



Leading Our School

A Newsletter from the Leadership Team

Issue 12 - November 2016

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School Priorities for 2016-2017

The priorities for school improvement this year have been informed by the governors' 3 year strategic plan and on-going internal and external monitoring and evaluation. The following three priorities for this year have been written by the Curriculum Development Teams within the school, who all strive to achieve the best possible outcomes for our children.

Diminishing the Differences

Our first priority is to maximise the attainment of all children falling behind by closing the progress gaps in reading, writing and mathematics. The teams are also working to support parental engagement through on-line tutorials and teaching workshops. We aim to close the gaps in children's learning in order to allow every child to succeed.

Science & Environments

Our second priority is to accelerate progress and raise attainment in Science by making robust use of assessment for learning and maintaining regular opportunities for enquiry led learning. The science and environment team have been busy planning improvements to our vast outdoor area.

Some of these developments include a new school pond, a digital weather station, a bug hotel, and a butterfly garden. We want to provide all our learners with engaging, hands on outdoor learning opportunities as often as possible.

Curriculum Enrichment

Our third priority is to maximise the opportunities for every child to succeed by providing a rich and varied curriculum that enhances pupil enjoyment and engagement, promoting independence and curiosity. The curriculum enrichment team have been working hard on planning ways to communicate clearly with the parents about all the fantastic, engaging opportunities that happen on a day to day basis in school. Themed days, trips, tournaments and whole school events are just some of the enrichment opportunities planned to get parents involved and showcase the variety of talents our children have, whilst celebrating success in all areas of the curriculum.

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:

Sharon Sanderson, Head teacher:

head@groveroad.herts.sch.uk

Governing Body:

governors@groveroad.herts.sch.uk

If you don't wish to email, please call the school office on 01442 822056 and leave a message. We will call you back as soon as possible.

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

Leadership of School Improvement

The three school priorities for 2016/17 are being led by teams who work collaboratively under the leadership of a Curriculum Development Leader.

The role of the team leaders and their teams is to identify the core priorities for improvement, plan what needs to be done and then monitor and evaluate improvements. Their roles include lesson observations, planning support, team teaching and training. Through this regular guidance, feedback and support the talents of the teams are shared and are helping to ensure improvements year on year.

This is the third year of working in this way and it is proving really successful in growing leaders and improving provision across the school. Each team includes teachers from across the age phases and with a range of subject expertise.

Each team also has two Link Governors who provide the strategic connection with the governing body. It gives them first hand experience of monitoring tasks such as book scrutinies, pupil voice surveys and staff training sessions. In this way they can be sure to provide the right challenge and support as part of the self-evaluation and improvement cycle.

Vicky Hillier is leading the team of staff working to identify pupils falling behind in their learning and supporting teachers and teaching assistants to target interventions, support and high quality feedback to ensure the children understand their next steps and what they need to do to make progress.

Chloe Lea is leading the team who are supporting science and environments. They are working to develop and support assessment and tracking in science as well as leading training for staff to promote and develop how we use the variety of habitats available on site to observe, explore and better understand the world on our doorstep.

Katie Carter and her team are leading the initiatives to further enrich the curriculum and to develop and share specialist subject knowledge.

Diminishing the Differences	
Curriculum Development Leader	
Vicky Hillier	
Vicky Hillier	Maths
Emma Chappell	English
Ria Garry	*SENCo
Freya McAteer	KS1 Phase Leader
Katie Collins	EYs Phase leader
Janet Langdon	Link Governors
Helen Dear	

Science & Environments	
Curriculum Development Leader	
Chloe Lea	
Chloe Lea	Science
Lloyd Francis	Humanities
Steph Meedin	Computing
Louise Bowen	*FL
Toby Morgan	NQT
Jo Passingham	Link Governors
Elizabeth Dolton	

Curriculum Enrichment	
Curriculum Development Leader	
Katie Carter	
Katie Carter	Art & Design Tech
Kara Collins	*PSHCE & SMSC
Michael Tomkinson	PE
Sophie Holland	Music
Sophie O'Leary	NQT
Charlotte Cooper	RE
Kevin Kumar	Link Governors
Catherine Pyefinch	

*SENCo-Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator

*FL-Foreign Languages

*PSHCE & SMSC-Personal, Social, Health & Citizenship Education and Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

New Teacher Profiles



Emma Chappell (Year 6)

I have had the privilege to be a Primary teacher for the last 14 years. After completing my 4 year Bachelor of Education at Hertfordshire University, I began work in Harrow, Middlesex. I worked at the

same school for 14 years and had the pleasure of seeing many of the children I taught progress, grow and develop throughout their time at the school. I am thrilled to be joining the excellent team at Grove Road and cannot wait to get to know the children and families better. Having recently moved to the area it is wonderful to feel part of the school community as well as the Tring community as a whole. I look forward to tackling the many challenges I am sure await me and to spending my days getting to know the pupils, staff and families at Grove Road. The best piece of advice I have been given is from my parents, "take it one day at a time." Sound advice, in a busy place of work like a Primary School.



