



*~ inspiring each other ~*

# **Annual Governors' Report**

## **2017-2018**

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## Dear Parents and Carers

As another school year draws to a close, we say goodbye and best wishes to our brilliant Year 6 pupils, the last single form at Grove Park (next year we will be a complete two form entry school). On June 11, Governors had the privilege of interviewing all the Year 6 children, one-to-one, and hearing them talk about their interests and views on a range of topics, including the school and current affairs. We were really impressed by their confidence and how well they expressed themselves, and we came away sure that they will thrive at their new schools in the Autumn.

Over this year we have seen several changes to the Governing Board. We welcomed Kathryn Davey as a new parent governor and Professor Neil Taylor as a co-opted governor. Several governors have swapped places: Debbie McMullen stepped down as the Chair at the end of her term and Neil Taylor was elected as the new Chair. David Woodward continues as a co-opted governor but has been replaced by Craig Robertson as Chair of the Finance and Premises Committee and Sheila Wiggett has also stepped down as Chair of the Teaching and Learning Committee and been replaced by Debbie McMullen. All governors play a vital role in supporting the school and ensuring that it continues to be a truly outstanding school.

One of the challenges that we as governors have dealt with over the past few years is the vexing question of 'academisation', a term that means the status of the school would change and be directly funded by the ESFA. After much deliberation as a governing board and with colleagues at other local schools, we have chosen to remain as we are, a state community school but working in collaboration with our local primary school cluster.

On 22 March the Governing Board decided to join the Hounslow Education Partnership (HEP), a school-led school improvement partnership, which will provide a wide range of support services. 90% of primary schools in the borough have expressed an interest in joining, and it should be fully operational from September 2018.

During the year, Governors take part in a series of Learning Walks, when we can observe the school in action. For example, in June we took part in a Yoga, Mindfulness and Well-Being Learning Walk. This was extremely well organised, covering a wide range of techniques and activities for mindfulness through age appropriate methods. The Governors were led through every class (apart from nursery who were on a school trip), and witnessed a wide variety of activities: relaxing breathing, meditation, yoga, how to focus the mind, dealing with worries and being aware of senses and feelings throughout the school. Activities were accessed by children of all levels of learning and physical ability, and all the governors present on the walk remarked at how impressed they were by every class and teacher. There was a very high level of engagement from all the children.



Later in the same month, we went on a Computing Learning Walk, and discovered how each teacher was approaching the subject of computing and, in many cases, using recently-purchased equipment (Chromebooks and microbits). We were introduced to the idea of the 'Computational Thinker' and the approaches which the school draws upon when introducing children to computers and coding. They undertake tasks which involve logical thinking and non-verbal reasoning, creating algorithms, spotting patterns and making judgments.

In the process they discover the value of tinkering, experimenting and playing; as well as the benefits of working collaboratively with others. Governors were absorbed in and impressed by what they saw -the careful planning and co-ordination which lay behind the day's work, the clarity with which all the teachers and TAs explained concepts and tasks to the children, the stimulating and imaginative range of activities across the school, and the children's obvious enjoyment in those activities.

As well as observing the teachers and children at work, the governors host a lunch in the staff room in the Spring Term for all the school staff. This year it had an Italian theme and governors brought in Italianate dishes they had prepared at home. This event provides a great opportunity for staff and governors to meet socially and get to know each other in an informal setting.

Finally, we are very pleased to let you know that the school is in a strong position despite an increasingly difficult education environment. You may have heard about the struggles facing many primary schools over finances and staff recruitment and retention. Fortunately at Grove Park we have secure finances, thanks to careful budgeting, and our teaching positions are fully staffed with first rate teachers. As you will read more from the individual committee reports below, our school curriculum continues to be innovative, creative and the envy of other primary schools.



Debbie McMullen, Chair of Governors to March 2018



Neil Taylor, Chair of Governors from April 2018

Dear Parents and Carers,

As the Summer Term draws to a close, it is the perfect opportunity to reflect back upon the year. This current academic year marks a point in history for us as a school as we say farewell to our last ever single form entry class and fully become a two-forms of entry school.



Despite the many changes at local and national level in education, Grove Park remains committed to its values of a personal growth model of teaching, whereby we educate children to discover their individual passions and interests. Our aim is to prepare the children socially, morally, intellectually, spiritually and culturally to become the best they can be and make a difference in the world. Working with our cluster schools and indeed schools across the country, we are told time after time how special and exciting Grove Park Primary School is.

