



# Leading Our School

## A Newsletter from the Leadership

Issue 10 - October 2015

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Leadership at Grove Road was recently judged as outstanding by the Local Authority in our annual review. Leaders at all levels were found to be proactive in promoting school improvement and innovation through highly effective monitoring and clear strategic planning. The leadership structure at Grove Road has been designed to promote professional development through the coaching of new leaders of Curriculum Teams, rather like the sub-committee structure of the governing body and age phase Key Stage teams. Both are designed to provide challenge and support on the path to school improvement.

Each Curriculum Development Team has a Curriculum Development Leader and a group of Subject Leaders who work in teams to address curriculum improvement. The strength of these teams is that in addition to promoting strong subject leadership, they also provide regular opportunities for all staff to work in teams to build and develop their curriculum monitoring and evaluation skills and in turn

their abilities to identify next steps and improvement strategies from a strategic leadership perspective.

Pupil outcomes are led and managed in age phase teams led by Key Stage Leaders, whose role it is to track pupil progress and quality of teaching in each year group. Curriculum Development Leaders and Key Stage Leaders work in tandem to promote improvements in both curriculum provision and pupil outcomes.

In a bid to further enhance outstanding practice across the school, we now have two Assistant Heads: Mike Comer and Katie Reeve. Mike Comer is responsible for ensuring the curriculum provides the best possible

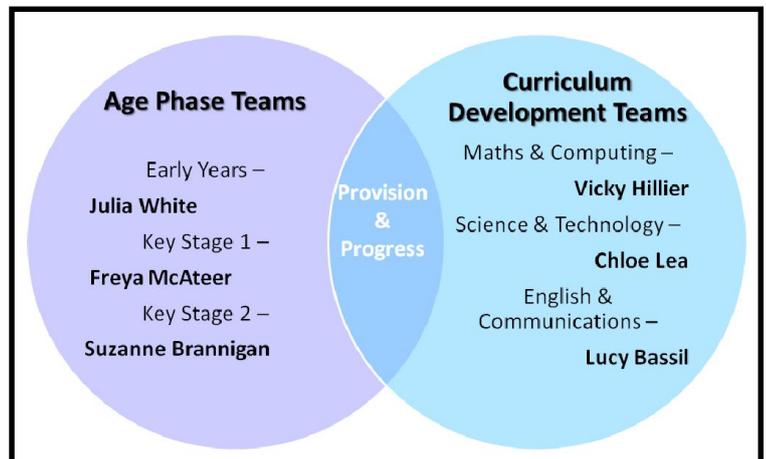
opportunities to prepare your children for life in the 21st Century. Mike line manages the Curriculum Development Leaders and oversees the curriculum. He is also responsible for transition arrangements and liaison with other local schools. Katie Reeve, in her role as Assistant Head, oversees pupil well-being and behaviour. Katie tracks pupils' attendance, their progress and any gaps in learning. The Assistant Heads bring an invaluable class teaching perspective to the leadership voice in the school. They work to coach and support teaching colleagues as well as challenging pupils and staff to exceed expectations.

