



# Grove School

Curriculum Report from Leaders at Grove school

September – October 2018.

## Nursery – Miss C Williams, Year Group Leader

The nursery children have had a super start to their educational journey at Grove School. At the beginning of term, the children were invited to attend 'stay and play' sessions with their parents. This was a lovely opportunity for the children to meet their new friends and teachers, and explore their new classrooms with the support of their parents. The children were all very excited to receive their Grove School book bags and take a book home to share with their families.



The children were also very excited to meet Maths Dog and his Magic Box! They watched in amazement as the Magic Box made small things get bigger and big things get smaller. This inspired lots of emerging mathematical language and the children were very keen to predict what would happen to the toys they put in the box. The children also enjoyed helping Maths Dog to practice his counting skills by counting their friends every day to see how many children had come to school.

The children have really enjoyed our Amazing Animals topic this half term and have learnt about lots of interesting creatures. They were particularly inspired by our Animals in Hands visit, where they had the opportunity to look closely at, and handle lots of different animals. They children were very brave and were keen to handle a snake and a cockroach. Some children even let a tarantula sit on their tummies!



Nursery children have enjoyed lots of stories this half term, including *The Blue Balloon* by Mick Inkpen and *Peace at Last* by Jill Murphy. They have shared books with their friends in the book corner and have been very keen to get their photographs on the Reading Rocket for their super reading. The children have especially loved cosy story times with their teachers at the end of the day. They have chosen the stories they want to hear and made themselves comfortable on cushions and beanbags.



The nursery children have now begun to learn phonics and are excited to wear their listening ears every day to help them develop super listening skills. They are learning to distinguish between different sounds, and to mimic and talk about the sounds they hear. The children really enjoyed going on a listening walk to explore the sounds we hear around our school.



Nursery children have also enjoyed lots of mark making and are beginning to talk about what their marks mean. They have drawn pictures of their families and explored colour mixing with paint. Nursery children are now beginning to develop their skills in cutting and sticking.



The children really enjoyed exploring pumpkins at the end of the half term, ready for Halloween. They used wooden blocks to carefully hammer tees into the giant pumpkins, then used their strong fingers to pull the tees out again. They worked very sensibly and showed great focus and teamwork during this exciting activity.



What a fantastic start the nursery children have had! Now they are looking forward to learning all about our families and our community as part of the next topic, On the High Street.

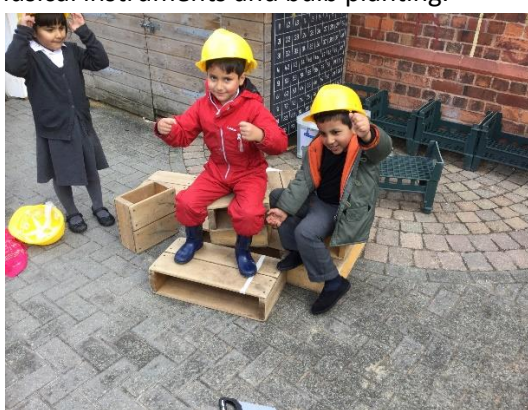
## Reception – Mrs C Willoughby, Year Group Leader

Reception children have made a wonderful start to the school year. The transition from their previous setting has been a smooth one and the children settled rapidly in to the routines of reception. Their enjoyment of school is reflected in their positive attendance with the children eager to win the weekly attendance awards, prize draw and stickers. With such incentives the children have quickly become competitive between the classes!

The year began with ‘wow’ moments from visitors in to school. The Road Crossing lady was our first visitor to visit us. She talked about her job and her uniform. The children then practiced their road safety and made stop signs to use in the role play. Mo the Animal Man caused great excitement when he brought in his animals. The children displayed great courage in holding beetles, snakes and tarantulas and were eager to paint what they had seen and to write about their favourite animals.

