

Notes from the Parent Forum

Saturday 31st January 2026

Attendees from Gordon's School:
Rhys Rowlands, Jemma Moreau, David Butler

Points for Discussion	Response Given/Action Required
Changes to the school Wi-Fi system and how to ensure Residential Boarders have access to social media (outside lessons/school hours).	<p>There is a clear and consistent Wi-Fi access policy in place for all Residential Boarders. Access to social media and wider internet use is enabled outside of lessons and school hours, in line with safeguarding expectations.</p> <p>For Residential Boarders, Wi-Fi access for social media begins at 7:30pm in the evenings and is also available over weekends. The specific type of access and the permitted times vary by year group, ensuring that access is age-appropriate and supports a healthy balance between study, rest, and leisure.</p> <p>This structured approach allows students to stay connected socially while also maintaining clear boundaries around learning time and wellbeing. Boarding staff monitor usage and are on hand to support students if any issues arise.</p>
How the school sees the EBacc and any reactions to the government's announcement that it will be abolished.	<p>Gordon's has never allowed the Government target of 90% of students achieving the Ebacc to influence its approach, believing that a student should select their options based on three key areas - enjoyment, aptitude and ambitions. The general idea of Ebacc is supported because this balance of academically rigorous subjects ensures students can access all the A level and university courses they would wish to. The belief is that a solid foundation in these facilitating subjects provides students with an extremely strong platform from</p>

	<p>which to undertake future learning, so students are encouraged to consider following an EBacc pathway to ensure they keep their options open for further study and future careers.</p> <p>However, students would not be dissuaded from taking creative subjects to achieve the Ebacc, and these creative subjects remain an integral part of the curriculum.</p> <p>Should the government choose to abandon the Ebacc, the approach to advising students on their options choices will therefore likely remain largely unchanged.</p>
<p>Tablets and screen size. It is felt by some parents that the tablets provided to students have a very small screen and that it may not be ideal for long periods of reading, studying, or working. There are some parents who have observed students adopting an incorrect posture and squinting. Is this something other parents have raised as well?</p> <p>Similarly, a question was raised about sitting at desks for long periods and whether there would be a possibility for standing desks.</p>	<p>The IT requirements are reviewed in the monthly IT meeting including the screen size. The comment will be noted at the next meeting on 9th February.</p> <p>It is also emphasised by the school that Students shouldn't be on their tablets all the time, only some lessons use tablets, and not all prep work is set to be completed with the use of a tablet.</p> <p>Whilst standing desks may not be feasible, based on cost, there is scope for a PSHE lesson which teaches students correct posture, sitting up properly and ensuring that they are comfortable during the day.</p>
<p>Security in Houses – How are the school ensuring that lockers and personal belongings are secure in the Boarding Houses?</p>	<p>Staff have kept reminding students about their responsibility to keep their lockers secure and any attractive items out of sight. They continue to push the use of padlocks and supply them to those who need them.</p>
<p>Merchandise - for pitch side parents supporting the sports matches, for example. What would parents like to see?</p>	<p>Items which can be re-worn, re-purposed – such as scarves, hoodies, and dry robes.</p>
<p>Fundraising – Regular donations via Direct Debit. Would parents be amenable to this</p>	<p>Parent feedback suggested that the best option would be to offer both one-time</p>

<p>idea to support students with bursaries, or would they prefer to make one-time donations during events/campaigns?</p>	<p>donations and the option to donate monthly to a fund which supports bursaries.</p>
<p>Events: A list has been given by Events and Fundraising Co-Ordinator detailing theatre trips, Summer Dance (Friday 26th June – with live band), Outdoor Cinema (Date TBC September), Quiz Night (9th October), Christmas Wreath making on 27th of November, and the Christmas Fair on 12th of December.</p>	<p>Feedback to all events was positive.</p>
<p>School Meals – A question was raised about what is available to students during the school day for their lunch.</p>	<p>There are a range of options; hot food, cold food, sandwiches, salad bar, all dietary requirements catered for and fresh fruit and vegetables. Students can have second portions by request, if required, and if available.</p>
<p>David Butler (cycling coach) shared some information about how well the cycling team have been doing recently – which prompted a question about availability of showers for students after partaking in cycling clubs.</p>	<p>Rhys Rowland will check about the use of the shower blocks and whether these need to be booked for the cycling club members.</p>
<p>British Young Pilots – In Reading. Possibility of this being a Saturday school option for Gordon’s students.</p>	<p>The school is doing more research and getting more information about what would be involved/required for this to take place.</p>
<p>Comms for parents – How best to communicate changes to matches and training times to parents, in the event of wet weather for example.</p>	<p>The parent group suggested a potential Whatsapp Group between the school and parents. Rhys Rowland will investigate different options.</p>
<p>Shows – Creative Arts</p> <p>Some parents are concerned that late nights after school productions may negatively impact their children during the school day. Would there be a possibility to move the school shows to Exeat weekends, to lessen the impact of late nights?</p>	<p>At present, there are no plans to change when the shows currently run, and this is led by the Creative Arts department. The school would consider increasing the three night performances to four but the welfare of students taking part is the priority. During the parent forum, it was discussed that it would be nice for all students to be able to see the shows and that it might inspire more students to get</p>

<p>Parents also asked whether there might be more shows so that all year groups can see the shows.</p>	<p>involved in creative arts. Tickets to see the latest production (Amelie) were free to students. However, due to the numbers of students, it would not be possible to accommodate them all in seeing a show as this would involve seven additional performances, which may impact on the welfare of the student performers. However, it may be possible to open a dress rehearsal to some year groups.</p>
<p>Students sharing documents when working on a collaborative group project – This is not permitted.</p>	<p>There is a blanket policy prohibiting students from sharing documents; even when collaborating as part of a society or group. Students can share their documents with the teacher leading the class or group, who can then collate them or a group project.</p>
<p>MAD Day</p>	<p>Make A Difference Day – If anyone knows of individuals in the local area who could benefit from some additional support or complete a project that they are unable to complete alone, students would be looking to undertake that project on 1st July. It was shared that last year, students helped to clear the garden of a local resident who was unable to do this alone. These are the sort of personal projects students would like to undertake.</p>
<p>When are PE rain jackets (school branded, purchased through Tylers) to be worn?</p>	<p>When there is wet weather, students can wear their jackets walking to and from their activities, but not during the lesson itself.</p>
<p>What does the school want from the Parent Forum?</p>	<p>The initial meeting format worked well. The school received several questions in advance of the meeting, and was able to bring answers to the forum, as well as answering questions raised through the course of the meeting.</p>