### Get in Touch

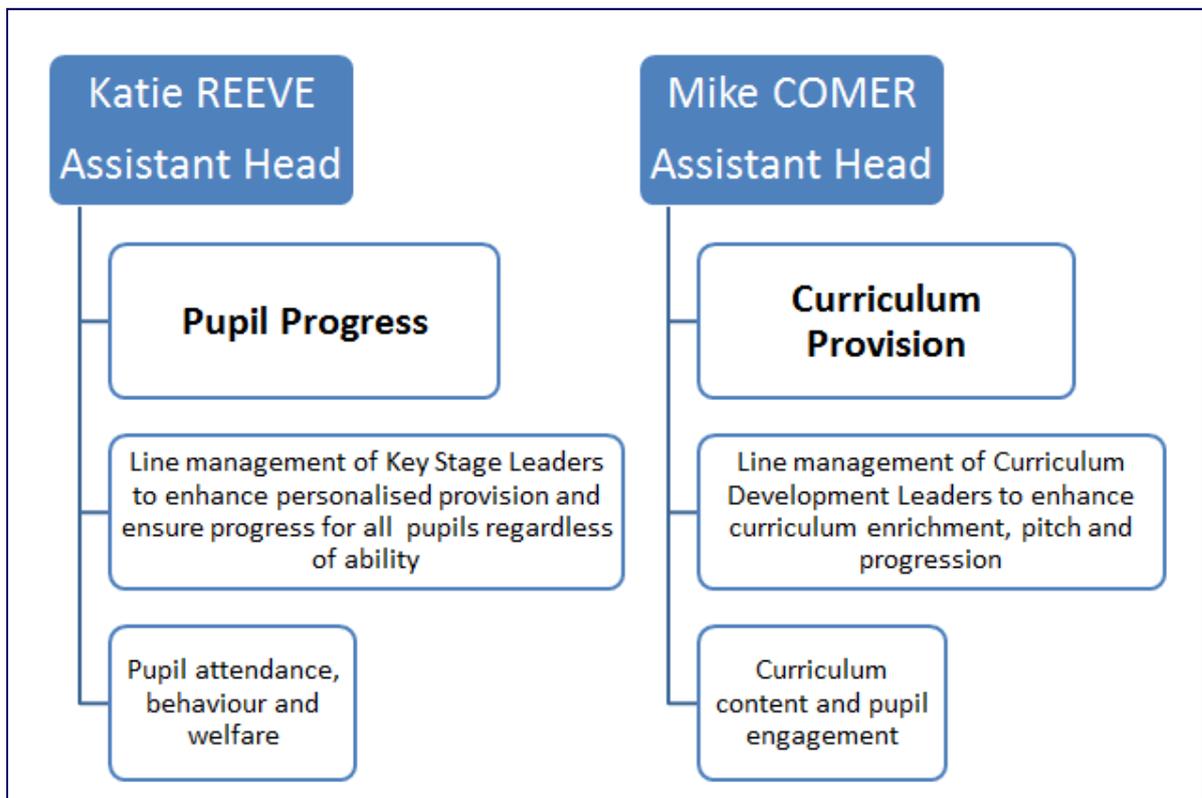
Do you have something you would like to discuss further or would like us to include in future issues of this newsletter? Please contact us on:

[governors@groveroad.herts.sch.uk](mailto:governors@groveroad.herts.sch.uk)

Leading Our School is a twice yearly email publication produced by the Governing Body and the school Leadership Team.



## Leadership structure cont.



## Curriculum Development Teams

Science & Technology Team	Maths & Computing Team	English & Communications Team
<b>Chloe Lea (Science)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nicky Gifford (Design &amp; Technology)</li> <li>Lloyd Francis (Geography &amp; Environment)</li> <li>Michael Tomkinson (PE)</li> <li>Julia White (SENCo)</li> </ul>	<b>Vicky Hillier (Maths)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sophie Holland (Music)</li> <li>Freya McAteer (Computing)</li> <li>Ria Garry &amp; Steph Meedin (History)</li> </ul>	<b>Lucy Bassil (English)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Charlotte Cooper (Collective Worship &amp; RE)</li> <li>Suzanne Brannigan (PSHE &amp; SMSC)</li> <li>Caroline Oakley (Phonics &amp; languages)</li> <li>Katie Carter (Art &amp; Design)</li> </ul>

PSHE - Personal, Social & Health Education

SMSC - Spiritual, Moral, Social & Cultural Education

## Assistant Head Profiles

### Katie Reeve

I joined Grove Road Primary School as a member of the Senior Leadership Team in September 2012 and have been part of the many changes that the school has experienced and the journey it has been on.

During my time at the school I have taught mainly in Year 6 but I have had previous experience in both Key Stage One and Key Stage Two. This means I have a good understanding of pupils' needs from an early age to when they leave primary school.

