

Briefing for Press from Grove Parish Council

This briefing refers to the safety concerns that Grove Parish Council (GPC) has about road safety for the new secondary school in Grove.

The new St John's C of E Secondary School in Grove is due to open its doors for the first time at the beginning of September 2026 to pupils from the area. The school is situated at a crossroads on the new Wellington Gate development in Grove, with the main access to the school along Liberator Lane. This is also the main entry and egress to the whole Wellington Gate site.

Liberator Lane is now a very busy road, and traffic passes down it at high speeds, particularly at school arrival time between 8 and 9 am. The speed limit is believed to be 30mph although there are no speed signs along the road to indicate this. Currently there are no speed signs along the road. There is no safe crossing point for pupils or adults to access the school from anywhere North of Liberator Lane.

This has all come about because Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) either failed to notice that there were no school crossing points or deemed them unnecessary at the planning stage for the school, despite OCC Highways commenting on other issues, their technical experts failed in this regard.

GPC have been pressing OCC to rectify this for over a year, before the new school opens. Despite going round in circles from department to department, GPC has not found a satisfactory resolution, and school attendees will be at high risk of injury or worse come September.

Persimmon Homes agreed that they would build a crossing if OCC would provide the technical specification for it. OCC have said that they cannot because the road is not yet adopted, nor has it been speed checked etc.

Despite the risk to life, OCC have not progressed this issue for over a year, instead pointing to the red tape hindering any progress, again putting the residents of the area at great risk. GPC questions why this risk to children and staff is acceptable to both OCC and Persimmon Homes.

GPC has visited the site and identified a suitable location for a controlled crossing. GPC is willing to consider contributing towards the cost of a crossing, despite it not being the responsibility of the Parish Council to do so, but we are not willing to accept the level of risk to school attendees.

It is less than three months until this school is opened. **Action must be taken to install a crossing now, to prevent risk to life.**

Richard Ackers

Chairman Grove Parish Council