

Welcome from the Headteacher

We warmly welcome you to The Grove School, a special school for children and students aged two to either 16 years, in some cases 18 years and rarely nineteen years old with additional learning needs. Thank you for your interest, any comments or suggestions you would like to make will be appreciated as support for our ongoing development and improvement.

Our whole school ethos and culture is centred around ensuring the very best education and care for every learner. Through our friendly and calm yet vibrant and stimulating approach we aim for learning to be fun whilst nurturing ambition to succeed within every step. Personalised planning ensures that progress is achieved through challenging targets that identify and build upon every learner's individual strengths and interests. The dedication and commitment of our Staff Team and Governing Body creates an outstanding professional purposefulness that sustains our high standards.

We benefit from strong links with many others including our Local Partnership of Schools and our local Berwick and wider communities which includes many individuals who further support and enhance the work of our school. The high quality of this work has been recognised by a number of national awards and our most recent Ofsted inspection commented that 'staff are tender and patient. They find ways to understand pupils. They unlock pupil's potential' and that 'pupils development, well-being and happiness are at the centre of everything that happens at The Grove Special School.' Judging us an "outstanding" school for the care and education provided for all pupils who attend the school.

If you would like to visit The Grove School please contact us to arrange to do so.

Penny Derries

Headteacher

Our Admissions Policy

The Local Authority, Northumberland County Council, is the Admissions Authority for all Special Schools in Northumberland, which includes The Grove School.

The application process for a place at The Grove School is different to that in place for mainstream schools. Before a place may be applied for a child must have an Educational, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). The process is managed by Northumberland County Council's Commissioning Panel and it is this panel who decide whether The Grove School may or may not be an appropriate placement based upon the details they receive from parents and multi-professionals. If the Commissioning Panel agree that The Grove School is an appropriate placement it is only at this point that the school is able to offer a place.

We warmly welcome contact from parents who would like to look around our school to discuss the educational opportunities we are able to provide and to openly discuss with you whether you consider us to be an appropriate school placement or not.

Our Ethos

We are a happy, safe and supportive school where everyone is equally important and nurtured to learn and thrive.

Values

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Education is intrinsic to our school culture and ethos, we demonstrate this by: -

- valuing learning with, from and on behalf of each other in school and beyond;
- valuing flexible, creative and open thinking and approaches that are solution focussed;
- valuing and respecting everyone equally whilst acknowledging individuality and diversity;
- valuing, listening to and respecting each other's opinions;
- valuing and caring about the environment and being actively involved in our community;
- supporting, nurturing and caring for each other;
- being kind, thoughtful and considerate with each other.

Our Aims for Everyone in Our School Community

- To provide the highest standards of teaching and to progress knowledge, concepts and skills through learning experiences that challenge everyone's potential, develops from their needs and builds on their success.
- For teaching and learning to be fun, enjoyable and motivating and which optimises learning key, core and life skills within meaningful contexts through an enriched curriculum.
- To nurture and progress the independence of every learner through their choices being central to their learning and future options. For all in school to have a 'voice' that is valued.
- To ensure an inclusive approach to learning that prioritises equality of access and opportunity through everyone being respectful of each other, our school environment and the wider community and which builds an understanding of 'right' and 'wrong'.
- To value parental contributions to their child's learning and school life sustaining a strong partnership based upon open communications which build trust and mutual respect.
- To liaise with, learn from and support schools in our local partnership, Northumberland and beyond. To sustain and further develop our Business and Community Partner links.
- For our working surroundings to provide a welcoming, supportive, happy and safe environment for everyone and for healthy lifestyles to be encouraged and supported through whole school events which celebrate traditions, cultures and festivals from Britain and around the world.

Our Class Arrangements

Our school organisation is flexible to ensure that we can provide the very best for every child/young person. There may be little change between class groups in some school years as we have two special care groups and four classes for the seventeen age groups between nursery and sixth form. School is arranged flexibly in the way that best meets the needs of the children/young people attending at the time.

