

# APPENDIX I: Transcripts of interviews

Following Appendix contains shortened transcripts of interviews, which served as an authentic source of qualitative data for the research part of the thesis. It contains transcripts of two interviews conducted with prospective and current parent.

## INTERVIEW 1: PROSPECTIVE PARENT

### 1. Can you remember when and where have you first heard about Park Lane?

*I came across the school profile on the Expats.cz website when researching the school options.*

### 2. Was there someone who recommended/told you about Park Lane?

*One of my colleagues told me that Park Lane was one of the best schools in Prague.*

### 3. Being a parent searching for international school in Prague, where did you first look for information about the potential school?

*I used expats.cz website, which proved very useful when researching different school options*

## MEDIA TYPES

### 1. Do you find the information on the school website being helpful?

*Yes, I have found their website to be full of relevant information, which has helped me to determine whether this school meets my expectations or not*

### 2. Is there any information missing on the school website? If yes, please specify.

*No, I think their website has all the information that any prospective parent may need*

### 3. Can you easily browse the website and find required information? Is it well structured?

*Yes, I have found their website to be very informative and user-friendly, as well as very well structured, which has saved me a lot of time when comparing Park Lane to other schools in Prague*

### 4. Can you specify why you have found the websites of other schools to be more complicated?

*They seem to include more information and facts than necessary, and thus make the whole browsing experience rather time consuming.*

### 5. Are you an active user of social media? Can you specify which social media are you using and how often?

*Yes, I use Facebook and Twitter on a daily basis*

**6. Are you following Park Lane on social media? If yes, please, specify. How do you like communication of Park Lane on social media?**

*Yes, I have been following mainly the school's twitter accounts. I really like the fact that many departments use twitter to display the students' work and celebrate their successes. As a prospective parent, I find it useful to see what sort of activities and events the Park Lane students participate in, both inside and outside of the classroom, and social media make that possible.*

**7. Do you wish the school provides you with an opportunity for interaction via social media? Do you wish to engage with Park Lane? If yes, in what ways?**

*To some extent, perhaps if they were looking for suggestions on how to improve the school, or hoping to involve parents in the educational process as such*

**8. Have you attended Park Lane Open day? If so, in what way has it influenced your decision? If not, would you like to visit it in the future?**

*No, I did not attend the official Open Day, but in the past, when choosing the school for my child, I visited plenty of schools on my own. The visit as such, definitely influenced my decision, as not only could I see for myself what the school offers, but I was also given the opportunity to talk to teachers and other members of staff.*

**9. Do you consider the opportunity to visit a school to be an important factor when choosing the right school for your child?**

*Absolutely, I think every parent together with their child should visit the school they are considering, as sometimes the brochures and websites can be rather misleading or deceptive*

**10. Has the school provided you with its brochures or could you find it on the internet? Have you found provided information being helpful?**

*I did not consult any brochures, since I found all the information about the school on their website*

**11. In what ways do you wish school approaches you? Please, order the following according to your preferences.**

- Telephone - 7
- Email - 4

- Social media (Facebook, Twitter..etc) - 3
- School website - 6
- Online portal for parents - 2
- Newspaper - 8
- E-newsletter - 1
- Printed newsletter - 5
- Other (please specify)

**12. Do you wish to be connected with the teachers of your child? If yes, in what ways?**

*Yes, the parents evenings and email communication (if necessary) meet my needs and expectations*

**13. What do you consider to be a more credible source of information from the following two options?**

**a) What other people (friends, community) say about Park Lane**

**b) What Park Lane says about themselves**

*I would say that general public's opinions about the school might be less biased and thus more credible, however I like to take into account both sources of information*

**CONTENT**

**1. What information do you require the school provides you with? Please rate the following as very important, important or less important.**

- Information about school events and activities – less important
- Information about overall school performance, school reputation – very important
- Information about pedagogical staff – important
- Curriculum information – very important
- Extra-curriculum activities – less important
- Information about school lunch – less important
- Information about student achievements and alumni – important
- Information about school fees – very important
- Information about school culture – important
- Other (please specify)

