

# Grove Park Primary School Newsletter – End of Term 1

Dear Parents and Carers,

As Term 1 draws to a close, we'd like to take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support and share some of the highlights from what has been a very successful start to the school year.

## ***A Successful Term 1***

We're incredibly proud of how well our pupils have settled into the new academic year. From learning achievements to positive friendships, Term 1 has been filled with fantastic moments, and we're looking forward to building on this momentum next term.

## ***Introducing Our New Heads of Community***



A big **congratulations** to **Ava and Lucy**, our newly elected Heads of Community!



In their manifestos, they wrote about how committed they are to support others, building strength in our values and leave a positive mark on the school community. I am sure they will be successful in their campaign to improve the school and work well with the school's leadership team. Well done to all the pupils who put themselves forward – your confidence and commitment were inspiring and shows how dedicated you are to our school.

## ***Thank You for Attending Parents Evening***

It was lovely to see so many of you during Parents Evening. These early conversations are key in helping us build strong relationships and working together to support your child's learning journey. Thank you for making time to attend, listening to staff and finding out more. As we move into Term 2, you will be continually updated on your child's progress, but our doors are always open if you should need us.

### ***Have your say - Parent Surveys Coming Soon***

We will soon be sending out several **parent surveys** focusing on different areas of school life, such as OPAL, EYFS transitions and many more. Your feedback is incredibly valuable to us, so please keep an eye out and take a few moments to complete **all** of them.

### ***Supporting Positive Behaviour***

We are proud of our approach to behaviour at school. Here's how we support and guide pupils:

- **Reinforcing the positives** – we always look for opportunities to highlight and reward great behaviour.
- **Dojos and Nojos** – recognising positive actions with Dojos and reflecting on choices with Nojos.
- **Celebrating success** – through weekly assemblies and special mentions.
- **Clear consequences** – where needed, we apply consistent and fair consequences to help children learn from their actions.

We understand that at times, behaviour in class can be challenging. This is a normal part of every school, and rest assured, we handle these situations with care and professionalism, always aiming to support every child and their family. Our teachers are always happy to help, please discuss matters regarding your child's behaviour and ways the school can help if you should need to.

### ***Stay Connected – Sign Up to Parent Dojo***



If you haven't already, please sign up to **Parent Dojo**. It's our main tool for sharing updates about your child's behaviour, helping us to maintain open communication and work in partnership with you. Your class teacher can support with this free platform, so please let them know if you need the relevant details.

♥ ***A Heartfelt Thank You to Our HSA Team*** ♥

We would like to extend a huge thank you to **Sheryl, Fay, Liz and Lana**, who are stepping down after years of incredible service as part of our HSA. Their dedication, creativity, and tireless efforts have made a lasting difference to the school – not just through fundraising, but in building a strong, vibrant school community.

Their work has changed the lives of so many children, and the legacy they leave behind is truly valuable. We will sincerely miss their presence and passion. The new HSA members will be introducing themselves to you soon – we look forward to seeing what the next chapter brings! For now, thank you to everyone who has supported and contributed to the HSA's work over the years.



# ATTENDANCE

At Grove Park attendance matters. We ask our pupils to have 100% attendance because we value your children and would like to see them!

## **Building Strong Foundations**

The early years of school are when children learn essential skills like reading, writing, maths, and social interaction. Missing school – even just a day or two each month – can lead to gaps in learning that are hard to catch up on later.

## **Creating Good Habits for Life**

Regular attendance builds routines and a strong work ethic. Children who get into the habit of coming to school every day are more likely to be engaged, motivated, and responsible as they grow older.

## **Developing Friendships and Confidence**

School is not just about lessons – it's also where children learn how to work and play with others. Poor attendance can make it harder for children to form friendships, feel part of the class, and develop confidence.

## **Everyday Counts**

Did you know?

- Missing just **1 day every 2 weeks** adds up to nearly **4 full weeks** of lost learning in a year.
- Over the course of primary school, that's nearly **half a year** of missed learning!

## **How You Can Help**

- Aim for your child to attend school every day unless they are **genuinely unwell**.
- Book appointments (like dental or medical) **outside school hours** whenever possible.
- Take holidays **during school holidays**, not in term time.
- Talk to us if you're facing challenges – we're here to support you.



**Let's Work Together**

We understand that sometimes absences are unavoidable. If your child is having trouble with attending school – whether due to illness, anxiety, or family circumstances – please contact us. We're here to help.

Together, we can make sure your child has the best start in life through strong attendance and a love of learning.



# OPAL Newsletter

## Term 1



Opal's vision is that every child in every school has an amazing hour of high quality play every day—with no exceptions. We firmly believe in this vision, and our goal is to give every child at least one hour of excellent play each day. (<http://outdoorplayandlearning.org.uk>).