Currently we have six groups, the following summarises the organisation within each:

- Willow and Maple are our 2-19 years Special Care Groups
- Elm is our Early Years/First School Group
- Beech is our Middle/High School Group
- Sycamore is our speech, language and communication group
- Oak are our High School and Sixth Form Groups

We have a high staffing ratio in all classes which supports smaller/flexible group planning, individual timetables and personalised learning.

Special Educational Needs Policy

We provide an appropriate and relevant curriculum for all our pupils which develops abilities through personalised programmes that plan for progression and achievement. For some pupils who are very dependent on others for physical support we help them to achieve through participating co-actively and hand over hand as well as optimising the use of technology. For children and young people who depend upon alternative ways to communicate we use a wide range of augmentative communication methods, including PECS - Picture Exchange Communication System; Makaton - both signing and symbols; photographs and, within early developmental steps, Interpreted Intentionality which is the interpretation of gesture and repeated responses.

For pupils on the Autistic Continuum we optimise the use of a breadth of specific strategies such as visual timetables, within structured and consistent approaches, upon which trust and meaningful relationships are built that support learning both within school and on a functional life skills basis.

Inclusion throughout our local community is valued for the very important social links and relationships it provides for everyone.

Curriculum Subjects and Approaches

The National Curriculum provides the framework for our thematic approach, which ensures that teaching and learning is stimulating, motivating and fun. We personalise learning and plan for progression through appropriately individualised targets that are prioritised within every lesson. Achieving the Quality Mark for Basic Skills is recognition of how successfully English and Mathematics are embedded throughout our school's curriculum.

Progress through small steps of achievement is supported in many ways including:-

- valuing what is learnt, a breadth of theoretical knowledge to guide the practical application of skills whilst developing concepts and understanding across the curriculum especially within English, Mathematics and Computing
- valuing learning within sensory and play based experiences that stimulates, engages and excites learners
- valuing the context of when learning takes place: - in planned lessons, in informal less structured times during lunch and playtimes, at times of change in the school day etc.
- valuing the context of where learning takes place: - the environment, inside, outside, in the community, specialist facilities and resources etc.

- valuing the development of positive learning attitudes and dispositions such as concentration, focus and attention to tasks, self-regulation, reasoning, judgement and decision making skills, resilience and determination to succeed
- valuing every individual's strengths, interests and preferences and building upon these to motivate, engage and enthuse learning through accurate assessment that enables tiny steps of achievement to be measured
- valuing a Business and Enterprise approach to learning
- valuing the time to teach and praise independent achievement
- valuing team working throughout school and with multi-professionals to optimise upon and further develop our staff expertise and to provide additional specialisms.

Personal, Health, Social Education/PHSE, Citizenship and Spiritual, Moral Social and Cultural Education/SMSC

These areas of learning are embedded throughout our whole school practice as well as

being specifically taught, as detailed within our approach to the curriculum and recognised within our inclusion award, Quality Mark for Basic Skills and other accreditations. All learning opportunities are optimised to support and guide emotional and social development and inter and intra personal skills as well as the development of self-care skills and independence. Often it is informal learning situations such as transition times between home and school, change times between lessons, social break and lunchtimes that give learners the richest opportunities to progress these skills. The expertise of our additionally qualified, Emotional Literacy Support Assistants, ELSAs, is key to our success in supporting learners to be confident, creative, imaginative, kind, thoughtful, caring, resilient and responsible individuals.

Sexual health, relationship

SHRE is part of our wider Health Education curriculum within which our School Nurse plays an important role both with supporting our children and young people and through her work with parents. Parents are always consulted before specific aspects of SRE are introduced.

Religious Education/RE

RE is an integral part of our general ethos and school curriculum. Multi-cultural activities take place through our thematic approach and assemblies. Our approach is multi faith with Christianity being an essential aspect of this.

Parents may withdraw their child from part or all of the RE taught in school and the collective worship.

Early Years

Children starting with us in their early years join the class that will most appropriately meet their needs which may be either Elm or Willow.

