

School Newsletter: Celebrating Our Successes and Progress

Date: February 14, 2025

Dear Parents, Carers and Pupils,

I want to take this opportunity to share with you what has been happening at Grafham Grange School. During this half term I have been working with pupils and staff, gaining a deeper understanding of the mechanics of Grafham Grange school as it stands and working with both OHCAT and LSEAT on what happens next.

This half term our focus has been on developing systems to improve attendance, pupils wearing a uniform, and how we interact with each other, all while celebrating the incredible successes and talents of our pupils.

Attendance Matters

Over the last six weeks, we have seen some great improvements in overall pupil attendance. A special thank you to all our families for supporting the importance of regular attendance. We understand that occasional absences are sometimes unavoidable, but we ask that every pupil continues to aim to come to school every day. Its important that we work together to ensure that each child makes the most of every learning opportunity!

A school Uniform

In January we introduced an interim uniform of black jogging bottoms, a black sweatshirt and white t-shirt. A school uniform is a key part of our identity and promotes a sense of belonging and pride in our school community. Please continue to support us in ensuring your children are wearing the correct uniform each day. By doing so this enables us to start to the day positively. If you need support with uniform costs please contact the school.

Respectful Communication

How we speak to each other is a core value that we are committed to developing in our pupils. Over the past six weeks, we have focused on how we address each other eg Sir, Miss. Speaking to each other with kindness, respect, and not swearing when we are feeling frustrated. I am proud to see these changes happening with many pupils treating each other with empathy and thoughtfulness. As we continue, let's all try to ensure that our communication is always positive and supportive. Small words can make a big difference!

Engagement in Forest School

Our Forest School program continues to be a big success! Pupils have shown incredible engagement as they explore nature, develop practical skills, and work as a team. From learning to cook on an open fire to exploring the woodland area, our pupils have embraced the outdoor learning environment with enthusiasm and curiosity. This hands-on approach to education has proven to be both fun and enriching for everyone involved.

New Gym Facilities

The new gym has been another hugely popular development. We have seen increased enthusiasm for physical education as pupils utilize the new space for sports, fitness, and wellness activities. The gym has become a hub of energy and teamwork, and it's exciting to see pupils pushing themselves to be

their best physically and mentally. We encourage all pupils to take full advantage of these new facilities!

Year 8 Fishing Achievement

One of the most impressive moments in the past six weeks came from some of our Year 8 pupils. As part of a series of outdoor learning activities, a group of Year 8 pupils have been learning how to fish in one of our school lakes. The highlight was catching a massive 32lb carp! This achievement not only shows the pupils' patience and skill but also their ability to work together and celebrate each other's successes. A huge congratulations to them!

Cooking Success: Sampling Cookies!

We also wanted to highlight the success of our cooking lessons this term, where students have not only honed their culinary skills but also had the chance to sample their delicious creations. One of the most popular treats in recent weeks has been the homemade cookies! It's been a joy to see students work together in the kitchen, following recipes, and most importantly, getting the chance to taste their hard work. The cookies have been a particular hit, and many students have expressed their excitement over getting to enjoy their tasty creations. We look forward to more culinary adventures in the upcoming weeks!

Looking Ahead

Next half term we will be moving to a **5-lesson day**, allowing pupils to study a broader curriculum including English, Maths, PSHE, Food Technology, PE and Forest School and a choice of extracurricular clubs for all pupils. In addition to this at KS3, Humanities, Science, Art and Design and KS4 Humanities and an Option choice of Business, Child Care or Sports Coaching and ASDAN and Careers. In addition to this all students will have dedicated reading time every day.

New School Day Schedule

- **9:00 - 9:30** Breakfast and Check-in
- **9:30 - 10:00** Reading Intervention Work, Catch-up, Gap Filling
- **10:00 - 10:45** Period 1
- **10:45 - 11:00** Break
- **11:00 - 11:45** Period 2
- **11:45 - 12:30** Period 3
- **12:30 - 12:50** Lunch (Year 8, 9, 10)
- **12:50 - 13:10** Lunch (Year 7, 11)
- **13:10 - 13:30** Tutor Reading, PSHE Topics
- **13:30 - 14:15** Period 4
- **14:15 - 15:00** Period 5 – Extra-Curricular Activities

Additionally, we will be introducing a **new behaviour policy** aimed at fostering a positive, respectful environment for all. This policy will emphasize consistency, accountability, and rewarding good behaviour.

We look forward to building on these successes and working together to ensure all of our pupils are able to develop their academic knowledge and vocational and personal interests.

Thank you for your continued support.

Louise Needham