Sophie O'Leary (Year 2)

Having grown up with both parents as teachers, I saw how hard they worked and how much they loved their jobs.

Through my teenage years I supported sports clubs, helped with youth groups and completed extended work experience in special educational needs schools. It was here I decided to pursue a career in primary education, knowing that I wanted to inspire, develop and help prepare children for their futures.

Having always loved Maths at school the decision to specialise in Primary Mathematics at Plymouth University was easy. Since then I have not looked back and I already feel a part of the brilliant, supportive team here at Grove Road. I am looking forward to seeing the children grow and develop academically and become independent learners throughout the year.

The best piece of advice I was given was from my dad who told me to always enjoy the moment. To celebrate the children and my own successes at every opportunity. To always cherish those moments and not to move onto 'what is next' too soon!



Louise Bowen (Reception)

I am really excited about joining Grove Road primary school this year. I have a passion for child-led learning, where children's skills can be developed using their interests. This helps to ignite excitement and a propensity to learn.

I gained my PGCE in 2010 with a specialism in Equality, Inclusion and Citizenship at London Southbank University. I have had experience teaching across the age ranges but mainly in Year 1 and the Early Years. I have previously worked as head of Early Years and have had experience of co-ordinating PE as a subject.

Out of school hours, I love to spend time with my friends and family and I also travel to Spain frequently. I also enjoy running when I have time!



Katie Collins (Reception)

Growing up I always knew I wanted to work with children, I just wasn't sure in what capacity. My work experience, even as a teenager, was with children who had profound special educational needs which I am passionate about, dedi-

cated to and inspired by. My degree in Sociology laid good foundations for working with and understanding people before embarking on my teacher training.

During my training, I soon realised what a privilege it was to be a teacher. To be able to inspire, guide and change children's lives every day was exactly what I wanted to do. The best piece of advice I could give is to make teaching relevant, fun and exciting to develop a child's love of learning.



Toby Morgan (Year 1)

I had the privilege and good fortune of having a work placement at Grove Road primary school. In the few weeks I was here, I realised that this was a team and a school that I wanted to be a part of. I am incredibly excited to be working at

Grove Road and I have a real passion for bringing enjoyment to children's learning. I gained my teaching qualification at Buckingham University having previously completed a Drama degree. I have been lucky enough to have worked in several schools in North London, working with children with autism, which ignited a passion for educating children.

Communicating Effectively

Effective communication and parent partnership sits at the heart of the school's vision, values and aims. Following on from the Parent Survey last summer, (which was summarised in the October Headteacher's Newsletter) communication between home and school is working well.

- *I am kept well informed about school activities and receive enough information generally about the school. (92.8% agree/strongly agree)*
- *I would find it easy to approach teachers at the school with questions about my child. (91.1% agree/strongly agree)*
- *The school gives parents a clear indication of what is taught and how (92.8% agree/strongly agree)*

As we have evolved and improved as a school, the standards we set become the norm and the expectations of the school seem to go even higher. Whilst we want to raise the bar, we have to also be realistic and ensure that staff can focus on the children as we try to manage expectations. Schools everywhere are under increased pressures due to a constant reduction in resources and we are all striving to "do more with less". That said, we also want to build and maintain our partnerships with you, so that together we can support the children to succeed.

We are working to increase the opportunities for you to come in and see your children learning and understand how they work best. In addition to termly consultations parents are invited to attend:

- Busy Fingers (Daily in Nursery and weekly in Reception)
- Family Learning which has been extended into KS2 (Y1-Y6)
- Building Blocks (Termly workshops for Reception parents)
- Assemblies (KS1 and Early Years)

In addition to our regular Curriculum Evenings, letters, emails, website resources and workshops, we are also developing on-line tutorials explaining how we help the children become proficient in both mental and written calculations.

The teachers are currently planning workshops for parents to come in and work in groups alongside their children and a teacher, to give a first hand view of how we teach, guide and question the children, in the hope that we can maximise the support and guidance parents are able to provide at home.