Early Years learning aims are similar to those prioritised within our whole school curriculum, it is organised within seven key areas of learning which we personalise to meet each child's individual needs. The Early Years seven areas of learning are:-

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication and Language
- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding of the World
- Physical Development
- Expressive Arts and Design

Post School Preparation

Developing an understanding of adult roles and responsibilities begins in the Early Years where all children are supported to keep their classrooms clean and tidy, wash and dry dishes after snacks and cookery and to look after their own and others belongings as well as caring for their school environment.

All classes run their own Business and Enterprise programme whereby every child/young person contributes to the making of products which are sold at a profit.

Social and emotional skills are also progressed through the development of team working skills, a key aspect of which is deciding as a team what each class would like to spend their profits on. Special days out are favourite choices alongside additional resources for the classroom.

Some students choose to be a Teaching Assistant supporting the younger children which progresses practical skills whilst also being immensely supportive in developing confidence and self-esteem too.

Through ASDAN and Functional Skills accreditations we offer a number of programmes that provide national accreditation and recognition for specific curriculum areas for our Key Stage 4 and Sixth Form Students. Course work studied includes Functional Skills in Maths and English, Personal and Social Development (PSD), Personal Health and Social Education (PHSE), Citizenship and Life Skills Diploma.

Specific planning for post school (which may be at 16, 18, 19) opportunities begins in Y9 when it would be usual for a Transition Worker from the Disabled Children's Team to begin working with a young person and their family from the student's fourteenth to eighteenth birthdays. The Transition Worker may help a young person and their family to be supported with a Care Manager who can help with planning from the age of eighteen years into adult life. A young person may wish to continue their education by attending specialist college placements for which there is a specialist college or college placement advisor. A young person and their family may also choose to be further supported by a Person Centred Planner in addition to school based support and guidance.

A flow chart explaining this and giving examples of post 16, 18 and 19 year provision is available on our website.

Annual Review of Statement of Special Educational Need/Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)

Every year we formally review a pupil's Statement of Special Educational Need in relation to the progress the children and students have made over the previous year. The Annual Review Meeting is an opportunity to recommend amendments to the Statement/EHCP, to reflect upon and celebrate the previous year and to agree targets for the forthcoming year.

Every pupil's School Report includes a review on their progress in social, emotional and physical outcomes as well as in curriculum subject areas, communication, interaction and cognition and when appropriate sensory and mental health needs too. We comment on progress through the use of two assessment formats, these are B-Squared and MAPP (Mapping and Assessing Personal Progress)

We encourage parents, children, students and multi-professionals to contribute written reports too, everyone's views are much valued and are essential towards supporting continued progress and achievements. We welcome requests from parents for meetings with class staff throughout the year and we often request meetings with parents for in-year discussions too.

Personalised Plans

All Grove School pupils have a Personalised Plan which has individualised targets that are based on the objectives detailed in their Education, Health and Care Plan. These objectives are reviewed, modified and amended through using the 'B' Squared assessment tool or using MAPP (Mapping and Assessing Personal Progress). All Personalised Plans are regularly reviewed throughout the year and as current targets are achieved new targets are agreed and set.

Celebration of Achievements

Our School's ethos encourages praise and recognition for all pupils, we reward everyone's success. Stars, stickers, certificates and badges are frequently awarded within class groups and at our End of Year Prize Giving, special awards and trophies are also presented.

Homework / Learning at Home

We do not set specific subject based homework. What we do encourage is broadening and generalising success to enable developments nurtured at home to flourish in school, the progress of achievements at school to flourish at home and for all of these to be successful in the community. We are pleased to establish regular, specific contact between parents and class staff to build strong home-school links. We have many fun ideas for specific learning activities and specific resources/books/apps that we are happy to recommend based upon an individual child's/young person's interests, age and abilities.

