

# Notes from Welcome Meeting Thursday 20 September 2012

## Introduction

The new Chair of the Governing Body, Julian Crane, welcomed the parents, staff and children to the meeting. He thanked parents for attending, acknowledging the importance of their engagement and commitment to the school.

The purpose of the meeting was to give parents an opportunity to meet the teachers and to look around their children's classrooms as well as giving our new Head, Miss Sharon Sanderson, the opportunity to say a personal 'hello and welcome'. Mr Crane then handed over to Miss Sanderson.

## Change

Miss Sanderson acknowledged the many changes that have already taken place and thanked the Friends of Grove for the significant contribution that they have made from their fundraising efforts to enable her to start a programme of improvements to the learning environments over the summer. The library areas, halls, corridors and classrooms have all benefitted.

Miss Sanderson recognised that change itself can be a challenge and stressed that everyone from parents, children, staff and governors right through to Ofsted wants the changes to work. She talked about the different stages that we all go through when facing change:



## The New “Right Things”

Communication was a focus of the talk and Miss Sanderson emphasised the need for this to be two way with the school’s task being to show parents that the changes being made are the right changes. Miss Sanderson said that she is very keen to hear from parents if they believe that the school is driving the ‘right changes’ and that the school will also receive external validation from Ofsted.

## The New “Right Things”?

- **Playground**
- **Behaviour Policy**
- **House System**
- **Home learning**
- **More changes to Ofsted**



### 1. The Playground

The Playground has changed and has been split into zones. The KS1 playground will be the ‘quiet playground’ as there was a feeling that previously very physical play dominated all playgrounds, thus preventing children choosing quieter types of play. This quiet playground has already seen a good mix of age groups and the developing of friendships as well as the older children supporting and encouraging the younger children. The two KS2 playgrounds will be the busy playgrounds, one will be for skills and developing game playing, and the other one will be for football. The aim is that the children will have ownership of their choices and actions. Mrs Gifford is working very hard to secure additional equipment for the playground. The initial feedback on this zoning has been very good in terms of children’s behaviour and Miss Sanderson commented on how proud she has been of the children seeing them responding so positively to the changes.

### 2. Behaviour Policy

Some changes have been made to the Behaviour Policy with an emphasis on rewarding good behaviour. Blue Sky playtime has been introduced on a Friday afternoon and will be enjoyed by all children who remain on Blue Sky level throughout the week. All children will

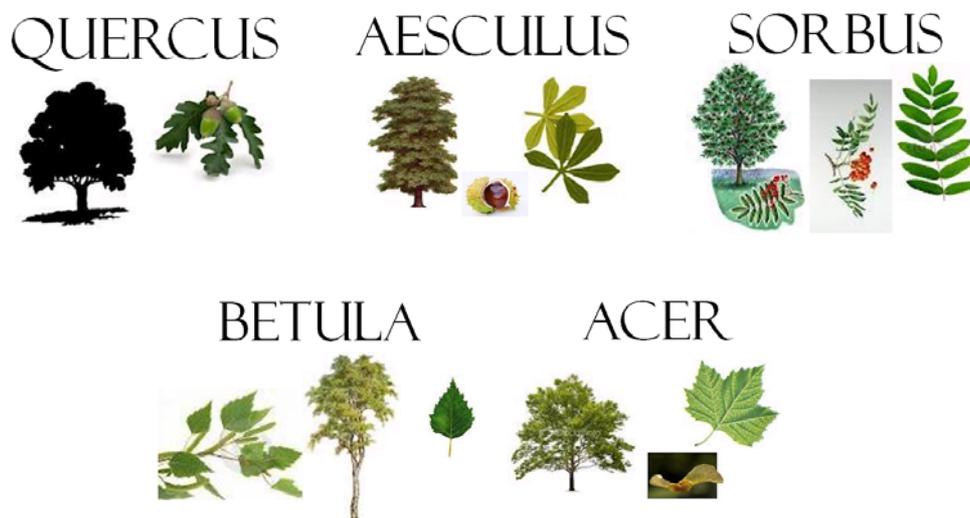
start each day at Blue Sky. Should bad behaviour occur, the children will be given one warning and one reminder about their choice of behaviour and if this persists after the reminder they will go down to Grey Cloud level and lose 10 minutes from their playtime. If the undesirable behaviour still continues they will go down to Storm Cloud level which means that they lose the entire 30 minutes of Blue Sky playtime.

The aim of this system is to equip the children with life skills so that they understand that there are consequences to their actions.

### 3. House System

A House System is being introduced with 5 houses all with Latin tree names. The aim of the system will be to foster collaboration across the school and a sense of group belonging and responsibility.

There will be a mix of year groups in each house. House points will be awarded for a variety of activities such as art, behaviour, homework and sporting success. This will provide the children who thrive on competitive sport an opportunity to compete but points will also be awarded for non-competitive achievements. The annual sports day will continue in the same format, however, there are also plans for a competitive element in an after school tournament which the children can choose to be involved with.



### 4. Home Learning

Home learning is about the school setting appropriate quality homework that allows progression throughout the whole school. A new approach to Home Learning has been adopted with the introduction of the Home Learning Grids. Each half term the children will have a choice of activities which will be required to be submitted on time and to a high standard. There will be tasks of different lengths and difficulty so parents and children can select tasks based on the amount of time that they have available throughout the week. The work will be reviewed by staff and brief comments will be given in feedback on the work.

## 5. More Changes to Ofsted

The Ofsted framework changed once again at the beginning of September which means that our next Ofsted inspection will be under the new framework. The chart below shows the old framework language against the new framework. Grove Road School will have a full Ofsted inspection anytime between 17<sup>th</sup> Oct 2012 and mid January 2013 and will be looking to move from the 4a category to the 3 category (now called Requires Improvement) on its journey to outstanding. This will be a no notice inspection.

### Ofsted From September 2012...

	Previous Framework	Current Framework
1	Outstanding	Outstanding
2	Good	Good
3	Satisfactory	Requires Improvement
	<b>CATEGORY OF CONCERN</b>	
4a	Notice to Improve	Serious Weaknesses
4b	Special Measures	Special Measures

One of the results of the no notice inspections is that there will be no opportunity for Ofsted to send a questionnaire to parents, instead they are hoping to judge parental opinion from their Parent View website. Miss Sanderson encouraged parents to use this website to record their feedback on the changes the school is making. However, if parents have a problem with anything Miss Sanderson would very much like the opportunity to address the issue directly before negative feedback is left on the Parent View website

<http://parentview.ofsted.gov.uk/>



## Also in the pipeline ....

- Family reading sessions are already in place for KS1 and all parents, carers and grandparents are welcome to come in on a Friday morning for 20 minutes to share a book with their child. This will be an ongoing initiative and the children loved week one and were very enthusiastic about welcoming their parents into their classrooms.
- Parent workshops will be developed throughout the year with the aim of supporting parents to 'help their children' at home. The first workshop will be on reading with a focus on encouraging reading across the year groups.
- Links have been made already with Tring School with regards to the work shadowing and also with reference to adopting the 3 Es (Energy, Esteem, Enquiry) language at Grove Road.
- A maths specialist teacher from Mount Grace School in Potters Bar will be providing support to children in years 5 and 6 working with the most able children. This will support the able children to achieve even higher standards and will also support the children in need of more support as the classroom teacher will manage smaller groups.

Miss Sanderson extended her thanks to parents for coming and to the staff for their work and support so far this term.