**2. Do you like browsing Park Lane pictures, videos or do you prefer reading a text? What is your view on these ways of communicating?**

*I like the combination of both. Videos and pictures are great for capturing especially students' successes and achievements, whereas written communication helps to put everything into the right context.*

**3. Can you get a vivid picture of Park Lane school life based on the school communication?**

*More or less, yes. The school's social media in particular make me believe that there is always something going on and Parklane students are kept busy all the time.*

**4. Have you found the information about Park Lane students' achievements? Would you like to hear stories about its students?**

*Yes, I think the school does a great job when celebrating its students' achievements and I always like to read stories about what these students have accomplished.*

**5. Do you know what is Park Lane motto? ("...preparing the young people of today for the unknown occupations of tomorrow."). What do you think about it?**

*It is very relevant to current globalised world and I think it distinguishes Park Lane straight away from other more traditional and academically oriented schools in Prague*

## **DECISION MAKING PROCESS**

**1. What are the criteria when choosing the school for your child(ren)? Please, rate the following according to your preferences.**

- Location of school (distance) - 7
- Language of instruction - 8
- K12 school (full education since kindergarten to university) - 9
- Fees - 5
- Size of school - 4
- Team spirit - 6
- School culture (values and attitudes) - 1
- School reputation - 2
- Academic content - 3
- Other

**2. Are there other schools you are considering? In what ways do they differ from Park Lane?**

*Yes, the other schools I am considering are bigger in size, located outside of the city centre and they tend to be more academically oriented.*

**3. What would you say are the advantages of Park Lane?**

*Centrally located school, friendly and mostly UK-trained staff, reasonable tuition fees, small class-sizes, international curriculum and plenty of opportunities for the students to learn outside of the classroom*

**4. How would you describe your wishes, needs, attitudes and values in terms of education?**

*I think students should be actively involved in their learning and their teachers should support them in doing so. The focus should not be exclusively on high academic achievement, but also, and perhaps more importantly, on the development of students' skills and abilities. Students should also be able to apply the learned knowledge to real-life situations.*

*I feel that Park Lane meets my expectations very well*

**Background of the respondent**

1. Age/generation: 40+
2. Marital status: Married
3. Educational background: Masters degree
4. Occupation: IT Consultant
5. Number of children: One

## **INTERVIEW 2: CURRENT PARENT**

### **1. Can you remember when and where have you first heard about Park Lane?**

*It's a long time ago. It's about 12 years ago. And I found..I believe on the internet. And it was not Park Lane , it was Nessy because it is part of Parklane, which is the pre-school.*

### **2. Was there someone who recommended/told you about Park Lane?**

*No.*

### **3. So I wanted to ask where you found information about the potential school, so it was the internet then.**

*I found on the internet, yes. I was looking for English pre-school in Prague.*

## **MEDIA TYPES**

### **1. So now we will continue with the section about the media type, and I will ask you to rate the following according to your preferences. And the question is, in what ways do you wish school approaches you?**

- Telephone -2
- Email -1
- Social media (Facebook, Twitter..etc)
- School website- 3
- Online portal for parents
- Newspaper
- E-newsletter
- Printed newsletter
- Other (please specify)

### **2. Thank you. Ok, so you've just rated these three types of media. What about the others? Are they not relevant?**

*Yes, they are not relevant.*

### **3. When you are searching for some information about the school, can you easily find it or are you struggling a bit?**

*I know the school, kids have been there for years, so I don't need any general information, so if I want to find specific information concerning the content, you know, the programme, I usually turn to the teacher or the administrative staff directly. So, I don't look for any general information as a parent. But I think you will get from every parent a very similar information.*

**4. Right, I see. I'm going to ask you about the specific media types. Do you find the information on the school website being helpful?**

