



Leading Our School

Issue 9 - November 2014

Inside this issue:

School Priorities 2014/2015	1
The Role of Phase Leaders	2
Pupil Leadership and British Values	2-3
Our New Teachers	4
Governor News	4

School Priorities 2014/2015

Our priorities for school improvement this year have been identified through our on-going monitoring and evaluation and further informed by the Ofsted inspection in May 2014.

We have identified and planned four school priorities, under which are numerous actions to promote improvement on our journey to being an outstanding school for your children.

Priority One is to improve the children's confidence in applying their knowledge and calculation skills in maths to problem-solving contexts. During this year the children will be using a method called The Singapore Bar to help them identify the best approaches to problem solving and finding an unknown quantity,

which can often be a stumbling block.

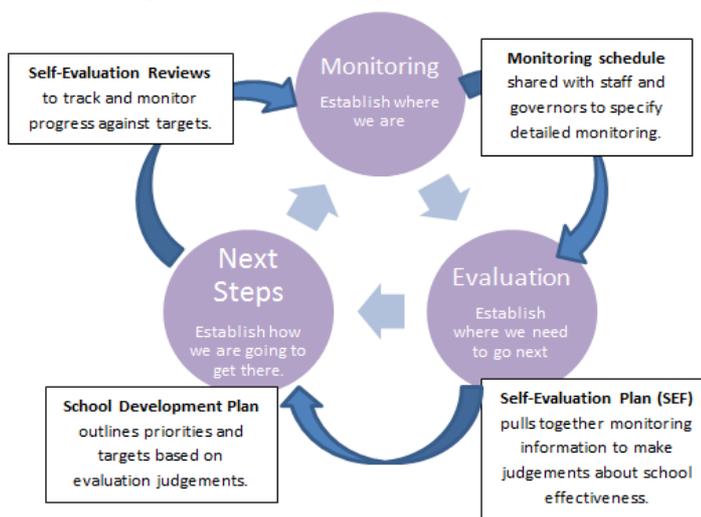
Priority Two is a focus on spelling and the strategies for spelling words to supplement the use of phonics. We are planning to repeat last year's Spelling Bee and possibly hold an inter-school competition. In addition, children in KS2 will be encouraged to identify root words and explore the etymology of words to provide them with additional strategies for spelling, in order to meet the revised pitch and expectations of the new curriculum.

Priority Three is a focus on developing, reviewing and adapting our new curriculum to ensure that we make the most of every opportunity to enthuse and engage the children in their

learning. Our thematic approach to mapping the curriculum is designed to both support the revised expectations in literacy and maths, as well as help the children make connections in their learning.

Priority Four is a focus on building and developing the leadership structures across the school, and specifically developing the strategic leadership skills of middle leaders in order to enhance continuity and support sustainability of approach. Subject Leaders and Curriculum Development Leaders will be encouraged to work alongside colleagues and visit other settings to share best practice and sharpen their school evaluation skills to ensure the very best leadership for this school.

School Improvement Cycle



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

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.

The Role of our Phase Leaders

As part of our school improvement planning this year, we have been developing our leadership structure to ensure leadership is distributed effectively - this includes developing the role of our 'Phase Leaders'. We have 4 Phase Leaders:

Early Years – Julia White
Years 1 & 2 – Freya McAteer
Years 3 & 4 – Suzanne Brannigan
Years 5 & 6 – Katie Reeve

As a large primary school, we strive for effective communication, accessible leadership and consistency of approach with our systems. Our Phase Leaders play a key role in these.

On a day-to-day basis, they have oversight of their age phase. This includes communication with the staff in their team, as well as being first port of call for discussing pupil behaviour and celebrating pupils' successes.

Their strategic role is to support, monitor and evaluate their age phase; for example analysing pupil data, observing lessons and giving feedback, being a link between their age phase staff and the Senior Leadership of the school.

Pupil Leadership and British Values

We aim to promote pupil confidence so that our pupils can prepare for life beyond Grove Road as citizens of the 21st century. Our House System plays a vital role in promoting the skills of independence and effective communication by encouraging all children to participate in House Forums as a regular opportunity to voice their opinions and feel they have some ownership over how the school works. The role of House Captains and Peer Mentors provides additional opportunities for pupils to lead and set expectations. The new Ofsted framework now expects schools to promote "British Values" through an understanding of:

- Democracy
- Rule of Law

- Individual Liberty
- Mutual Respect & Tolerance

Our House System, as well as our curriculum provides pupils with first hand experience of these aspects, supporting pupils to learn to appreciate their rights and responsibilities. Each year pupils at the end of Y5 stand for election as House Captains. The pupils take this very seriously and the quality of presentation at the Hustings is always of a very high standard. Every child in Y1-Y6 has a vote. Elected this year were: Quercus – Jacob Hendin and Charlotte Tidbury
Acer – Sam Hudson and Lois Morrissey
Betula – Imogen Cary and Jacob Bright
Aesculus – Edward Pike

and Emma Rouse
Sorbus – Megan Wyatt and Natalie Gurnett

When interviewed recently it was clear that they take their leadership roles very seriously...

Why did you want to be a House Captain?

"to show what is the right thing to do"

"I wanted to make a difference to the school"

"I wanted to represent the school"

"I knew I was a good leader and I wanted to make Aesculus stand out"

"to be a good role model"

What is the role of a House Captain?