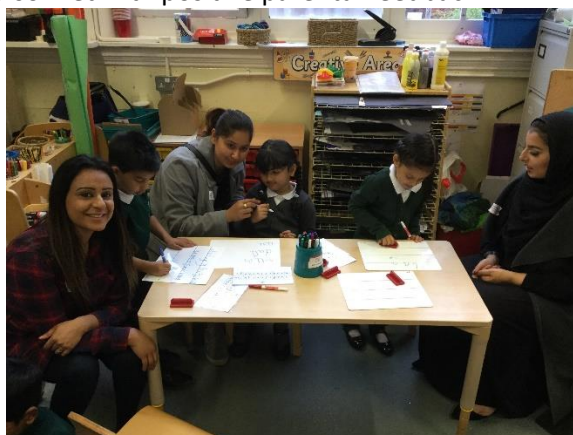


Our visitors helped to bring our learning alive as has our outdoor environment. This year staff have renewed their determination to established an outdoor learning environment to stimulate and challenge the children. The children have explored natural materials, the living environment and physical development among others. This exploration has caused excitement with clay models, leaf prints, seed musical instruments and bulb planting.



Reading has continued to be a key focus across the school this year. The children have risen to the challenge of beginning each day with guided reading. The daily phonics sessions have enabled the children to develop their decoding skills whilst careful questioning has encouraged the children to talk about the stories in a greater depth. A Parental Phonic and Reading workshop, run in October, provided parents with an insight in to how their children

learn. Parents were encouraged to participate in the activities to support their children. This resulted in positive feedback from the parents who have requested further such opportunities to see how to support their children. The introduction of the online reading books, Bug Club, has also met with positive parental feedback.



The enjoyment of reading is an essential ingredient in promoting reading at Grove. Staff have been delighted to see how eager reception children are to sit and share books with each other. The continued use of Reading Rockets to incentivise this reading has certainly had an impact. The children are eager to read and have their astronaut fly on to the rocket. They take a pride in pointing this out to their peers and recently, were overheard to say, "We love reading!"



Staff and children are now eagerly looking forward to continuing with our success over the next few weeks and months.

### **Year One – Mrs J Wilkinson, Year Group Leader**

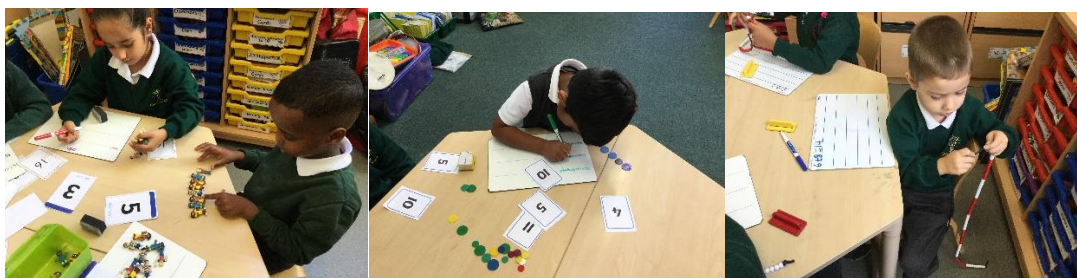
The children have settled well into Year 1, our topic for Autumn 1 has been Old and New Toys. We began our very first day with an explosion into topic where the children shared their wonderful holiday projects and rotated between the classes to explore and play with toys from the past. They also made their very own thaumatropes (Victorian optical illusions), spinning tops, wooden peg dolls, puppets and puppet theatre to name but a few activities.



Continuing the toy theme in literacy, we read *Kipper's Toy Box* by Mick Inkpen where the children wrote lists and captions and added capital letters and full stops to their writing. This was extended further when the children discovered adjectives and included these in their writing. They also explored how to write questions with question marks, in their first ever Big Write, when a mysterious bag was found in the classroom!

The children have studied the author of the term: Mick Inkpen and can tell you many facts about him, in addition to naming many of his famous stories. Kipper and Wibbly Pig remain our favourite characters in class.