*Sometimes. I usually look up only for a school calendar at the webpage.*

**5. You mean, looking at the school events?**

*No, meaning when is holiday, generally the free days. When the school has the free days.*

**6. Is there any information missing on the school website? What information is useful for you?**

*I don't use it that much. Maybe contacts, you can find contacts for the teachers.*

**7. What about the structure of the website?**

*I don't really care, I know where is what and that's important for me. As I said, I don't look too much information there, because most of the staff on the webpage is not directed to me, so therefore I am fine with it.*

**8. Personally, are you in favour of online school communication?**

*Depends on what it is. Sometimes I prefer online, sometimes I prefer paper. When for example kids are supposed to bring something signed, I prefer sign the paper rather than me having to print it at home.*

**9. Are you an active user of social media?**

*No, not really.*

**10. So you don't know about Park Lane communication on social media?**

*No.*

**11. Do you wish the school provides you with an opportunity for interactivity? Do you wish to engage with Park Lane?**

*Honestly no, because it is an extra time I would have to spent on the internet, which is not something I am looking for.*

**12. I know it was long time ago, but did you visit Park Lane before you made the choice about the school?**

*I just made an appointment, I went to have a look, I talked to the people, teachers, and that's it.*

**13. So you didn't go to the official event like Open day?**

*No, it was nothing like this in those days.*

**14. And do you think it influenced your decision in any way?**

*Definitely. It was not the only school I went to.*

**15. What did you find special about Park Lane during your visit?**

*The school was starting these days. I liked the atmosphere, I liked the people, I liked the place better than the other ones and that was how I made the decision.*

**16. Ok, so the atmosphere was important for you.**

*Yes, and we went to the Bertramka place. Which was the first location where they have been.*

**17. What about the school newspapers? Park Lane has its own newspaper, Park Lane Press, do you know about it?**

*Yes, I know, I flip through, the kids bring it home. They also send weekly newsletter about what's going on. It's cool, by email, which I like, I go through, and Park lane press , yes it's ok, it's fine, I flip through.*

**18. Do you find it interesting?**

*It's nice. There are some pictures of the kids. Yes. It's ok.*

**19. Do you wish to be connected with the teachers of your child? If yes, in what ways?**

*You know, my kids are both at secondary, they deal with their school stuff themselves, so I go twice a year to the parent meeting, and if I have certain doubt or I wish any additional information, I ask for it. But otherwise, I don't need information from 6 or 8 teachers on weekly*



*basis. So I don't really..only in special occasions when I have some need, specific reason to ask for something.*

**20. What would you say, what do you consider as a more credible source from these two—what people (friends, community) say about Park Lane or what Park Lane says about it?**

*Really, when I want some information about the school, I talk to other parents, we know each other for years, because kids are there for years, so we talk to each other..with several parents I know for years..and if I really needed some information about some really important study staff or the plans of the school or whatever, then I usually ask the management of the school. And they have sometimes meetings and if I think it's not enough I ask for the information.*

**21. What channels in general would you mark as credible sources? So you trust the management then.**

*Yes, the management of the school directly. You know, the type of information I usually look for is quite specific, so I don't think it's something that would be on the school website.*

## **CONTENT**

**1. Ok, so now we will move to the content. What information do you require the school shares with you? Please rate the following as either very important, important or less important.**

- Information about school events and activities - important
- Information about overall school performance, school reputation – very important
- Information about pedagogical staff - important
- Curriculum information – less important
- Extra-curriculum activities – less important
- Information about school lunch - important
- Information about the student achievements and alumni – very important
- Information about the school fees – less important
- Information about school culture – less important
- Other (please specify)

**2. If you could tell, what specific information and way of communication would you prefer for each or some of the category mentioned?**

*Honestly for me, it's very important for me – the school performance, information about the programme, about..you know, the school is new, meaning young, meaning where the school is aiming, with respect to the academic content. So, this is important for me. And its aims what type of programme academically the school aims to have and for that I would prefer, maybe it can be per email or paper, whatever, and sometimes meetings, from time to time to explain parents the school strategy on this topic. Reputation is important for me because it is interconnected to the academic content.*