My role as Assistant Head is to work with the Head

and Deputy in order to ensure that the school is well led and managed. I am passionate about all children making the very best progress educationally, socially and emotionally in order for them to leave primary school with the tools to tackle the challenges that may lie ahead of them. Ensuring children receive quality first teaching is key to this and through my role I will have the opportunity to support, coach and mentor teaching and support staff. I am very excited about this new role and am very proud to be part of the Grove Road community.

### Mike Comer

I am delighted to have been appointed as Assistant Head at Grove Road and am excited by the challenges the role brings.

In my three years at the school, I have had the privilege of being part of a dedicated and talented team, working with the shared vision of creating an outstanding school. Now, as an Assistant Head, I have the opportunity to contribute to that vision in a strategic capacity.

Part of my role will centre on developing a curriculum which challenges, inspires and excites.

It is an area of education which enthuses me and I aim to share that enthusiasm with both the children and the adults.

I firmly believe that developing a love of learning is one of the most important values we can instil in children, and I am looking forward to helping create a truly outstanding learning environment which achieves this.

## Welcome to Kara Collins

### Kara Collins

I decided to pursue a career in primary teaching because I enjoy the company of children and wanted to give something back to the education system that has served me so well. While completing my teaching degree at the University of Chichester, I was further inspired by the variety of school placements I completed across the primary age range. I find working with children particularly rewarding, when you see them grow academically and become caring, responsible and independent learners. I am pleased to be joining the excellent supportive team

at Grove Road to further my development.

The best piece of advice I was given was to remember that education is each child's unique lifelong road to discovery, and the teacher should act as a guide along this journey ensuring that each individual is supported, encouraged and happy!



## House Point Success

Congratulations go to Quercus for winning the House Trophy for 2014/15. They earned an incredible 10,681 points.

Previous winners include :

2012/13 Acer

2013/14 Sorbus

The race for 2015/16 is already well underway!

The Inter-House Sports Cup winners for 2015 were Aesculus for the second year in a row.



## School Priorities for 2015-2016

Our priorities for school improvement this year have been identified through our on-going monitoring and evaluation in the context of a changing educational landscape. As a team we strive constantly to achieve the best outcomes possible for your children to ensure they are ready for the next phase of their education and ultimately equipped with the skills that will be essential to enter the work place with confidence. From staff appraisal targets to the priorities identified in the school development plan, our goals are focused on the strategic priorities that will make Grove Road the best possible Primary School for your children. We have identified 4 school priorities, under which are numerous actions to promote improvement on our journey to being an outstanding school.

### Maths

**Our first priority is to build upon the improvements in our maths outcomes with a focus on problem solving, reasoning and fluency in arithmetic, so that the children are best placed to meet the revised national expectations in maths with confidence.** We want children to have a confident grasp of number facts and also to be able to articulate and explain their thinking using mathematical terminology as they develop their rea-

soning skills. “Tell, me, show me, convince me and prove it” is how we will challenge the children to apply their knowledge and explore all possibilities. A good example of how teachers will be using questions, number facts and associated links to promote maths mastery can be viewed on:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yXdHGBfoqfw&safe=active>

### Spelling, phonics, punctuation and grammar

**Our second priority this year is to build on the exceptional improvements in the spelling, phonics, punctuation and grammar outcomes in 2015.** 2016 sees a new spelling and grammar assessment at the end of KS1. Staff are already working to ensure that the children in KS1 will be appropriately prepared to tackle these challenges with confidence.