In maths the children have been focusing on number. We learned about place value and counted in 2s and we have become super mathematicians in adding and subtracting. We have explored using a variety of objects to help find the answers.



In topic sessions the children have enjoyed researching old and new toys and have made comparisons about the construction and materials used to make them. This was all in preparation for our very exciting trip to Weston Park. From the moment we boarded the coach our adventure began. Once at Weston Park we explored what it was like to be a rich Victorian child by dressing up and playing with delicate china dolls and tea sets. We also discovered what a poorer Victorian child would play with too. We all decided that we are very lucky these days compared to Victorian times. Everyone made a wooden spoon dolly to take home and had a marvellous time.



Our topic extended to researching maps of Handsworth and comparing them to maps of Weston Park. The children plotted where they live on a map and learned about human and physical features of both locations. The children quickly grasped the difference between human and physical features and they can name several of each feature and explain why they are either a physical feature or a human feature. Handsworth and Weston Park are very different locations!

In Design and Technology we made our own cup and ball toy. The children designed how the cup would look and used various objects to make the ball. Once these were finished, they evaluated the toy and talked about how well they worked and what would be done differently if we were to make them again.

A few weeks ago we invited our parents in to attend a reading and phonics workshop. The number of parents who attended was amazing. We gave them a sample of a phonics lesson and we played phonics games together. We also talked about reading and what kinds of



questions could be asked. We shared fun and educational websites that could be accessed at home too. The feedback from parents was overwhelmingly positive.

Curriculum clubs have been well attended too and we are looking forward to more clubs starting after half term.

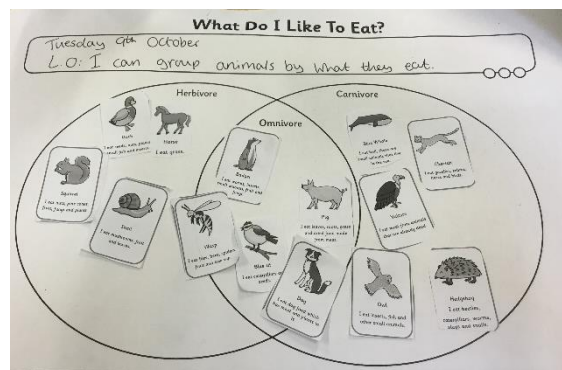
Our next topic is 'Where in the world is our class Bear?' and as an attendance incentive, two children from each class, who have 100% attendance, are going to build our very own class bears at Build a Bear workshop in Birmingham. The children have voted for the bears names and they have produced a class graph to show how each name was decided.

In addition to learning about our country in Autumn 2 we are also looking forward to putting on a performance all about Diwali and visiting a Hindu temple.

### Year Two – Miss E Knight, Year Group Leader

We have had a fantastic start to the school year. Our topic for Autumn 1 was Living Things and their Habitats. We started the topic with an explosion day looking at the 7 life processes. The children explored different types of vegetables which helped them to design their own soup and were given the opportunity to taste different flavoured soups.

We continued this topic by finding out about how we know if something is living, we researched and explored different habitats, including how animals are adapted to live in their habitat. We then learnt about food chains and who is always at the bottom and top of the food chain.



We went on our first trip of the school year to Brighthouse Hostel where we explored different habitats and microhabitats. The children went on an exciting walk through the woodlands where they saw and heard lots of different animals, including baby birds, cows and crickets. They also learnt how to read a map and the children had to give clear instructions to help their friend travel from one object to another.

Our Art was linked to our Living Things and their Habitats topic with the



children recreating Andy Goldsworthy inspired art work. The children gathered lots of objects from the natural environment to help them create their picture.



In literacy, the children enjoyed learning about their Author of the half term, Valerie Thomas. We read lots of her books and we used them to help us write our own setting description of under the sea. The children used lots of fantastic adjectives and were very imaginative with their writing. We then looked at our poet of the half term, Mary Hunters Austin. The children recited different verses from the poem 'Rathers', thinking carefully about their actions and their loud clear voices. This then led the children onto writing their own version of the poem. The children used the rhyming dictionaries and their knowledge of our science topic to help them.