"leading House Forums fortnightly with an agenda"

"putting equipment away at

the end of lunchtime"
"organising events – Pepper Day, Sports Relief, Children in Need etc"

"making sure children in your house know what is happening"

"being a role model"

"discussing in house forums how things could be better"

How does the House System improve your school?

"we take ideas from the children and take them to Miss Sanderson"

"behaviour and learning habits improve because of house points – we want to be the best"

What are your aims for the year?

"to win the house trophy and to win Sports Day"

“to get something new on the playground so that when you are at Tring School you can see it and say I made a difference”

“to help solve arguments and get more playground equipment”

“to have people look up to us and know I’ve done my bit to help this school – I did that for Grove”

What gives you most satisfaction in your role as House Captain?

“being a role model”

“sense of achievement”

“people look up to us”

“being known by other pupils”

“having a special place in the school”

“taking care of the younger children”

“having been voted in makes you feel proud”

“the parents are aware of us”

These reflections illustrate how important the system is to the pupils in providing an understanding of early leadership skills, democracy and community involvement.

Peer Mentors are new this year. The following pupils have been appointed: Ben Bezani, Sam Queralt, Joshua Grey, Ella Hargreaves and Mhairi Coull. There are 5 peer mentors and one of them is on duty on the playground each day. Their photographs are up in the window of the First Aid area so pupils and staff know who is on duty. Again, these children take their role very seriously and younger pupils aspire to follow in their footsteps. In a recent interview they said:

What is the role of a Peer Mentor?

“we have first aid cards to give out if someone is hurt badly enough to go in to First Aid”

“we help if someone has no friends”

“we check people are OK”

“we wear high-viz jackets and a badge so people can find us”

“we help round up the Reception children when it is time to go in”

“we help children find their friends on the playground”

What do you most enjoy about the role?

“people look up to us”

“I don’t like seeing people hurt”

“walking around and making sure everyone is OK”

“people rely on you”

“supporting the house captains”

“making things better”

“some people like to talk to us rather than an adult”

“taking care of Reception –

they are not always sure”

Do you feel your role helps improve Grove Road?

“makes the playground a better place”

“we understand what the playground is like for children”

Our House Captains



Our Peer Mentors



Katie Carter Y3

I decided to go into teaching while studying Fine Art at Loughborough University. At the beginning of my degree I was unsure about what career I wanted to pursue. During my third year, a friend suggested teaching, saying they could imagine me as a primary school teacher. That got the idea into my head and I began to explore my teacher training options. I find it rewarding being able share my passion for creativity with others.

The best piece of advice I was given was to always build on sound foundations.

Michael Tomkinson Y4

I recently bumped into my infant school head teacher, who remembered me as a pupil. Upon telling her that I had got my first teaching post she asked why I had chosen to go into teaching. My initial response was

that I had been inspired by the excellent teachers who had taught me. While this remains true, it is also for the more selfish reason that I enjoy teaching, as I continue to take inspiration from the excellent children I teach.

The best advice I was given was not to underestimate what the children can do.

Freya McAteer Y1

I came into primary teaching because I wanted to do a job where I felt I was making a difference. I have always loved working with children and I knew my passion was helping children grow and develop due to the influence I had on them.

The best piece of advice I was given at the start of my teaching career was that the children should always be at the heart of every decision I make, to always be the best role model I can be and to make everything as enjoyable as possible for

all children so they want to be in school and will look back with happy memories.

Lloyd Francis Y5

I went into teaching for two reasons. Firstly I wasn't getting any fulfilment out of recruitment, the industry was too money orientated and I wasn't changing people's lives. Secondly my five year old son had developed my interest in how children were educated and I wanted to be part of that knowledge and learning process but also be able to use my life experiences to add to their development.

The best piece of advice I was given was that every day in teaching will be different; expect the unexpected.

Suzanne Brannigan Y4

I came into teaching after I'd had my own children. Through their early schooling, I developed a passion for education and decided that I wanted to be a part of promoting a love for learning in children.

The best advice I received regarding teaching is to remember that every child is unique and to try to teach to their strengths.

Lucy Bassil Y2

Before choosing to study a degree in teaching I worked as a volunteer in my local Primary School, whilst working towards my A Level exams. After supporting, encouraging and inspiring the children who I worked with, I knew that this was the direction that I wanted to take. I knew that I wanted to make a difference to the children as young individuals, not just learners.

Best advice : each child should be seen as an individual person and is at the heart of everything that we do as teachers. A happy child makes a happy learner!

New Community Governor

Earlier this year our governing body was further enhanced when Marita Hopkinson joined.

"I am passionate about education and equality for all children so that they get the best experiences possible. I have worked in education all my life and I have over 20 years' experience in teaching, 15 of these as a senior leader

(deputy and head teacher roles) in primary schools. I have been an adviser for 16 years and I have worked as a senior adviser for 10 years. More recently I have opted to work part-time and try and find time to do some things on my wish list. This includes cycling, and cycling from my home in Dunstable to Tring is one of my favourite Sunday journeys.

I have enjoyed all of my roles, particularly inducting new head teachers, supporting governing bodies with head teacher appointments and performance management, and supporting schools in Ofsted preparation and in school self-evaluation. I trained as an Ofsted inspector in 1994 and I am currently in the final stages of being reaccredited. I am also an accredited

coach and have actively coached many aspiring head teachers".