### Science

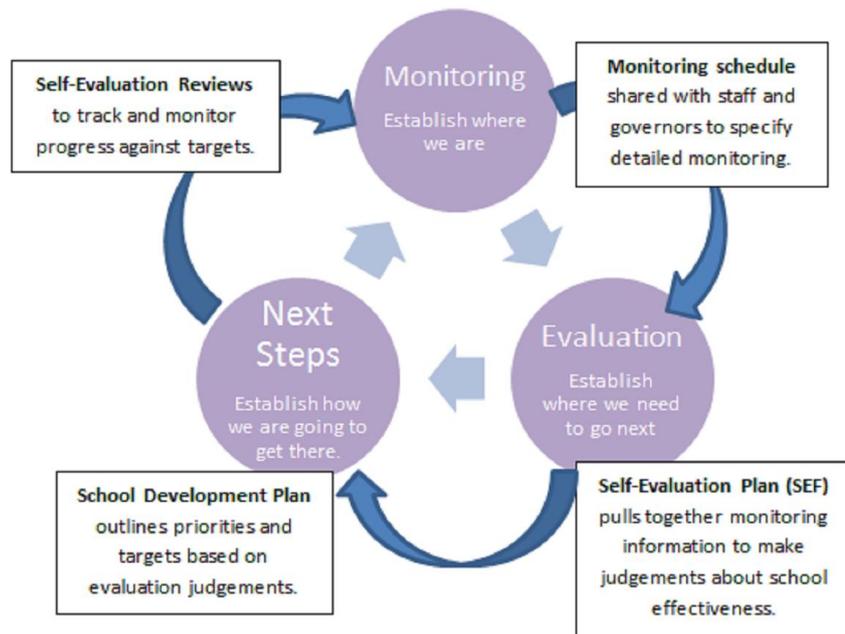
**Our third priority is to enhance our provision in science and maximise the opportunities offered by our extensive school grounds and the surrounding locality.** Chloe Lea is leading on this priority and has already been very busy undertaking a range of monitoring tasks to inform her plans for the coming year. She is very keen to talk to any parents who might be able to offer some specialist scientific expertise to further enhance the curriculum in science.

### Pupil progress

**Our final priority is to promote accelerated pupil progress. New government guidelines have shifted expectations, and we aim to enhance the ‘pitch’ of lessons, as well as making use**

**of the new assessment structures, to ensure that pupils meet these enhanced expectations.**

In the last three years our tightly focused strategic planning has resulted in significant improvements across the school. In maths there has been a 15% increase in the number of pupils exceeding age related expectations since 2012, with outcomes at the end of Year 6 exceeding both Hertfordshire and national averages. As we go forwards and work with the new expectations of the national curriculum, Grove Road is determined to ensure that we guide every pupil to success.



## Your Views Heard and Our Next Steps

We would like to thank all parents who gave us their feedback in the Parent Survey (via Survey Monkey) at the end of the Summer Term. We really do value your thoughts and comments, which help us to continue to shape our school. We have analysed all the data collected, after removing some duplicate data (multiple responses from the same IP address). Here is a snap shot of our findings and the next steps we will take as a result:

Overall, the data shows an upward trend from the 2013 and 2014 parent surveys, indicating that we are reflecting on feedback and striving to meet needs. For the majority of questions, the responses were over 92% for those agreeing or strongly agreeing with statements, but our aim is for this to be even higher. So, going forwards, to take account of views more frequently we are going to return to our ‘Parent Forums’, where we invite all parents to share their feed-

back, views and ideas with us, discussing a range of topics offered, and also bringing your own topics for discussion. The dates set for the rest of this school year can be found in the table below.

Overall, parents feel well informed about school activities and that they receive enough information, with 94.4% of responses indicating that they agree or strongly agree. However, we appreciate the feedback that some parents would like more dates set well in advance (e.g. for curriculum evenings, parents evening and performances). Some also felt that paper copies to all children for some important communications would be helpful.

We take both these points on board and will consider how best to meet these. If you would ever like a paper copy of a letter sent out via email, you are welcome to ask at the school office.

Parent Forums dates have been set for the whole year in advance, to help with

your diary planning should you wish to attend one, two or all of them.

There were many lovely comments both about strong senior leadership and good teaching, with 95.6% of parents agreeing or strongly agreeing that the school is well led and managed, and 92.2% feeling that teaching at the school is good.

