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A Dark Day for America

Bella Smith

Solar eclipse

You may have heard about the recent natural phenomenon that many people in North America were able to witness. The Solar Eclipse happened on the 8th March this year, with many people describing it as one of Earth's greatest spectacles.

What is a solar eclipse?

A solar eclipse refers to when the Moon is positioned between the Sun and Earth, causing a shadow to be cast over Earth's surface. On the 8th March people were able to observe a total eclipse which means a New Moon was completely covering the Sun. A total eclipse happens once every 18 months; however, most can only be seen from the Poles or from the middle of an ocean. Total eclipses are possible due to the Sun's diameter being roughly 400 times that of the Moon while being approximately 400 times farther away. This means that they have the same angular size: they appear to have the same diameter from Earth.

During the total solar eclipse the temperatures plummeted and twilight descended. Totality (when all of the Sun is obscured by the Moon) lasted for about three and a half minutes before the sky would have returned to normal. When witnessing a solar eclipse people wear eclipse glasses to protect their eyes from the Sun's rays. This is because the rays contain harmful ultraviolet light and infrared rays which damage the retina in the eye, and can cause blindness.

Solar eclipses in the UK

The solar eclipse that took place most recently wasn't very visible from here in the UK as we weren't on the



path of totality. This means we weren't able to see the full eclipse, only a partial eclipse, if we were lucky.

The last total eclipse that was visible in England was in August 1999 with countries like France, Germany, Switzerland, Austria, Hungary, Romania, Turkey, Iraq, Iran, Pakistan and India also being able to experience it.

In the UK we will have to wait for 66 years until the next total eclipse in September 2090 but if that is too far away, you can look forward to seeing a near total eclipse on the 29th March 2025.

Mobile Phones: To

Evie McDonnell

Parklands has now implemented its complete ban on mobile phones in and around school during all hours. Despite this rule being highly encouraged and supported by teachers and other local schools, this is only a recommendation by the government and, as a school, we are not legally obligated to follow suit.

We, as a school, have clearly seen phones as a useful advancement in technology as we use them to our advantage a lot: teachers regularly send emails to inform pupils of meetings, we use Google Classroom for homework and Edulink for timetables!

Some of these can easily be changed to fit the new rule such as regularly providing pupils with paper timetables, however there are still flaws with this. For example, students will not be aware of last minute room changes since many form tutors miss updates in the bulletin, and it's simply bad for the environment using so much paper especially when we as a school are trying to cut down how much we use.

It's also not just pupils who will miss the use of mobile phones as many teachers find them useful during lessons, whether it's wanting pupils to fill out a questionnaire, or finish some revision. Teachers being able to pretty much rely on the fact that people can quickly access the internet makes life a lot easier compared to booking iPads, and computing rooms, especially since without phones the demand for these will be even higher than they currently are.

“phones are a useful advancement in technology as we use them to our advantage a lot”



Another flaw that has not been properly adapted for is pupils trying to contact home. It was stated in the SECURE lesson we had that if a student needed to speak with home they could always ask a HAL, however HALs are known for being very busy with meetings and such so the chances of needing to contact home and the HALs office being completely empty is not unlikely. Even if Heads of Houses are available, repeatedly being asked to call/email home will soon take time out of their very busy days.

I hope that, as the mobile phone ban develops, it is kept under review and we can acknowledge what a useful academic and social tool mobile phones are.

ban or not to ban?



Aaron Denham

We now have a complete ban on mobile phones on the school premises (even before and after school). Some people are thinking that this will be highly beneficial for the school while others think it is not going to benefit the school so here is why school should ban phones and why they should not.

Firstly, Parklands is banning the use of mobile phones for safeguarding reasons as there have been incidents in the past of teachers and other students being filmed without permission and being posted onto social media sites like TikTok, Instagram and more. This can be a huge safeguarding risk as it could jeopardise the safety of a person if they are seen in the recording.

Another reason school is banning phones is due to the government's crackdown on it and some of the latest bit of legislation for schools is that phones should not be allowed to be turned on in school.

“since social media platforms such as instagram, TikTok and more blew up it mental health in teenagers started to decline and psychologists saw the correlation between two”

My third and final reason is because according to some studies since social media platforms such as instagram, TikTok and more blew up it was also around the time mental health in teenagers started to decline and some psychologists saw the correlation between two.

However, there some ways Parklands is not ready for a mobile phone ban for a number of reasons. The school is not equipped for the ban with only 4 sets of 10 I pads and not a large number of laptops so school would need a lot more of those if they want to be somewhat ready for it (some departments have invested in I pads for themselves but issues could still arise). My final reason is that with the computer rooms there are only 4 in total (W11, W12 ,S11 and A11) and 2 of those are occupied by Mr Miller and Mr Holding which only leaves 2 free for other teachers and that simply won't be enough to cover this ban. This phone ban also restricts activities classes can do which can help them engage.

In conclusion, I can see that it could be super beneficial for the school to ban phones but we need to have the equipment for it. I would also make the rules slightly more flexible, allowing students to use their phones after the end of day school bell in the grounds to contact carers, friends ect.

Clubs

Crochet Away!



Alexa Makinson

For weeks, Learning Ambassador Sophie Wright has been working incredibly hard to try to create this club, and has recently gotten it up and running, so this week, I am delighted to introduce the Crochet Club!

This club is a lovely place where you can go sit down and relax, whilst learning something new. Whilst it currently only has a small group who attend, it has a great environment where the people make you feel very welcomed and comfortable as it is run by the Learning Ambassadors.

Even as a complete beginner in crocheting, when I went for my first time, they were all incredibly kind, and even taught me how to do my first chain stitch. This club is perfect for experienced crocheters who would like to spend more time on their hobby, or even for complete beginners who want something new to do.

If you think that crocheting might be something you are interested in, then I would recommend just going for a lunchtime and watching how it works to get an idea of if you'd be interested. Whilst they do recommend bringing your own materials, they are very kind and often lend you spare hooks and wool if you're new and haven't had a chance to

get your own.

Overall this club is a great community of lovely people and I would fully recommend dropping by if you're interested. Crochet club takes place in Steinbeck, which is part of the upper English Block, at lunchtimes on Mondays.

Alfie Woods becomes Editor

“the school newspaper is important because it's a platform for students to express themselves”

Hello! My name is Alfie Woods and I am now the Editor of the school newspaper. I have attended newspaper club almost every single Thursday since I first heard about it in year 7 and I am currently in year 8. The reason I have taken the position of Editor is because I enjoyed writing and creating a puzzle corner and wanted to help others be able to like and feel happy about writing like I have. Another reason may be so our past editors, Alexa Makinson and Lily Hodgkinson, can focus on their mock exams. I believe the school newspaper is important because it's a platform for students to express themselves and state their views on current events in the world.

The Big Parklands Paper

Editor: Alfie Woods

If you have any comments on the content of the paper, wish to suggest future articles or want to submit a report to the paper, please email:

newspaper@parklandsacademy.co.uk

Want to write for the Big Parklands Paper?

Join the newspaper team at break, every Thursday, in W01.