been absent- that is **two school weeks** of your child's learning missed for that year. If we consider that children are taught 4-6 lessons a day, then 10 days absence over the course of the school year equates to **40-60 lessons missed**.
  - Attendance of **90%** for the year equals **19 days** that your child has been absent, that is almost **4 weeks** of school missed, or **76-114** lessons missed.
  - Attendance of **85%** for the year equals **29 days** that your child has been absent, that is almost **6 school weeks** missed (nearly the equivalent of the summer holidays) or **116-174** lessons missed.
- Attendance of **80%** for the year equals **38 days** absent per year, that is over **7 school weeks** or **152-228** lessons missed!

**Punctuality Matters** Being frequently late for school adds up to lost learning

- Arriving 5 minutes late every day adds up to over 3 days lost each year
- Arriving 15 minutes late every day adds up to 2 weeks absence a year
- Arriving 30 minutes late every adds up to 19 days absence a year

If, for any reason, you require support getting your child into school, please let us know. Contact the school and we can arrange a meeting with a member of the Senior Leadership Team to discuss how best we can support you and next steps.

Please see the government website for more details

The Education Hub<sup>10</sup>

## Otford Instagram Account



We would love to remind everyone to visit our Instagram page at Otford\_primary\_school where you will find lots of information and pictures regarding all the exciting things we have been doing at school. We regularly post news in the "stories" rather than posts as they can easily become lost in the posts. We have 478 followers now- thank you for taking the time to look. You can find us here: otford\_primary\_school<sup>11</sup>

Should we receive any inappropriate content on this page the account involved will be blocked and reported to Instagram.

## Early Birds Bookings

Dear Parents\Carers,

ParentPay should be used to make Early Bird Bookings. Bookings can be made until the end of the academic year and will need to be paid for at the time of booking. There is a limit of 45 children per day in place and spaces are allocated on a first come first served basis. Please find below link to guide to booking:

[https://cdn.embedly.com/widgets/media.html?src=https%3A%2F%2Ffast.wistia.net%2Fembed%2Fiframe%2F7e9aflmga&display\\_name=Wistia%2C%2BInc.&url=https%3A%2F%2Fpare](https://cdn.embedly.com/widgets/media.html?src=https%3A%2F%2Ffast.wistia.net%2Fembed%2Fiframe%2F7e9aflmga&display_name=Wistia%2C%2BInc.&url=https%3A%2F%2Fpare)

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<sup>10</sup><https://educationhub.blog.gov.uk/2024/08/fines-for-parents-for-taking-children-out-of-school-what-you-need-to-know/>

<sup>11</sup>[https://www.instagram.com/otford\\_primary\\_school](https://www.instagram.com/otford_primary_school)

[ntpay.wistia.com%2Fmedias%2Ff7e9aflmga&image=https%3A%2F%2Fembed-ssl.wistia.com%2Fdeliveries%2Ffe388bc7ea8e1880c18a91c5f5ec1e32f6ca5d2bc.jpg%3Fimage\\_crop\\_resized%3D960x540&key=40cb30655a7f4a46adaaf18efb05db21&type=text%2Fhtml&schema=wistia&wvideo=f7e9aflmga](https://wistia.com/medias/f7e9aflmga&image=https%3A%2F%2Fembed-ssl.wistia.com%2Fdeliveries%2Ffe388bc7ea8e1880c18a91c5f5ec1e32f6ca5d2bc.jpg%3Fimage_crop_resized%3D960x540&key=40cb30655a7f4a46adaaf18efb05db21&type=text%2Fhtml&schema=wistia&wvideo=f7e9aflmga)

*Parents who pay for sessions using childcare vouchers should email their requirements at least a term in advance to [earlybirds@otford.kent.sch.uk](mailto:earlybirds@otford.kent.sch.uk). Early Birds will then manually add the required sessions onto ParentPay on your behalf. Sessions paid for by childcare vouchers are not guaranteed unless booked termly in advance.*