School Rules

All pupils and staff are expected to be polite, courteous and tolerant of each other. We try to create a family atmosphere in school which encourages everyone to be concerned with each other's happiness and well-being. Expectation of good behaviour is central to our Positive Behaviour Policy which aims to develop a child's self-discipline/regulation and personal responsibility for his/her own actions. Through this approach we aim to give every child/young adult the freedom to develop greater independence by assuming additional responsibilities during their time at school in preparation for their futures as life-long successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens.

Times of School Day / Taught Hours

School begins for all pupils at 9.00am. All pupils have a lunch break in their class groups with school ending at 3.00pm.

Within the school day there are break times built into the timetable. We provide twenty five 'Taught Hours' each week which is more than the requirements set out in the DES Circular 7.90 Management of the School Day.

Leave of Absence for Holidays/Attendance

It is the policy of The Grove School to maintain the optimum attendance of all our pupils in partnership with parents so that their child can gain the greatest benefit from the education we offer. The granting of leave of absence during term time is only possible for exceptional circumstances. We request that families take their holidays during the set school holidays. If there are exceptional circumstances please contact Mrs. Derries, headteacher, to discuss

these. Please refer to the sections regarding Medical Needs/Ill Health and Transport for additional attendance related details.

Complaints Procedure

We very much value our open and friendly relationships with the families of our pupils and encourage parents to talk with us informally to raise matters of concern with either the relevant member of staff or with Mrs. Derries, headteacher, in order for us to be aware of any problems and work together to find a solution. Complaints are usually resolved at this stage but there is a written Complaints Procedure if needed, the details of which are available from the school office.

School Meals

Our lunchtime is an important priority within our Personal, Health, Social, Education and Citizenship learning. Staff sit alongside pupils to support the development of table manners, mechanical and social skills. Our meals are cooked on the premises and special diets are catered for as necessary. Pupils who bring a packed lunch sit alongside staff in their class groups. Lunch-time jobs of responsibility such as setting tables, clearing away, wiping tables and sweeping the floor provides valuable work placement experiences which also supports the development of independence, confidence and self-esteem both for our younger and older pupils.

School Milk

School provides free milk for all the children who wish to have it.

Medical Needs / Ill Health/Attendance

Mrs Heather Cornish, school nurse, takes the lead on most medical needs and also supports parents and their children by attending the consultant clinics that are held in school. On entry to school we request that specific medical forms are completed which include emergency telephone numbers, please help us to keep all of this information up to date. Within these forms we seek permission to give paracetamol when this may be needed in school and to monitor pupil's heights and weights which all contributes to supporting your child's general well-being. We err on the side of caution and do frequently contact parents to discuss their child's health and ask for advice and support with regard to specific medical conditions. We support complex medical needs with individual Care Plans for which identified staff are specifically trained.

If your child needs any medication, either for long term use or for a short term illness, to ensure safe practice, medical forms must be completed and signed by parents before we can follow through with the instructions. Medication is stored

safely, usually being kept in a locked cupboard or fridge and is administered by our school nurse or two members of staff following safety protocols. We follow careful procedures for the safe transportation and administration of medication for community based lessons, residential visits and outings.

Our school nurse Mrs Heather Cornish is available all day Monday, Tuesday and is pleased to discuss any health concerns.

If your child is absent from school please phone and let us know why. Whilst this helps us with following guidelines and procedures which ensure that school always accurately records why a pupil is absent, we care about every child, worry if they aren't well and very much appreciate being kept up to date about their health and well-being. In relation both specifically to the health of vulnerable children who have complex medical needs and to everyone's well-being, we are concerned about anyone attending who is unwell or likely to infect others and encourage all parents to keep poorly children at home until they are well enough to attend school. Should a child's/young person's condition deteriorate whilst they are at school, we make sure that they are cosy and

comfortable and isolate them from the other children to try and prevent cross-infection until their parents can collect them. If your child has had a vomiting or diarrhoea illness they need to stay at home for 48 hours after the last episode of vomiting or diarrhoea to enable the time for cross-infection to pass. We also encourage everyone to use tissues for both coughs and sneezes and to thoroughly wash their hands afterwards to try to minimise the risk of spreading any infection and to keep school as healthy an environment as possible.

