



# Grove Junior School

Turner Street, Northwood, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire, ST1 2NL  
Telephone:(01782)234550 Fax:(01782)236404 Email:office@espritmat.org

Executive Headteacher: Mrs S Moran - Head of School: Mrs S Machin  
Deputy Headteacher: Mrs J Blackhurst and Mrs L Morrall  
Link Governor for Child Protection: Miss Michelle Chadwick

## *Where Every Child Does Matter*

20<sup>th</sup> December 2017

Dear Parents/carers,

It's hard to believe that this is the last letter that I will send to you in 2017 and that our Year 3 children (who make me proud, laugh and smile every single day) have been at Grove for a term already! Where has the year gone? As always in school, it has been a busy and rewarding term that has ended with an array of fun learning opportunities for all. I'm sure that you would agree that the Christmas concerts were fantastic. The children have been working hard on improving their public speaking and presenting skills and their efforts were clear for all to see. As always, we respond to your feedback and are looking to improve year on year. We will ensure that, moving forwards, we make better use of the stage and consider height order to maximise opportunities for you to see your children. Our Christmas fayre was a huge success; we raised over £1,000.00 for school fund. Congratulations to our raffle prize winners and once again we thank-you for your support in our fundraising efforts. Christmas dinner was delicious and well received. Thank-you to our kitchen staff and lunchtime staff for making feeding 480 look easy!

It is pleasing to share with you that standards are rising at Grove. With high expectations for good and outstanding teaching and learning, the percentage of children working at Age Related Expectations (ARE) is increasing in each year group. We had a visit from our Local Authority School Improvement Officer at the beginning of December and her report confirms that:

- School has set aspirational targets for 2018
- Reading is a whole school priority and significant improvements have been made to the teaching of this subject (thank-you for your support with this)
- Attendance is improving this year (thank-you again)
- Executive Leaders are providing strong leadership and demonstrate continued commitment to rapid improvement alongside SLT and new middle leaders
- Links with parents are improving

Your feedback from our parent questionnaires and event comment cards has also been analysed showing that you agree and/or largely agree that teaching, learning, behaviour, well-being and safeguarding is good or better. Again, we are always looking to improve and will ensure that your most common suggestions for 'what we could do better' - improving communication with parents, safety of the site and the surrounding area (road safety) and more trips and clubs - remain as high profile priorities for our academy. Indeed, our upcoming improvements in these areas are:

- We will be launching our new website, Facebook page and re-launching our Twitter account in January. The website will include a weekly blog from myself and senior leaders, diary dates, letters and much more – watch this space!
- We will be hosting a safety meeting with our link governor, community representatives and local councillors and continue to campaign for a safer school environment. Our School Council are involved in this campaign and we would like to increase our parent/carer representation too. Mrs Blackhurst will be in touch in the new year to seek your support
- We have increased our enrichment after school club provision for the spring term to include a drama club and a Spanish club – look out for the letter!





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- We are mindful of costs and try to balance affordability for all with enhanced curriculum experiences. All year groups will be having an out of city educational visit, a local educational visit (in Staffordshire) or an in school WOW event/visitors in school during the spring term

Other achievements, celebrations and 'proud moments' that I would like to share with you are:

- That the children's behaviour and mature attitudes to learning are recognised as a strength in school; by external partners on learning walks, your comment cards and feedback and within emails received into (including from Birches Head Academy and staff at the Civic Centre in Stoke following our participation in Democracy Week)
- We have been successful in achieving the Bronze School Games Mark (thank-you Miss Woolridge!)
- We have been successful in achieving our Stem Ambassadors Award (thank-you Mr Woods)
- Our school choir performed at The Victoria Hall earlier this month. Their talents and behaviour were second to none (thank-you Miss Craddock)

We have another busy term ahead for spring. Attendance and punctuality (at the beginning and end of the day) will continue to be a focus for rapid improvement as external and internal high expectation targets need to be met in order for Grove to be recognised as a good school. We will also monitor and build on the improving teaching and learning of reading and will also be implementing our concrete, pictorial, abstract (CPA) pedagogical approach to teaching, learning and mastery in maths. Our staff inset and children's experiences of working with 'Subject Revolution' have motivated and inspired them all and we look forward to sharing this approach with you in our parent 'Watch me Learn Maths' sessions early in the spring term.

Before I sign off for the year, may I thank the majority of parents/carers who are communicating with teachers through their child's communication diary appropriately. Parent feedback has been largely positive where this process has been followed. The teachers are the adult who know your child best in school and they can, in most cases, discuss and agree solutions to niggles, queries and concerns promptly but will escalate to leadership involvement if needed.

And finally....I thank-you for choosing Grove and wish you all a Happy and safe Christmas with your special people. I look forward to working together in 2018 for a happy and successful year for our children.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Machin  
Academy Principal