We held a reading and phonics workshop for parents to share work what we do in Guided Reading and Phonics in school and how they can further support their children at home. We based the workshop around questioning, linking to the different content domains. We demonstrated the different questions we ask the children, verbally and written and how they can use these at home. We also showed the parents how we teach phonics and informed the parents on the techniques we use to help them read and decode words. The workshop was very well attended and the feedback was very positive.

In maths we have been focusing on place value and addition and subtraction. The children have persevered and tried really hard to add and subtract using the partitioning method or a number line. The children have loved solving problems, using the specific methods to help them and they are becoming very confident with this.

Our topic next half term is The Great Fire of London and we are particularly looking forward to our visit to Aston Hall to learn all about how it began and to take part in different art and design activities.

### Year 3 – Miss A Bennett and Mr A Hartwright

Year 3 started off the year by learning about the progression of life in Britain from the Stone Age to the Iron Age. We started the project with an explosion day which included looking at civilisations such as Skara Brae, we created timelines of the events, we drew our own cave art using techniques and tools that replicated those of the Stone Age.

The children really enjoyed map work where they located Stonehenge and estimated the distance and how long it would take to get us there.

The children thoroughly enjoyed our new educational visit to Sarehole Mill where they constructed their own shelters, hunted for food whilst discussing the food chains, made and handled tools that would have been used and explored a local area which included a historical landmark from the Bronze Age.





The children were given the responsibility of finding a sturdy stick that they could then transform into a Stone Age paintbrush. This brought up lots of fantastic discussion about which materials were the best and most efficient to use. These were then used to create their own class mural based on cave art pictures that we had discussed.

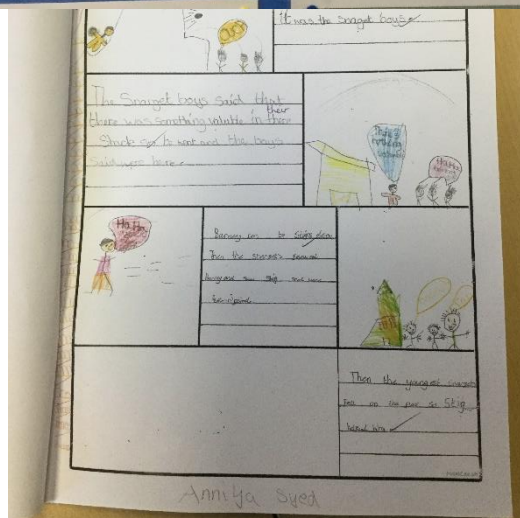
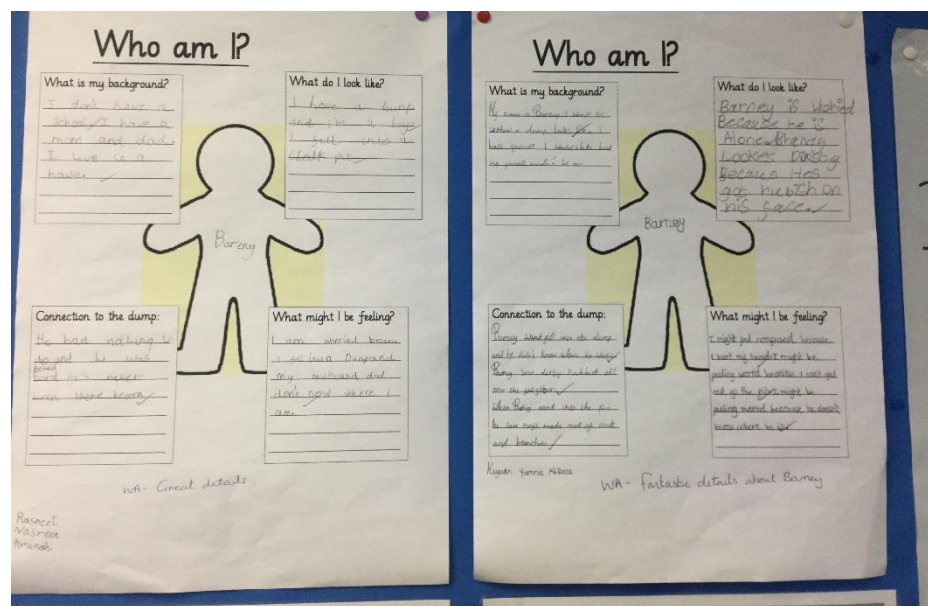