Smoke Free Policy

The Grove School operates a Smoke Free Policy both throughout the school building and in the school grounds, including the car parks. Thank you for supporting this policy which is very much appreciated. We are happy to support both families and staff with information and guidance about stopping smoking and to run a support group if this would be helpful. To begin with please contact whoever you are most comfortable with to talk about this.

Fire Safety

Fire drills are held each term which are supervised by senior members of staff who monitor the effectiveness of practice and make modifications as the need arises.

Charging Policy

Every child/young person has regular opportunities to enjoy a wide range of activities both within and out of school to enrich their learning experiences, for which there is no charge to parents. School supports all the costs for swimming,

cookery, theatre visits and social learning experiences to local cafes, educational visits and residential holidays.

Etal RDA supports all the costs involved in the riding lessons they provide, including the rider's hats, whilst school provides the boots for riders. Donations from many local organisations and individuals support special activities, but this does not cover all these costs.

Weekly class visits as well as special outings to the theatre, museums, cities etc. are covered by our annual block parental permission slip.

We seek specific permission for activities which may have an element of risk such as Go-karting and for all residential holidays.

Parental Requests

We are pleased to respond to interest relating to all aspects of school life which may for instance involve school policies, our school curriculum, our website and Ofsted Reports. Please contact Mrs Derries if you would like to discuss anything in more detail.

Governing Body

The full Governing Body formally meets at least once a term to discuss issues relating to our school and statutory duties which includes governor visits. Governors look around all classes as well as focussing upon a specific area and writing a report on the aspects observed. Sub-committee group meetings support school improvement, curriculum and policy development, financial, staffing and other areas as detailed in the attached *Governors Booklet*. We have three Parent Governor Positions as well as Community and Staff Governors, each term of office lasts for four years. We very much appreciate parental interest in serving on our Governing Body and are very happy to discuss this with all interested parents. A complete list of current members is included in the back of this prospectus.

Chair of Governors (Community) - Mr Robert (Bob) Curry

Vice Chair of Governors (Parent) - Mr David Hogg

Transport and Attendance

Many pupils are provided with transport to and from school. If you wish for your child to begin using transport this needs to be discussed with the Local Authority who both authorise the provision and make all the arrangements with the operators. An increasing number of pupils who live locally choose to walk to school and parents use their own cars too. It is the parent's responsibility to inform both the transport operator as well as the school if their child is not able to attend for any reason. This is very helpful to transport operators as it ensures that unnecessary journeys aren't made; please could you let them know either the night

before or early in the morning before they begin their journey. Difficult weather conditions, road works and busy roads may create variations in pick up and return times; your help with being ready for the transport as soon as it arrives and being at home at the soonest possible return time is much appreciated by everyone, especially the other children and students sharing the transport route.

Data Protection and School

For many years schools and the School Health and Dental Services have worked together to ensure that all children in school are offered immunisation, health and dental check-ups, advice and support. To do this the School Health and Dental Services need population databases, including an up to date list of all children attending school. These are used to provide programmes, including HPV in Y8 for girls, Tetanus, Diphtheria, Polio boosters for everyone in Y10, Meningitis C and dental, hearing and vision screening. In response to changes in the Data Protection Act we are required to ensure that parents know that the school gives your child's name, address and date of birth to the School Health and Dental Services for this purpose. This information will be shared unless you advise the Headteacher in writing that you do not wish this to happen. Information about the services offered by School Health and Dentist are detailed in the information leaflet that you will have received when your child started school. Further copies, if required, can be obtained from The School Health Service. Please note that no immunisation or dental work is carried out without a signed consent form from a child's parent/carer. The Freedom of Information Act requires schools to be clear about the information they publish. All transfer of information is only ever arranged once parents have given their permission. Additional reasons to do so may include a pupil changing schools and/or preparing to leave school when additional services may be supporting plans for the future.

