



### Weekly Newsletter

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Dear Parents and Carers,

### **Covid 19**

In line with the roadmap easing of lockdown measures we have decided to mix Key Stage bubbles outdoors for playtimes and lunchtimes from Monday 17<sup>th</sup> May. This means that Y5/6 can mix – Trumpet, Flame and Ginkgo. Year 3/4 can mix - Chestnut, Mountain Ash and Golden Cedar. Y1/2 can mix – Dove, Lime and Beech and for transition purposes can be joined by Reception – Acorns for afternoon play. Should we get a COVID case we will have to close the indoor class bubble and then try to identify close contacts around each case to see if it affects others outside of the class. You can help with this by noting which children are meeting up out of school and which class they are in so that if we announce a COVID case in a certain class you can contact us so that we can help identify if your children have had close contact.

### **New look website**

We have been working on making our website more user friendly and accessible for smart phone use. We have been trying also to simplify the pathways for information as over the years it had become very populated. It is important to note that it is still a work in progress, but any useful feedback would be welcomed.

### **Staff news**

After 10 years at The Grove, Mr Mark Brudenell has been offered a super exciting career move and although we shall miss him, we do wish him all the best. He will leave at the end of the school year in July.

We have recently welcomed some new members of the TA staff – Mrs Natasha Ive, Mrs Hannah Palmer and Mr Alex Teague. These are supporting children with additional educational needs and Natasha is also temporarily supporting our Early Help/ family support provision as Assistant Sendco (special educational needs and disability coordinator).

### **Friendships / bullying**

Since all this COVID business started we have noticed an increase in friendship issues and bullying in school (and online for some older children). Children have lost some socialisation skills, naturally and understandably, during this time and we are working to rebuild friendships and awareness of others feelings and needs. I led the assembly this week about bullying and we are on high alert to support children.

You are the crucial link in this work as, although often the children talk to us about any issues, they almost always talk to their parents. If you have any concerns, then please do get in touch with the class teachers and we will do our very best to stamp out any bullying and iron out any friendship issues.

In after assembly class discussions some of the children also opened up about issues with their siblings. If this is the case in your home this is a useful link for your family wellbeing: <https://www.verywellfamily.com/what-is-the-big-deal-with-sibling-bullying-460624>

And: <https://www.verywellfamily.com/solutions-for-sibling-fighting-and-rivalry-620104>

### **News from the Governors**

Hello everyone, we have had a busy couple of weeks with two governor meetings, and a discussion with the Ofsted visitors to help them with their national review into sexual abuse of young people that Hilary mentioned two weeks ago. I personally welcomed the opportunity to feed into this, both as a sneak peak into the mind of an Ofsted inspector, but more importantly it was a chance to put forward some thoughts on how systems locally and nationally can improve to better support everyone involved in a school community.

This is a busy time of year, but we can look ahead to this last term with optimism as we begin to see further lockdown measures easing. Our focus in recent meetings has been on the curriculum and continuous improvement within the school - there are some wonderful things planned for the children, and I would like to thank all staff for their continued passion and commitment. As a board we have been focused for so long on risk assessments, and other Covid-affected items - while they haven't gone away just yet, and remain important, it is lovely to be able to see plans forming for the medium to long term within the school, with more certainty.

We will be ending this school year by resuming our visits with meet to teaching staff (in person or virtually) to hear first-hand the plans for their curriculum focus areas, and to discuss impact. We will also be sending our biannual parent questionnaire after half term, one of the key links between the board and all parents and carers.  
Ian Stewart, Chair of Governors

### **PTA School Lottery**

Don't forget that you can join our PTA school lottery. The lottery has been set up specifically to raise money and make a difference for our children! It's a fantastic way to bring Parents, Carers, Teachers and the wider community together, in partnership with our school, and at the same time give something back. We hope to raise funds that can support and enrich the education of our children - we aim to provide extra resources for the children, improve the school environment as well as run extracurricular activities.

Here is the link

**<https://www.yourschoollottery.co.uk/lottery/school/the-grove-school-totnes>**

Kind regards

Hilary Priest