Through reading, writing, speaking & listening and drama, the children have been really enthused by our new class novel *Stig of the Dump* by Clive King. The children have had many opportunities to step into the characters' lives and envisage the settings included in the story. *Stig of the Dump* has made the children more excited and enthusiastic to read at home.

Every Friday, the children have really enjoyed their class novel sessions which have been based on Stig of the Dump. In this time, we have looked at the different elements of reciprocal reading, created our own vocabulary boards, developed our use of dictionaries but the highlight has definitely been creating our own comic strips that were then made into our own class book for our book corners. The children love coming in the morning and rush to grab our comic strips!

Dirty Face by Shel Silverstein has been our poem of the term. The children have been exploring the different features of the poem and have been using this to create their own version based on their class novel.

Lots of children are working to achieve their pen license, thinking hard about their joins and keeping their presentation beautiful. We'll hopefully have many more children using pens soon.



Swimming has been a tremendous success this first half term, with some children receiving up to three of their badges already. Across the year, we have 12 badges with many more to come!

Through science, the children have been exploring their bodies; discussing how to keep healthy, what basic needs we have and the purpose of our skeletons. We worked as classes to label our skeleton and now we have a secure understanding of the bones within our body.

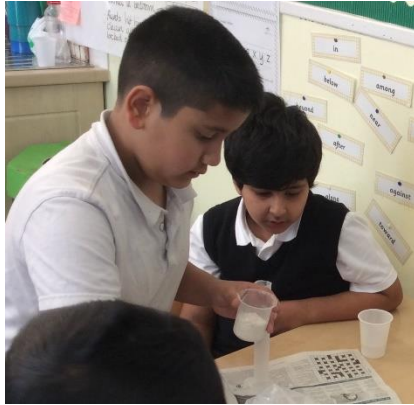


From the start of the year children have explored new concepts in mathematics, they have developed a good understanding of reasoning and problem solving skills needed.

#### **Year 4 - Mrs I Hines, Year Group Leader and Assistant Head teacher**

The start of the new school year has been very exciting. Our first project that the children found fascinating was all about the digestive system. Year 4 learnt about the organs in their bodies that are associated with digestion and recreated what happens to food when it reaches the stomach, its journey through the large intestines and finally its excretion through the anus. There was a mixture of horror and delight from the children as the experiment was conducted, using tights, a plastic bag, orange juice and cream cracker biscuits.

Towards the end of September, Year 4 were visited by Hands on Science. This was a successful visit where the children handled different animal's skulls, focusing on the type of teeth present and determining what type of diet the animals had. However enjoyable this part of the visit was, the high point came when the children each made a set of teeth using plaster and a mould.



Food webs have been another area of our science curriculum that the children in year 4 have studied this half term.

Our author for this half term has been Roald Dahl; our class novel has been James and the Giant Peach. This novel has proved to be very popular with the children. We linked our writing to the book, using drama to deepen our understanding of the text. One of the dramas we created was where the children were journalists who interviewed the Centipede to find out what happened on the day that James entered the peach. The children were not impressed, as the Centipede was not telling them the truth. As a result of this work, the children have written some great stories.