**3. Based on what you are saying, I think you prefer mainly personal communication. Can I put it like this or is it too generalised?**

*It's hard to say. Some can be written, you know sent per email, something can be shared on paper. But mostly it can be per email. Electronic way is fine. But sometimes personal. You know some things concerning the academic content really need to be explained, it's a British curriculum, it's different from the Czech and parents need to understand, what and why the school does and how and..it's got to be explained in person.*

**4. So it's better, because when you are reading something on the website, you can't ask directly, when you are just reading it..**

*Yes, exactly.*

**5. You were also mentioning the pictures presented in the school newspaper. Do you like browsing Park Lane pictures, videos or do you prefer reading text? What is your view on these ways of communicating?**

*Not really. You know, I really don't have that much time to sit and browse through the pictures. If I know that my kids were part of some activity and newsletter comes, I look at the pictures, I say ok, these are my kids, these are my friends' kids and that's it. I don't need more. And when there is something you know, some real school occasion, you can usually get the pictures from school office, like on flash disk or something, so that's fine and that's it.*

*Stories about students are nice. They are in a newsletter sometimes, someone achieved some success or something, yes, I flip through, I don't read it in detail..If it's part of newsletter, that someone achieved something interesting, then yes, I read it, and it's good it's there. And I think school should present the achievements of its students. It should be there. But again, for me as*

*a parent, it's good to know that school can support students in various activities. That's the information I like.*

**6. Can you get a vivid picture of Park Lane school life based on the school communication?**

*You know, it's the school. Kids go there, they like it. The school has very nice atmosphere, so they enjoy going to school, they have good academic results, they enjoy and that's important. So I don't need to dig into that much deeper. As long as the school keeps that going, I am happy with it. But for those who are looking for school, the website is important, but you will have to ask someone else. I'm in a different position.*

**7. Do you know what is Park Lane motto? (“...preparing the young people of today for the unknown occupations of tomorrow.“). What do you think about it?**

*Yes it's nice. This is nice one. And they try to develop all source of skills of children so that's good.*

**8. So do you think they are preparing them for the real life?**

*I would say compared to Czech schools, definitely.*

**FREQUENCY OF COMMUNICATION**

**1. Are you satisfied with the frequency of Park Lane communication? Do you think it should communicate more?**

*I think no, but the trouble is if you ask parents of pre-school children, or smaller children they would tell you yes. I really, after all those years I trust the school and I believe that if they need something, they contact me and if I need something I contact them. So really, I am not in a need of very super quick frequent communication on general topics. If there is some important information, yes, I hope they will let me know on time. It's an emotional thing. If you have a small child, you want to know everything. After 12 years, you don't ask about daily routines.*

**OVERAL SATISFACTION**

**1. How informed do you feel about the school of your child/ren and the learning process of your child(ren)? Is there any gap in school communication you wish the school would improve?**

*Most of the time, I am well informed. Sometimes I could use more information, especially when it comes to the curriculum for the future. Because the school is still in the process of implementing the IGCSE and the IB programme, so there I could definitely use much more information and I would also appreciate if the school much more communicated not only with me, but more importantly with children, about, you know, about their potential future, future jobs, professions, because based on that they have to decide on their subjects for this programme. So I think in that area, there should be much more information, especially for the children.*

## **DECISION MAKING PROCESS**

### **1. What do you value about Park Lane the most?**

*As I've said, the kids are happy, they like to go to school, you see they have relatively good knowledge of broad spectrum of information, the school teaches them different skills, not just knowledge, they teach them skills.*

### **2. What are/were criteria when choosing the school for your child(ren)? Please, mark the following as very important, important, less important.**

- Location of school (distance) - important
- Language of instruction – very important
- K12 school (full education since kindergarten to university) – less important
- Fees - important
- Size of school – less important
- School culture (values and attitudes) – very important
- School reputation, renom  – less important
- Academic content – very important
- Other