We hope you will agree that there are now a significant range of opportunities and resources available to give parents at Grove Road a clear indication of what is taught and how.

In a large school community there is always lots going on and the day to day communication between home and school is also important, particularly for the younger children. Although our teaching day begins at 8:30am, we always try to have at least one member of staff (either Teacher or Teaching Assistant) on the door so that parents can pass on any important information that we might need to know that day. In the event that you need a longer conversation, we ask that you make an appointment to come in after school or book a phone call. The start of the day is a very busy time for the staff and it's really important for them to be able to focus on the children as they arrive and settle them into the learning for the day. Parents sometimes find this difficult to understand and staff don't like turning people away but once the children arrive the teaching day begins, making lengthy conversations difficult. If your issue is urgent the office team will always try to find someone for you to talk to, who will pass your concerns or queries to the class teacher when they are able to give it their full attention.

As a school we do not give out teachers' email addresses but ask you to email the class teacher via the admin@groveroad.herts.sch.uk address. In this way we can be sure that messages are received and actioned. Teachers very rarely get the chance to check their emails during the day and the admin team will make sure your emails are directed to the most appropriate person. We will always aim to acknowledge receipt of an email or phone call within 48 hours so you know it has arrived and then respond fully within 5 working days. If you don't get a response please let the school know.

As families you do an enormous amount to support the school and engage effectively with us and for this we thank you. Going forwards we need to work closely together to achieve success. Our staff too work incredibly hard and it has been lovely for them to get your positive feedback and support this term, which is always welcome. Please do keep this coming because it is a definite motivator.

House Captains 2016 / 2017

Welcome to our New House Captains!

We wanted to get to know them so we asked them some questions. Here are a selection of their answers (full interview available to view on our website):

Why did you want to become a House Captain?

I wanted the responsibility of leading my House and being a role model for all the children.

To help the school improve and suggest ideas from my House and me. Also to understand being a good leader and not being rude, bossy or mean.

I wanted to end my time at Grove Road on a high through leading my House.

I really enjoy talking in front of people. I also enjoyed listening to the previous House Captains because they were fun and interactive!

I wanted to build my confidence and to learn to be a good leader. And to help my house win.

I have always admired what the House Captains do and thought it would be very interesting.

How did you prepare for the Hustings and what did you base your speech on?

I based my speech on how I would improve school life for the students.

I practised my speech with my Dad, my brother and my Grandparents every day.

I based my speech on helping others and being positive, and being a great leader.

I put down the values I would show, I also put down ideas about what I thought I could do to make the school better. I tried to make my presentation fun.

I based my speech on respect and how I would make Quercus a better House.

What makes your House the best?

The people in it. Aesculus is the best house because we never give up at whatever we do.

Acer is an excellent house as it listens and suggests different ideas. We also help and encourage each other to make sure we can be better.

Sorbus is the best House because there's a wide range of pupils in our House, for example sporty people, clever people and people from different backgrounds.

Something that makes Sorbus the best is that we work as a team and co-operate in House Forums to get the best ideas we can. We worked as a huge team on sports day to try to win. We tried hard but have not won as yet; however bring on sports day 2017!!



Quercus is the best because of the way we all communicate and share great ideas .

We are a great team and we try our best in learning in and out of school.

Acer is the best house because we all work together as a team and we all listen to each other's answers and questions and we respect the school and its property.

What makes our House the best is the fact that we keep on going even if we don't win.

What are your own hopes and aspirations?

I want to become famous.

To become a professional rugby player for Ireland.

Become a good sports player, for example a footballer or cricketer.

I really want to be an Accident and Emergency doctor because I like being kind and helping people out.

To be a professional swimmer.

I want to become a famous hypnotist!

To become a teacher and show children what I have learned.

I would like to become some sort of scientist as I am very interested in science!

What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?

Playing for Tring Rugby and spending time with my puppy, Maisie. Playing golf, being with my friends, reading, drawing. Playing sport and looking after my pet Guinea Pigs. Football in my garden, Irish dancing, netball, swimming, gymnastics, squash and drama. Swimming in Tring academy. Rugby and kickboxing. Listening to music, netball and badminton. Rugby, kickboxing, drumming and gardening. I also enjoy going to scouts.

Acer Issy & Luca **Aesculus** Stephanie & Edward
Betula Isabel & Jonathon **Sorbus** Cai & Harry
Quercus Amelia & Zack