Welcome to Term 1 of our OPAL journey at Grove Park! After an unforgettable year of excitement, creativity, and growth, we're thrilled to kick off another fantastic year of outdoor play and learning. This year promises even more as we take on fresh challenges in every zone and introduce exciting new expansions to our play spaces. This year, every child will have the chance to try something new, and make their own discoveries in every zone.



### Planet Earth inspires our New Opal Challenges

As we move into the next stage of our OPAL journey, we're excited to introduce something new for the children—OPAL Challenges! These are weekly activity-based tasks set in each outdoor zone, designed to spark curiosity, creativity, and teamwork.

This term, our theme is Planet Earth, and the challenges have reflected this. From riding through the wind tunnel path, to designing beaches in the sandpit, making rivers in the Water Zone, or rescuing the sea creatures on the buggy boards. The children have been immersed into these challenges and successful achieving them. The challenge—clean our world in the sandpit has been a particular favourite—full of imaginative ideas and purposeful exploration.

### OPAL Rangers

This term, we welcomed a brand-new team of OPAL Rangers—and they've already made a brilliant start! Full of enthusiasm and positivity, our Rangers are quickly becoming key figures in the playground.

In just a few weeks, they've shown great initiative by supporting and guiding other children, helping everyone get involved in play, and encouraging others to follow our school values. Whether it's lending a hand, offering kind reminders, or helping with challenges in each zone, their presence is already making a real difference.

We're excited to see how they continue to grow in their roles and help lead the way in our OPAL journey this year.



These weekly activities not only make outdoor play more engaging, but also help children develop key skills such as **problem-solving, cooperation, and responsibility**. It's been fantastic to see them take ownership of their play spaces and approach each new challenge with such excitement and pride.

### What's Coming Next in Our OPAL Adventure

Our OPAL journey is growing and thriving! One of the firm favourites this year has been the expanded Balance Zone, where children have loved testing their skills on the new balance obstacle course. It's been fantastic to see their confidence and coordination soar as they take on new challenges.

In the Water Zone, children have been excitedly taking part in gardening challenges—seeding, watering, and nurturing sweetcorn and tomatoes. The highlight has been harvesting their fresh produce to feed the guinea pigs, helping them learn about growth, care, and responsibility through hands-on experience. They have also learnt how to make rain in a bottle.

Looking ahead, we're thrilled to bring back some popular events like OPAL Club during term time and Welly Wednesday in the New Year (more information to come), giving everyone more opportunities for outdoor fun and leadership.

**We need your help! Please see our donation poster.**





# Giraffe Class Newsletter



This term in Giraffe Class has been full of fun! The children made their first steps in starting school and we are so proud of how they have adapted to their new routines. We have made lots of friends, had lots of fun and started our learning journey as a class.

We have loved making new friends!



We spent a lot of time thinking and learning about feelings. We read 'The Colour Monster goes to School' and loved it! We can identify different feelings and even give some examples of what those feelings look like.



We had a very mischievous visitor from the Gingerbread Man too, he escaped from the Bakery! We have been trying our best to find him, leave him notes and even make some friends for him! Let us know if you find him!



We looked at observational drawing in Art. We took our time to look at our faces in the mirror and sketch them using pencils. We then used paint and colour to paint our faces. It was important to check our eye colour and hair colour before choosing our paints.

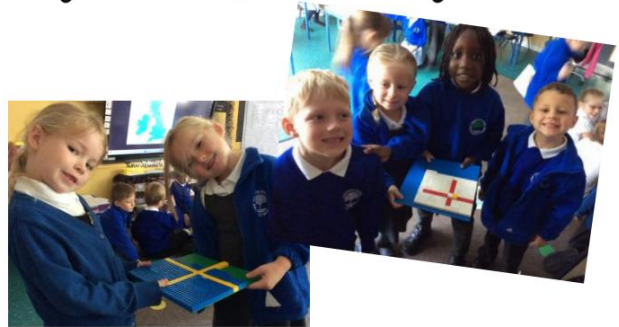




# Term 1 in Meerkat Class

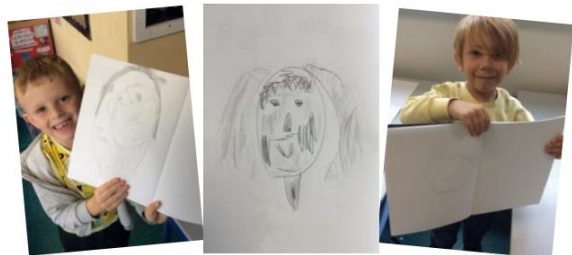
What an exciting start to the year it's been! The children have settled wonderfully into Year 1 and have loved getting stuck into our topic, "What makes planet Earth amazing?" We've explored lots of new ideas and shown great curiosity in our learning.

