

# GROVE PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL

## PARENTS FORUM, via Zoom

6.11.25

Attendees: Rachel Davies, Headteacher and Safeguarding Lead

Joanna Lovatt, Chair and Parent Support Adviser

26 Parents & Carers

1. There were no apologies for this meeting.
2. The actions from the previous meeting, which focussed on the new wraparound care service being provided by the current club providers, Foxes Club, were about the setting up. A meeting in the Spring Term will be arranged so that families can provide feedback on the new wraparound arrangements.
3. NEW ISSUES FOR DISCUSSION
  - USE OF THE TV AT THE END OF THE SCHOOL DAY. Although this has been debated before, another parent has raised it as being a continuing issue so it would be useful to hear other parents points of views
    - Two parents asked if teaching staff could encourage children to draw or read quietly rather than just watching TV.
    - RD reminded parents that the prime aim at the end of the day is for the children to be safe and engaged so that both teachers and parents/carers can use the time to talk face-to-face. Some children are happy to chose to read or draw instead of watching the screen.
    - Other approaches have been tried and the school is happy to evolve the last 5/10 minutes of the formal school day.
    - The length of time that children are watching TV depends upon the age group. Years 1-4 have 5 minutes; Reception have 10 minutes and Years 5 & 6 go out to the back playground. However, if children are late being picked up, they will stay in the classroom for up to 15 minutes after the end of the school day. If they are still at school, they are transferred to the supervision of the front office where there is no screen access.
    - The cleaning staff come in from 3.15pm and will start cleaning classrooms soon after so it is necessary to ensure that whatever activity occurs at the end of the school day, is onerous for the teaching or cleaning staff to clear away.
    - Over the last summer, RD put together a comprehensive list of suitable TV programmes to each year group, with a lot of BBC resources & Learning programmes being on the list but with "Horrible Histories" being removed due to parental concerns.
    - YOU TUBE is normally avoided due to the pop-up adverts, unless it is prepared in advance.
    - Parents/Carers are very welcome to email their class teacher if there are any programmes that they would prefer their child not to be watching. Please provide information on the content that is not suitable for your child to ensure that the particular issue is understood for any replacement.

- From the chat box “KS2 seems to be listening to audio books now which is an improvement, but previously what the children have been watching is never shared with parents or agreed with parents and I still have massive battles at home over things they’ve watched at school that I would never let them watch at home”.
  - From the chat box “**contact with teacher at the end of the day is very helpful, even briefly. A lot of other schools can’t offer that opportunity because of the physical layout of their school etc, so it’s something really positive at GP we are very lucky to have.**”
  - From the chat box “You tube also not ideal I.M.O as it opens the kids up to watching the pop up adverts without being able to screen them first, also normalises you tube, which not all parents will let kids use.”
  - **RD will issue a reminder** to all teaching staff to use the recommended list already provided.
- WITH STRAND I & J SCHOOLS, ALONG WITH CHISWICK SCHOOL, BANNING SMART PHONES, WHAT IS THE POSITION OF GROVE PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL?
    - RD has read through 4 of the largest pieces of research on children in school and Smart Phones, which encompass a wide range of perspectives. At Grove Park, there is a balance between the Welfare/Safeguarding of the children vs individual parental choice.
    - Only Years 5 & 6 are allowed to bring in a phone, with parental permission. This has to be handed into their teacher at the beginning of the day and handed back at the end of the school day.
    - The position of the school is that, overall, it is felt that it should be down to parental choice.
    - Another parent asked what the policy is for “Little Foxes” as children have been seen to have access to a phone after school. **JL to follow up on this.**
    - A parent asked RD to forward the positive evidence of children having access to smart phones.
    - All the attendees were then asked to show if they were comfortable enough to use the Zoom thumbs as to whether they wanted the school to ban smart phones (thumbs up) or leave it to parental discretion (thumbs down). Of the 26 parents/carers, 9 wanted the school to ban smart phones and 3 wanted it left to parental discretion.
    - Of those wanting to leave it to parental discretion, the points were raised that they had discussed it with their Secondary School child using parental controls on the phone and with parental access to the phone to check all activity as and when.
    - A parent said that even with controls, they couldn’t be sure what other smart phone users might show their own child.
    - From the chat box: “Smartphone free encourage the pact in the absence of schools putting in a ban, its not a really different opinion.”
    - From the chat box: “If Chiswick can put in a ban and GP is a feeder school for Chiswick, doesn't it make more sense to prepare them by aligning?”
    - From the chat box: Smartphones need to be banned to help follow the trajectory that local high schools are following (Chiswick School, West London Free, Christ’s, Green Schools, Twyford, etc). There’s far too much data now that shows how harmful they are.”
    - From the chat box: “Banning smartphones will stop the year 5 bullying that tends to happen over WhatsApp every year, which is a safeguarding issue. It also stops there potentially being a safeguarding issue with children using phones in afterschool clubs (anecdotal feedback from Aktiva, not aware of any issues with little Foxes).”

- From the chat box: “ I don't think we need to put a ban on smart phone. The Parent can just chose to not buy a smart phone for their kids that are walking home themselves. And buy a brick phone so they are still able to make calls.”
  - RD said that this topic was under constant review as all Headteachers in the East of the borough are in a partnership which meet regularly to review shared issues.
  - From the chat box: “I think it should be parent choice, and parent’s shouldn’t abdicate their own responsibility for managing their children’s device usage to the school”
  - From the chat box: “I can’t see how you will get a majority here. School can offer a preference/suggestion but do feel as if it does sit with the parents to manage.”
- "FOXES CLUBS/WRAPAROUND" - ARE THE CHILDREN ONLY USING THE HALL OR ARE THEY STILL UTILISING THE OUTDOORS WHEN WEATHER ALLOWS?
    - Breakfast club go outside every morning but depending upon what time children arrives depends upon how long they are outside for.
    - After school, clubs run between 3.30-4.30 with all sports outside but non-sports (eg Lego) being indoors.
    - 4.30-5pm tends to be a transition time with some children leaving school and some staying as part of wraparound care. Those staying will have a snack, which the child can take their time over. About half the children will go outside but, again, there are staggered times when children leave. If they leave by 5.30pm, the child is unlikely to go outside.
    - A parent mentioned that there used to be a light in the car park area which no longer operates and this means that it can be dark trying to collect children. Is there an alternative solution?
    - RD said that a neighbour had said that the light was too intrusive for them so it had been disconnected. The school was already actively looking for an alternative spot to erect a light to solve this problem. **RD to follow up.**
- IS THERE ANY OTHER WAY THAT PARENTS MAY HELP IN WAYS, OTHER THAN FINANCIAL, TO PROVIDE RESOURCES FOR THE SCHOOL? HOW HAS THE SCHOOL'S REQUEST FOR HELP IMPROVED THE RESOURCES AVAILABLE?
    - Since the meeting in June, huge efforts have been successful in providing savings due to an incredible response from both individuals and by the PTA. The improvement is noticeable although overall, there is still a deficit.
    - With ten regular volunteers providing 25 hours of help, it equates to £20,000 per year in savings.
    - What came out of the PTA AGM is that a directory of Skills/Knowledge/Expertise is being set up that could provide future resources.
    - Individual families have signed up for regular financial donations, equating to around £10-12,000 per year.
    - The school have been blown away by the response and the on-going commitment to help by all the stakeholders involved at school.
- ANY OTHER BUSINESS
    - A Parent asked if the school would consider providing a full day for pre-schoolers?
    - RD replied that this has again been recently assessed but it was not currently financially viable. However, it would be continued to be reviewed in case there was a change of circumstances.