The palpable sense of creativity and enjoyment is apparent to anybody who walks through our doors and where the inspirational nature of Grove Park is truly felt. This feeling is created by talented staff who go the extra mile for children, governors who are enormously committed to the school and you as parents who work with us to provide the best opportunities for children. The Grove Park family is indeed a special one and we all feel fortunate to be a part of it and to work with the most dynamic, exciting and talented children. The sense of community fostered by our PTA events enriches the school further as reflected in our recent Barn Dance, which was a great success. We are thoroughly grateful for the sense of community at the school and for your support, both socially and financially, which enriches the children's lives enormously.

Our unique, cutting-edge curriculum engenders a sense of achievement and curiosity in children and is designed specifically to meet the needs of our inquisitive, thoughtful and motivated pupils. Based upon a contextualised model, all children make links to their learning and are enriched through visits and visitors to place their learning into a meaningful context. As such, we receive a large number of visitors to the school to see how things are done 'Grove Park style'. All are amazed at the quality and depth of our curricular work and how we carefully weave creative projects such as 'Developing a Narrative Voice', 'Real Life Maths', 'Multi-Modal and Digital Literacy' to name but a few into everyday learning. The nurture and well-being of children is at the heart of our aims and vision and oscillate carefully between standards and creativity. Education has its meaning in 'bringing out that what is within a child' and encapsulates splendidly the approach we have to the curriculum. We strive to bring out children's talents through excellent teaching, care, guidance and patience and we have seen this evidenced across the school all year.



The creative arts are flourishing and pupils have this year experienced: performing plays during assemblies, reciting performance poetry and of course taking part in our lavish and highly acclaimed Year 6 production Peter Pan. Music has truly blossomed this year with breathtaking performances of singing and instrumentals reflecting the hard work and musical talents of the children.

The balance between high standards and creativity is clear at Grove Park. External evaluations have been outstanding again this year and always the recurring themes are our excellent curriculum, pastoral support and sense of vision for the future. Standards have once again remained high and been exceeded. As our children leave Early Years,

85% have reached the 'Good Level of Development' far exceeding other outstanding schools and the national picture. Similarly we had a 98% pass rate for our Year 1 phonics Screening Test and at Year 2 90% reading, 93% Mathematics and 88% writing; stunning results which place us high in attainment levels. Year 6 SATs results are the highest we have ever achieved with 97% of children achieving the expected standard in Reading, Writing and Mathematics and at greater depth level 79% in reading, 52% in Mathematics, 76% in Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling and 76% in writing.

These results reflect how happy the children are at school and how well the balance between creativity and standards is achieved.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank my inspiring Senior Leadership Team for their relentless support for the school, to the inspirational staff who do so much more than is required of them, to our talented and assiduous governing body who add greatly to the school and to you as parents who entrust us to provide the best care and education for your children, a trust we all take seriously. Finally, to the reason we are all here: our amazing children who are a joy personified, enrich our days as staff and for whom we all fundamentally believe we are making a difference to their young lives.

I wish you a peaceful summer break and thank you again for your support and commitment to the school.

D T Jones

Mr Darren Jones  
Headteacher

## Finance and Premises Committee

The Finance and Premises Committee works closely with the School to ensure that the annual budget is managed effectively and a healthy surplus is maintained for the future. During the financial year 2017/18 the School's income was almost £2m, and the largest expenditure related to the salaries of teachers and all other staff (£1,465,000), with learning materials for children (£158,000) another significant outgoing.

The Committee would like to express its gratitude to David Woodward, who stepped down as Chair earlier this year but who continues to provide valuable insight as Finance Vice-Chair. Gill Golding is also on the committee, as is Brian Hardman (Premises Manager) who does a consistently outstanding job in maintaining and improving the School's buildings. The Headteacher, Darren Jones and School Business Manager, Miss Vicky Rodrigues work tirelessly to provide the pupils with wonderful opportunities on a limited budget and manage to prioritise effectively year after year. A surplus of £153,000 was carried forward to the current financial year and provides the school with a healthy buffer to meet the financial challenges that lie ahead.



Improvements to the playground carried out last summer have been a huge success, with children able to play on the new artificial grass throughout the year, as well as enjoying the climbing frames and games equipment. A big thank-you is extended to the PTA for funding the playground works, and for raising another sizeable sum during the current academic year.