In geography, we learned about the four countries of the UK and their capital cities, and we can now name all seven continents – helped by our fun continent song! We talked about physical and human features, then went on a walk around our local area to spot them in real life. We found trees, woods and fields, as well as houses, shops and our local park.



In science, we explored what makes humans and animals unique. We learned about the parts of the body and used our five senses to carry out a fun investigation with mystery bags. The children also discovered how to group animals such as mammals, reptiles, birds, fish and amphibians, and learned what it means to be a carnivore, herbivore or omnivore.

In art, we looked closely at the work of Paul Klee, noticing how he used shapes, lines and colours. Then we created our own artwork in his style, using shapes to make abstract self-portraits. We also practised using different pencil pressures to make lighter and darker lines when drawing.



In our writing, we brought everything together to produce our very first non-chronological report. We worked hard to organise our ideas, use factual language and present our information clearly and can't wait for you to eventually read them.

It's been a fantastic first term filled with learning, creativity and fun. We're so proud of everything Year 1 has achieved – well done, everyone! We're already looking forward to next term, when our new topic will be the Three Queens – we can't wait to learn all about these amazing women from history!



# Lion Class- Year 2



**Respect Responsible Resilience Resourceful**

This term we have celebrated the following members of Lion Class for showing how responsible, resourceful, resilient and respectful they can be. Well done!!

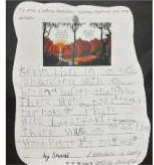
**Rhyleigh** (responsible), **Archie-James** (respectful), **Grace** (resourceful), **Joshua** (resilient), **Dolly** (respectful), and our Value Champion this term was **Arabella** (all 4 values).

This term, Year 2's topic was '**Australia**'. We can answer 'The BIG question'- **Where would you prefer to live- Sittingbourne or Sydney?** We can speak about the climates of each place and human and physical features we might visit. We have also learned to play a didgeridoo!!

In **Maths** we have been looking at the value of each digit in numbers to 99. We have been ordering and comparing them using this knowledge. We have been practising number bonds, and adding and subtracting



In **English** this term, we have been looking at the book 'The Koala Who Could'. We had great fun retelling the story using capital letters and full stops, extending sentences using 'and' and 'because' and describing Kevin the koala using amazing noun phrases!



In **Science**, we have been learning about animals including humans. We have thought about how to keep healthy and enjoyed a scootability day as a fun new way to keep active! We have looked at how animals grow and change as well.

In **RWV** this term, we visited Bobbing Church to learn about where Christian people might worship and about the parts of a church. We have also been learning about Hinduism and Mrs Thakur taught us about puja. We understand that learning about different people's beliefs and world views are very important in teaching us tolerance and respect for others- an important British Value.



## Year 3 - Elephant Class - Term 1

This term in Year 3, Elephant Class have been travelling back in time to explore life in the Stone Age. Our historical journey has taken us through the Palaeolithic, Mesolithic, and Neolithic eras, where we discovered how early humans lived, hunted, and began building communities.

Elephant Class have especially enjoyed learning how Stone Age people hunted and gathered food, crafted stone tools, and built shelters. They rose to the challenge of designing and constructing their own shelters using sticks and paper—just like early humans might have done!

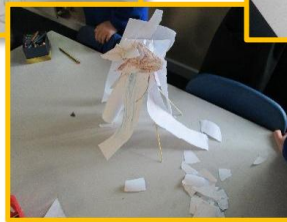
In art, the children got creative by making their own natural paint using flour, water, and fruit, inspired by Stone Age cave paintings.

It's been a fantastic term full of curiosity, creativity, and teamwork. Well done, Elephant Class!

Elephant Class thoroughly enjoyed their Forest School sessions this term! They made fantastic connections to their Stone Age topic by crafting stone-inspired jewellery using clay, just like early humans might have done.

Mrs Day was especially impressed with their behaviour, noting how safe, respectful, and responsible they were while exploring the site.

Well done, Elephant Class, your creativity and teamwork really shone through!



In Science this term, Elephant Class have been investigating the fascinating world of rocks. We explored how different types of rocks: **igneous**, **sedimentary**, and **metamorphic** are formed, and discovered the incredible process of fossil formation.

The children were amazed to learn how fossils give us clues about life millions of years ago and enjoyed examining rock samples to identify their properties.

In Computing, Mr Matthews has been really impressed with the class, as they have been learning about communication and how emails work. They have been challenged to think about the to reply, and to consider what to do if a fraudulent email is sent to them. Great computing this term Elephants, well done!