During French lessons, this half term, the topic has been All about Town as part of our lessons we have asked questions about where we live and answered them; learnt the names of the 10 largest French cities; how to say the name of different places found in a city; and counting in 10s.

In food technology, Year 4 were extremely excited about designing and making a healthy wrap. The children created the most amazingly, tasty wraps in the kitchen in the Upper school building. Unfortunately, these wraps did not make it home with the children as they were devoured immediately after they had been made.



The art we have produced this half term has also had a food theme, as Year 4 have been creating still images of fruit and vegetables. They also looked at the amazing art works by the artist, Guiseppe Arcimboldo, who painted some extraordinary portraits, made entirely of fruit and vegetables.



## Year 5 - Mr J Bentley , Year Group Leader

We started, during the autumn term, discovering what life was like for people living in Victorian Britain. Beginning with Queen Victoria herself and her reign we explored the revolutionary changes that were happening across society, in industry and in education and reflected on the impact this had on children. Our work orbited around our amazing trip to the Black Country Living Museum where we studied four real children that grew up in the Black Country and researched what life was like for them.

We have also had the amazing privilege of having the Welsh National Opera teach our children every week in year 5 about singing and drama. Already the children have grown in confidence, writing their own 'pocket operas' and learning songs ready to sing to year 6 in week 8.

In science we have been learning how to sort different materials (solids, liquids and gases) based on their properties and exploring how some materials can change from being a solid to a liquid or move from a liquid into a gas. We have also been exploring how to work scientifically creating fair tests and looking to identify and then minimise variables to ensure fairness.



## Year 6 – Mrs J Basnett, Year Group Leader and Assistant Head teacher

We began this term with a topic immersion day. The children found out about what led to the start of World War Two and heard the radio announcement by the Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain. Through drama the children were able to experience what life was like for children who were evacuated and explored the story of two young siblings. The children produced some excellent writing based on a letter from an evacuee home.

During the topic the children have studied the impact of the Blitz on Birmingham, the role of women, the holocaust and in particular the life of Anne Frank.

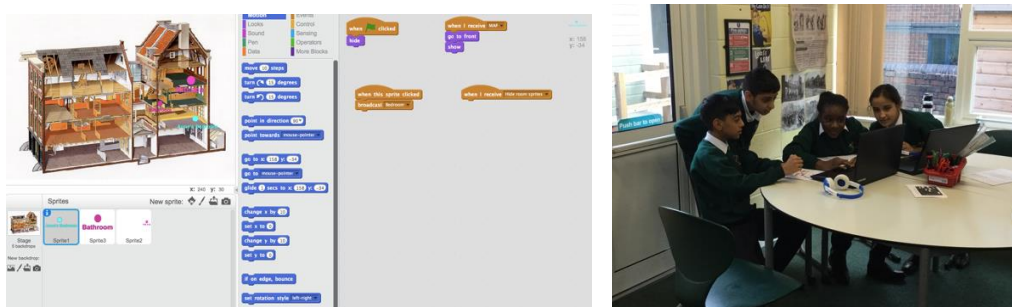
As part of the project we visited the Imperial War Museum of the North. The pupils had to explore the museum seeing artefacts from World War 2. They watched 'The Big Picture Show' showing images and oral history from wars through history. There was a special exhibition about how war is remembered as part of the lead up to the centenary of the end of the First World War in November. It prompted some of us to think about how we could mark this occasion.



Our art topic was looking at the work of LS Lowry and, as part of the visit to Manchester, the pupils were able to go to the Lowry art gallery and make sketches of the art works by Lowry on display. The children really enjoy seeing the real paintings for themselves.

To end the topic the children found out about how the war came to an end. We then celebrated VE day in style with community singing of some 1940s songs and jiving to the sounds from the era.

This half term, the computing in year 6 has been led by Sharon Cufflin. The pupils in year 6 have created some excellent interactive guides to Anne Frank's Secret Annex. Some of these are available to explore in the Year 6 curriculum journey section of the school website.