We recognise that some parents would like further information about what is taught, more information about the role and work of governors and also that some parents of older children in Key Stage 2 would welcome more time to communicate with their child’s class teacher, for example at the start or end of the school day. Communication will be discussed at the Parent Forums, to ensure that we get the balance right between meeting parents’ needs and teachers’ workload.

We asked about e-safety and how well equipped parents feel to protect their child on-line. This is an area the media have focused on recently, with more children having access

to social media and mobile phones. 88.9% responded to say that they knew how to protect their child online, but of these only 36.7% strongly agreed, so we feel this is an area where we could provide further information and support.

We have booked Richard Maskrey (the Herts for Learning adviser on e-Safety) to talk to parents on Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> March at 2pm for an hour. We will send out more details shortly. (We understand an evening session would be more preferable for many parents, but Richard’s diary was fully booked for evenings this school year! So we will aim to book this for next school year as an evening session). In the meantime there are also lots of resources on our school website: [http://www.groveroad.herts.sch.uk/e\\_safety.html](http://www.groveroad.herts.sch.uk/e_safety.html). Please be reassured that we discuss e-safety with your child regularly as part of their Computing lessons.

Date	time	Focus areas for discussion
Wed 18 <sup>th</sup> November	8:45am	Communication with parents
Wed 18 <sup>th</sup> November	6:00pm	Communication with parents
Mon 25 <sup>th</sup> January	8:45am	School policies and behaviour
Mon 25 <sup>th</sup> January	5:30pm	School policies and behaviour
Mon 14 <sup>th</sup> March	8:45am	TBC nearer the time based on other forums
Mon 14 <sup>th</sup> March	6:00pm	TBC nearer the time based on other forums
Thurs 26 <sup>th</sup> May	8:45am	TBC nearer the time based on other forums
Thurs 26 <sup>th</sup> May	5:30pm	TBC nearer the time based on other forums

Parent forums will last for around an hour with refreshments provided. Forums will be led by Kate Kellner the Deputy Headteacher, with other members of staff or governors joining when appropriate. If you have suggestions for areas to discuss at these forums, please email Kate via: [admin@groveroad.herts.sch.uk](mailto:admin@groveroad.herts.sch.uk)

## Introducing our New House Captains

All children at the end of year 5 have the opportunity to run for House Captain. The hustings were held at the end of the summer term and children from years 1 -6 voted for their preferred candidate.

We asked the eager new House Captains some questions. This is a selection of the responses...

### 1. Why did you want to become a House Captain?

"I wanted to become a role model"

"To encourage people and to make the school a better place"

"Because I feel I will be a good leader"

"To make a valued contribution to the school, to give myself a challenge and to build confidence"

### 2. How did you prepare for the hustings and what did you base your speech on?

"By researching what qualities a house captain needed to run a house forum"

"I based my speech on a poem because I love poetry"

"I prepared carefully over time and based it on sport, leadership and inclusion"

"how I will make the school a better place and grow students' confidence"

"By thinking about what a good House Captain would look like and why I would make a good House Captain"

"I thought about what was important to me and my friends"

### 3. What makes your House the best?

"we share and value our ideas"

"we work as a team"

"we have won inter-house sports day twice"

"we try hard to get lots of house points"

"we use all the learning habits and are very determined"

"we are clever, kind, helpful, curious, independent, determined, respectful, listen well and will always give 100 per cent"

"we won the House Trophy last school year"

"The friendships of the people in the house, we value each other's opinions and actively listen to each other"

"We are confident and strive to be the best"

### 4. What are you looking forward to this coming year?

"Being able to lead house forums and take everyone's ideas into consideration"

"inter-house sports day because we have won 2 years in a row"

"making the school a better place"

"hopefully having all of the House Captains' ideas come to life"

"hearing the views of the children"

"winning the House Cup, "

"To experience what it's like to be a house captain and to gain confidence"