Value Champions - Well done to the following children for demonstrating one of the school values this term:

Nikola

Miya-Blue

Grace-Kelly

Adalind

Archie



Zebra Class



### Term 1

This term in Zebra Class we have been looking at Rainforests and gorillas in our Discovery topic and this also links into our writing. Our science topic has been animals including humans and has had us looking at teeth and the digestive system.

In maths we have been investigating place value and rounding to the nearest 10's, 100's and 1000's. We have also been focusing on using the column method for adding and subtracting.

In art the children sketched gorillas and used shading skills to make them more realistic.

In our writing we have looked at fronted adverbials, expanded noun phrases and adding speech in writing, as well as remembering the basics such as capital letters and punctuation.

In PE the children have been looking at gymnastics in our indoor lessons and have been truly amazing. Mr Edwards and myself are extremely proud of them. In our outdoor lessons we have been looking at attacking and defending skills.

It has been an amazing first term and the children should be very proud of how well they have settled into year 4.

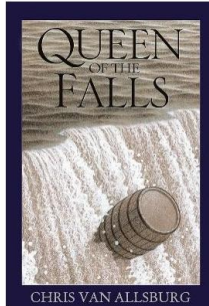
Congratulations to our certificate winners for our school values of respect, resilience, responsibility and resourcefulness.

It just leaves me to wish you all a restful half term. See you in term 2.

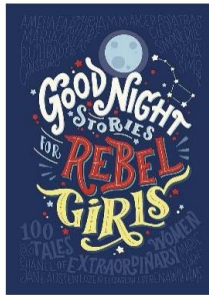
## TERM 1 IN RHINO CLASS!

Our topic this term has been INSPIRATIONAL WOMEN, and we have been learning about the lives and legacies of many inspirational women throughout history!

In our **Writing**, we have been researching the infamous daredevil, Annie Edson Taylor, who courageously went over Niagara Falls in a barrel. The children enjoyed reading her story in 'Queen of the Falls', learning what it means to be a daredevil, recounting Annie's dangerous journey in our own unique ways!



In our **Reading**, we have been looking at 'Goodnight Stories for Rebel Girls', learning about many inspirational women such as Rosa Parks amongst many others! This has helped us with our writing, where we have been writing our own diary entries recently!



In **Art**, we worked on our portrait-drawing skills, completing fantastic portraits of Evita Peron!

We have had an awesome time in **DT** this term! Through our topic, we learned about Amelia Earhart and her many planes, making our own from wooden sticks, pegs and paint! We went out to the sandpit and tested how well they could fly! This has helped us with our **Science**, where we have been looking at and testing different forces, such as air resistance!

We have had an amazing term in **Maths**, focusing on rounding, adding and subtracting, and place value amongst other things! We have gained lots of confidence in our Maths skills this term!

Our focus in **PE** has been leadership skills and organisation, where we have created some cool new games to play, and have created lots of amazing sports leaders!



Congratulations to Deborah, Ayo, Millie, Jake, Jennifer and Isla for being our first values certificate winners this term!

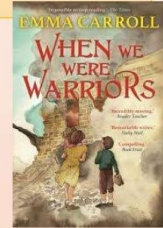
Next term we are looking at the Ancient Greeks!

# Term 1 - Ostrich Class

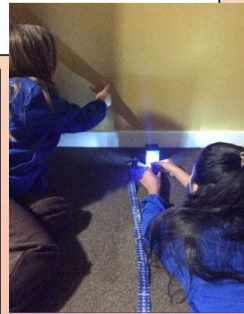


We are delighted to share with you the exciting learning experiences Year 6 have enjoyed during Term 1. The children have worked incredibly hard across all subjects and have shown great enthusiasm and resilience.

Our English lessons have focused on World War II. The children explored historical events through creative writing, producing heartfelt diary entries and compelling newspaper reports. We also enjoyed reading the novel 'When We Were Warriors', which sparked thoughtful discussions. We also explored World War II poems to deepen our understanding of the emotions and experiences of the time.



Our Science topic this term has been 'Light'. We investigated how light travels, how shadows are formed, and how we see objects. The children enjoyed conducting experiments and recording their findings.



In Maths, we have been developing our understanding of place value, addition, subtraction, and multiplication. Pupils have been working hard to apply their skills to solve problems and explain their reasoning clearly.



We have been working hard on our spelling using Spelling Shed. Pupils have practiced weekly spelling patterns and applied them in their writing.

In Computing, we learnt about networks and how computers communicate with each other. The class explored the structure of the internet and practiced using digital tools safely.

Our PSHE lessons focused on families and relationships. The children explored different family structures, the importance of respect, and how to maintain positive relationships.

A massive well done to our certificate winners this term:

Kelbie, Shriyen, Ella, Sophie and Harper