Grove Park School is one of the first in the borough to take part in an exciting new scheme to promote energy efficiency. During the Easter holidays, LED lights were fitted throughout the school and improvements were made to the boilers. The final stage involves the placing of solar panels on the roof of the new building over the summer holidays. This project is being funded by an interest-free loan which will be repaid within 10 years, meanwhile the quarterly payments will be covered by the resulting lower energy bills. During the autumn term pupils will be provided with interactive educational tools to improve their understanding of different types of energy.

Meeting once a term, the Finance and Premises Committee has recently discussed matters such as the provision of Chromebooks for pupils, upgrading the School's server and Wi-Fi network, major improvements to the kitchen and an updated Evacuation Policy in the unlikely event that it is needed in the future.

**Craig Robertson**

**Chair of Finance and Premises Committee**

## **Staffing and Community Committee**

This year the committee welcomed Kathryn Davey as a new parent governor member, thanked Katherine Forster for all her contributions to its work over the years, and saw the handover of Vice-Chair from Nicky Rogers to Emma Prunier. Other members are Mary Buchanan and Rev. Martine Osborne.

During the year, we have regularly monitored staffing and commend the excellence of all the very dedicated staff. We have looked at the annual staff survey, reviewed the results and the changes made as a result of staff suggestions. We have also spent considerable time monitoring (and, again, commending) the school's excellent and thorough approach to Safeguarding (led by Rachel Davies). We have been struck by the level of individual care and attention given to each child. This is above and beyond the statutory requirements and reflects the very real pastoral priorities of the school. These are also manifest in the emphasis on parent liaison and support, and on mental and physical wellbeing. Staff, children and parents have benefited from a range of training and information sessions and will continue to do so.

The school continues to support and be visible in the local community – for example, through litter picking, contributing to the Chiswick Timeline and a range of charities, and visiting St Mary's Convent and Nursing Home to meet and entertain the residents. The bomb scare that caused the total evacuation of the school in March not only reinforced the efficacy of our Disaster procedures but also the important role that local institutions, such as the pubs on Strand on the Green, play in providing safe shelter for us in such circumstances. The school has joined the cluster collaboration of Chiswick schools and is leading on NQT (Newly Qualified Teacher), training.



This year has seen us review and decide to retain Aktiva to run the out of school clubs, ensure that the school meets the very stringent and complex requirements of the new Data Protection Act (GDPR) and agree a future communications plan, which means we will publicise one major item about the school per term.

We shall continue to monitor children's attendance, currently running around 96.5%. We would urge all parents to understand and abide by school rules about attendance, as attendance is a vital statistic in the eyes of government, the local authority and Ofsted.

**Gill Golding**

**Chair of the Staffing and Community Committee**

## Teaching and Learning Committee

The main purpose of this committee is to deal with all matters concerning pupil achievement and progress, assessment and use of data, the curriculum and the quality of teaching and learning. It is our role to receive information from the School and to ask appropriate questions to ensure that all children achieve their full potential in the context of an exciting and rewarding curriculum.

Sheila Wiggett, who resigned as Chair at the end of the Spring Term, has led the Committee over the past 6 years. She has been supported by Nicky Rogers, the Vice-Chair, Mary Buchanan, and four parent governors, Katherine Forster, Emma Prunier, Craig Robertson and Kathryn Davey. We receive excellent detailed reports from staff and are grateful for their expertise in explaining data and keeping us informed.

We have received regular updates on the progress of all children including those who are vulnerable or may have particular needs. We have monitored achievement regularly and all governors received training in the revised DfE assessment procedures. Mr Jones has arranged the Learning Walks referred to above, and he has also reported to us at each meeting on the progress of the School Development Plan (SDP) and all the new initiatives at Grove Park.



Members of staff with responsibility for focused priorities in the SDP have reported to the committee on their progress including staff training on new aspects of the curriculum, exciting projects run throughout the school and shared with us examples of the work. We have been extremely impressed with their enthusiasm, confidence and dedication to enriching the learning experience for children.

The committee has been kept informed about the detailed monitoring of children's progress and attainment and the measures put in place where needed for individual intervention support. We recognise the extensive amount of staff time that goes into assessment, marking and tracking and are extremely confident that the correct procedures are in place. We congratulate Mr Jones and his staff for a highly successful year and are sure that this will be reflected in outstanding attainment results across the school

**Debbie McMullen**

**Chair of the Teaching and Learning Committee**