### 5. If the House Captains were in charge of the school for a day, what changes would you make?

"I would allow children to have many practical lessons and switch classes"

"I would change Sport and would introduce real sport like rugby and football"

"A whole day of PE so everyone could do whatever

sport they want and indoor games for people who don't like sport"

"I would make play times better by buying more equipment and allowing footballs"

"More activities during lunch time e.g. art, sports and music clubs"

"I would make sure that everyone could choose what they wanted to learn and extend lunchtime"

"To help students prepare for a changing world, I would provide more language lessons"

"Arrange a charity event, where the teachers become pupils for a day"

"make the lessons more fun by taking the class outdoors"

### 6. What are your own hopes and aspirations for the future?

"When I am older I would like to be a special needs teacher and would like to live a happy life"

"In the future I hope to do well at school, enjoy school

life and become an England rugby player"

"For the future I would like to become a teacher and be the head of maths"

"Getting a job and getting paid"

"My hope is to become a professional footballer if not I would like to be a pilot"

"I want to be successful in whatever I do. In my spare time I would love to work with children"

"I hope that by working hard at school, I will be able to get a job that will pay me well so that I can have the best life I possibly can"

"I want to become a professional footballer and strive to be the best I can be"



**Acer** Mia Cunningham, Alex Osmond

**Aesculus** Eliza Smith, Oliver Hemlin

**Betula** Ellie Wallis, Harry Peterson

**Quercus** Maddie Bowyer, Finlay Power

**Sorbus** Jet Dyer, Maia Williams

## Celebrating Success



Celebrating success is an important aspect of school life, and indeed life in general. At Grove Road, success is recognised regularly throughout the year – in books and in the classroom every day; in the Book of Celebration every week; and in school reports. However, the end of the academic year provides a special opportunity to reflect on pupils’ achievements and effort during the year.

### Governor Awards

2015 saw the introduction of the Governor Awards. These awards are sponsored by the Governing Body and nominated by teachers in recognition of the effort and achievement of Year 6 pupils in school subjects and their contribution to school life.

The awards were presented by the Chair of Governors at the Year 6 Leavers’ Assembly, as part of the final assembly celebrations to bid farewell to Year 6 as they leave primary school and move on to senior school.

As much of the work of the Governing Body is often behind the scenes and outside the classroom,

analysing anonymised pupil data and scrutinising the progress and outcomes of specific groups, the Governor Awards provided a wonderful opportunity to put faces and names to pupils achieving success at the school.

The 2015 Governor Awards were awarded to:

Outstanding Artist –

William Esson

Outstanding Musician –

Libby Hobson

Outstanding Achievement in Computing & Technology – Lewis Everett

Outstanding Achievement in Literacy – Sophie Dimes

Outstanding Achievement in Mathematics – Oliver Gunton

Outstanding Achievement in Science – Will Davey

Outstanding Achievement in Sport – Edward Pike

Outstanding Personal Achievement – Ben Bezani

Outstanding Role Model – Natalie Gurnett

Outstanding Contribution to the School Community – Megan Wyatt

### Sports Awards

The Sports Awards are nominated by teachers and awarded to a boy and a girl in each year that has shown skill, endeavour and determination in PE and sport. The 2015 Sports Awards were awarded to:

Year 1 – Emilie Taplin and Thomas Reeves

Year 2 – Susie Sore and Jamie de Beer

Year 3 – Grace Burns and Ronnie Coburn

Year 4 – Isabella McDermott and EdwardRichard-

son

Year 5 – Olivia Taplin and Scott Whelan

Year 6 – Francesca Laine and Sam Hudson

Congratulations to the above named winners and congratulations to every child across the school for their hard work and enthusiasm to learn and achieve their personal goals. We are proud of your achievements and look forward to continued success this year.



### Grove Road Vision Statement

To maximise the potential of all our children and staff by providing an excellent learning environment that is at the heart of the local community.