*Academic content, you want to know what results your children have, what knowledge they have and I can't compare to other schools because my kids didn't go to other schools so it's hard to compare. But you know as long as they have good grades on some, from my perspective objective scales, so when I think they have good results..they have good academic results and knowledge they have, the knowledge and understanding of topics they discuss at school. I think good curriculum leads to better results than bad or no curriculum.*

**3. Have you looked at other international schools with the same curriculum maybe..**

*I don't know. It's subjective. Hard to compare. But the results are not the only important thing for us parents, the other thing is that the kids enjoy going to school, the school develops all sorts of skills, and you know, that's what I think is for us important.*

**4. Were you considering other schools as well?**

*You know, at different stages we were considering changing, but we have decided to stay.*

**5. Can you explain why?**

*Because it fulfils our expectations, as I said, kids enjoy the school, they enjoy the learning process, and at the same time, from our perspective, they have good knowledge.*

**6. But you said you were considering changing the school at different stages? So what was behind this?**

*We were mostly considering for changing for the Czech system, but we never did.*

**7. Do you value the opportunity to take part in the Czech study programme as well?**

*Yes, they do have the Czech Programme, the Czech language...which is important for us and many other parents as well, the Czech parents.*

**8. How would you describe your wishes, needs, attitudes and values in connection with school?**

*I think for me it's interesting... when it comes to values..is that the school..I think that children achieve from my perspective good academic results while enjoying it. They don't put unnecessary pressure on kids, and even if they have tests, somehow we never, I think most of time, never had any big stress around it, which I know from many of my friends who have children at Czech schools. So somehow they manage to achieve these results..somehow..friendly.*

**9. Do you know some parents who have kids at other international school? Maybe you compare information?**

*Yes, yes.*

**10. Can I ask which international school?**

*English college, which has similar programme and I think it is comparable..with its results, atmosphere. But yes, English college.. I know, people who have or had children there and were happy with the school.*

**11. I think it is a smaller school..**

*Yes, they have only the last 6 years, they don't start with the pre-school and the primary. They have only the secondary.*

**12. And what is your opinion on those larger international schools?**

*From the perspective of location, we've never considered them.*

**13. Because of the location?**

*Yes, you know...much traveling..two hours to school...But they are comparable. Our kids have classmates from other schools..and I think there are not big differences in the results.*

**14. Do you think it makes a difference if a child goes to a smaller school and large school?**

*Definitely. It does. I think Park Lane has nice family type of atmosphere, but it depends. It has its advantages, disadvantages like everything. Advantage – you know everyone, they have nice friendly and family type of environment. On the other hand, well, you know, it's still quite limited..the social environment. I mean, you have bigger schools, you have more people, bigger community. So everything has its advantages and disadvantages.*

**15. And how would you describe the pedagogical staff at Park Lane?**

*Yes, I've met many of the teachers. The big, big, big majority of them are enthusiastic people who like their job and like teaching children and have good results in it. So yes, good teaching staff.*

**16. Do you appreciate socializing with other parents or teachers during special events? In other words, what does it mean for you to be a part of school community?**

*Yes, we do attend some events and they are nice, yes. The school tries to create nice community. And I think everybody can get involved as much as you want. So it's not like, you know, there are parents, for example the foreign parents, sometimes like to get involved more, but when you have a full time job then you like to be involved less but the school gives good opportunity that you can get together..and it's nice.*

**17. So do you appreciate being a part of school community? Is it important for you?**

*Yes, yes definitely. It is important.*

**18. Can you explain why?**

*It is part of the culture, part of the community, and it's really nice community and it's nice to come and meet these people and talk to them..it's nice to talk to the headmaster, talk to the teachers..you know..know them from the other side than is the professional.*

**Thank you very much for your contribution.**

**Background of the respondent**

Age: 40+

Marital status: married

Educational background: university degree

Occupation: university teacher

Number of children: two