Reading continues to be a focus in year 6 and the use of an English specialist in each class' guided reading sessions on Mondays to Wednesdays has been very successful. The focus of these sessions has been the pupil's comprehension and showing they really understand the text.

The class novel Goodnight Mr Tom based on a boy's experience of being evacuated has been enjoyed by staff and pupils alike. With weekly activities and homework the pupils have shown a good understanding of the text and developing their comprehension as well as reading for pleasure.

### **The Creative Arts – Miss N Baines**

Year 5 are continuing their work with the Welsh National Opera this year. They have been learning the techniques needed to sing effectively and will be sharing one of the songs they have been working on with the Year 6 students as part of their World War 2 topic. All 90 children will then be performing at a concert at Birmingham Hippodrome in November. The Welsh National Opera practitioners will also be offering the children taster sessions to encourage them to join their Saturday youth sessions.

In upper school, two projects have been set up with the Birmingham Conservatoire. Firstly, a final-year student will be working with a group of children as part of an after school club in the Spring term. They will be starting a choir, who will then be performing with the jazz orchestra at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire.

Secondly, we have a joint project with the University of Cambridge Engineering department called '88 pianists'. This is a project that aims to fuse engineering and art in an attempt to break the world record for the number of people playing the same piano at one time. The

children will work with the engineering team to build 'mechanical fingers' in order to make this happen.

In addition, our arts councillors have been elected and we have begun meeting on a weekly basis. They have been planning an art project to mark the 100 years since World War 1 ended. This would involve a waterfall of poppies made by the children and put on display in the upper school playground. Many of the children expressed a desire to also include the purple poppies to remember the animals killed during the war.

#### After School Clubs at Grove – Mrs F Mc Arevey

Day	Year group/s	Club	Number of children attending	PPG children attending	Co-ordinated by
Monday	6 and 5	Keyboard Club	10	8	Music service
	6	GCSE club	10	3	Grove staff
	6	Maths	15	5	Grove staff
	4	Library Club	9	2	Grove staff
Tuesday	1	Reading	9	0	Grove staff
	1	Writing	12	1	Grove staff
	1	Phonics	11	2	Grove staff
	1	Maths	12	4	Grove staff
	3	Maths Club	7	1	Grove staff
	4	Reading Club	12	5	Grove staff
	5	Reading	8	4	Grove staff
	6	Reading	13	11	Grove staff
	3 and 4	Ukulele Club	15	4	Music service
	5 and 6	Brass Club	5	5	Music service
	6	Djembe club	13	11	Music service
	5 and 6	Football	26	15	Aspire Staff
Wednesday	2	Writing club	12	3	Grove staff
	2	Maths	12	3	Grove staff
	2	Reading	12	2	Grove staff
	2	phonics	12	3	Grove staff
	3	Reading Club	5	1	Grove staff
	4	Maths Club	12	6	Grove staff
	5	Maths	15	6	Grove staff
	6	Latin	15	9	Grove staff

	5	Bicycle Ability club	8	8	Aspire Staff
	5 and 6	Dance Club	12	12	Aspire Staff
	5 and 6	Dohl Club	13	6	Music Service
Thursday	5	Alternative Sports	26	13	Aspire Staff
	6	Alternative Sports	27	12	Aspire Staff
Total number of clubs		29			
Total number of children attending			353		
Total number of PPG children				156	

The clubs after school have been a great success. The children attending music clubs have increased this term, with ukulele, djembe and dohl becoming extremely popular. It has been a pleasure to see the children playing their instruments with such enthusiasm.

We have also increased the number of children attending football club and alternative sports for years 5 and 6 as the demand was so high. The children attending the alternative sports clubs have said that it is good to try a different activity each week.

Parents whose children attend an academic club said they appreciate the extra support we are giving their children and the children are happily attending weekly. Children who have not been chosen are asking when it will be their turn.