E-Safety

School has appointed staff who are responsible for the safety of all technologies that may be encountered in school which allow access to content and communications that could raise issues or pose risks to pupil's well-being and safety. Parents and pupils, where appropriate, and all staff are asked to sign an e-safety agreement, the key elements of which are attached to this booklet, especially with regard to social networking and parental and pupil contact with staff. We encourage our children/young people to use iPads as an integral feature of their learning whilst, within the written agreements, we have permission to screen what is stored to ensure that all aspects of safety are sustained.

Images of Pupils

Photographs and video images of pupils and staff are classed as personal data under the terms of the Data Protection Act 1998. Parents are requested to complete a form when their child begins school with us to give/refuse permission for photographs to be taken and/or used for publicising the school. For special events such as a TV programme specific permission will be requested.

School Council

Our School Council has representatives from all age groups who have the responsibility of sharing their views about how our school, its facilities and organisation may be improved for both themselves and all our pupils. School Council members are responsible for managing their own budget as well as discussing and making decisions about what other funding priorities may be. Council members are encouraged to be outgoing and openly communicative with others which at times may also involve showing visitors around school, being interviewed by Ofsted Inspectors and meeting with candidates who have applied for posts in school. Through our School Council pupils are directly involved in improving and developing our school.

School Activities and Visits

Our school has its own minibus which enables pupils to enjoy a wide range of environmentally based learning opportunities in their local community, school has a number of staff who volunteer to drive the school minibus all of whom are Midas accredited. Class groups regularly take part in visits and we also organise whole school trips when we hire additional transport. All pupils have the opportunity to enjoy residential holidays either within their class or smaller groups, they will have a primary, secondary and leavers holiday. School leavers are encouraged to choose their own destination, within affordable options, Glasgow, London, Manchester and York have been previous first choices.

Some of our pupils use The Swan Centre pool each week where they are taught to swim and develop their skills by qualified swimming instructors, some pupils may initially develop their confidence in our school hydrotherapy pool before joining these community pool sessions. We also use our Hall for PE and Games, often being supported by additional professional coaches for Kwik cricket, archery, Zumba, football etc.

Some of our pupils participate in riding lessons supported by our local RDA Group which take place at the Indoor Riding School at Etal Manor. This is a wonderful opportunity but access to these lessons is limited by the size of the ponies available and the health and safety requirements which this voluntary group must follow to ensure everyone's safety, well-being and enjoyment.

Hydrotherapy is provided through use of our school pool. We also have our own multi-sensory room, a soft play room and an outdoor safety surface play area. All of these special facilities support the children's and young people's communication, social independence and physical skills.

School Uniform

We appreciate support from parents to encourage their child to dress in our school uniform colours of pale blue and navy blue. The combinations depend on the class group and include jogging/sports trousers or black skirt. Mrs Lynne Kelly, Reception/Office Administration organises the orders of tops embroidered with our school logo. Please also ask Mrs Kelly about our Eco-tops - we usually have some previously used tops that we encourage parents to purchase for a small donation to help us succeed with our Reduce, Reuse, Recycle principles. We request that parents provide suitable clothing for sporting activities. We also request that parents provide suitable swim wear and a towel for swimming and jogging/sports trousers, thick socks, gloves and a warm coat for those who go horse riding. Special safety hats and riding boots are provided by either our local RDA or School Support Group. School also provides protective clothing/aprons when these are needed for lessons such as cookery, art and craft, technology, woodwork etc.

We request that all clothes are clearly labelled, biro marks on labels are helpful but soon wash off. Our school uniform provider can also provide iron-on name labels, we much appreciate parents support in using these, Mrs Kelly can give you details.

Jewellery

Many of our teenage pupils enjoy wearing jewellery and their individuality is encouraged; however, pupils who wear jewellery may put themselves at risk of an injury, particularly during practical and physical education lessons. Therefore, for everyone's safety, it is advisable that only minimal amounts of jewellery are worn. Earrings may put a child at particular risk and we therefore request that only small studs are worn. Jewellery must be removed for practical lessons to ensure we follow safety guidelines.

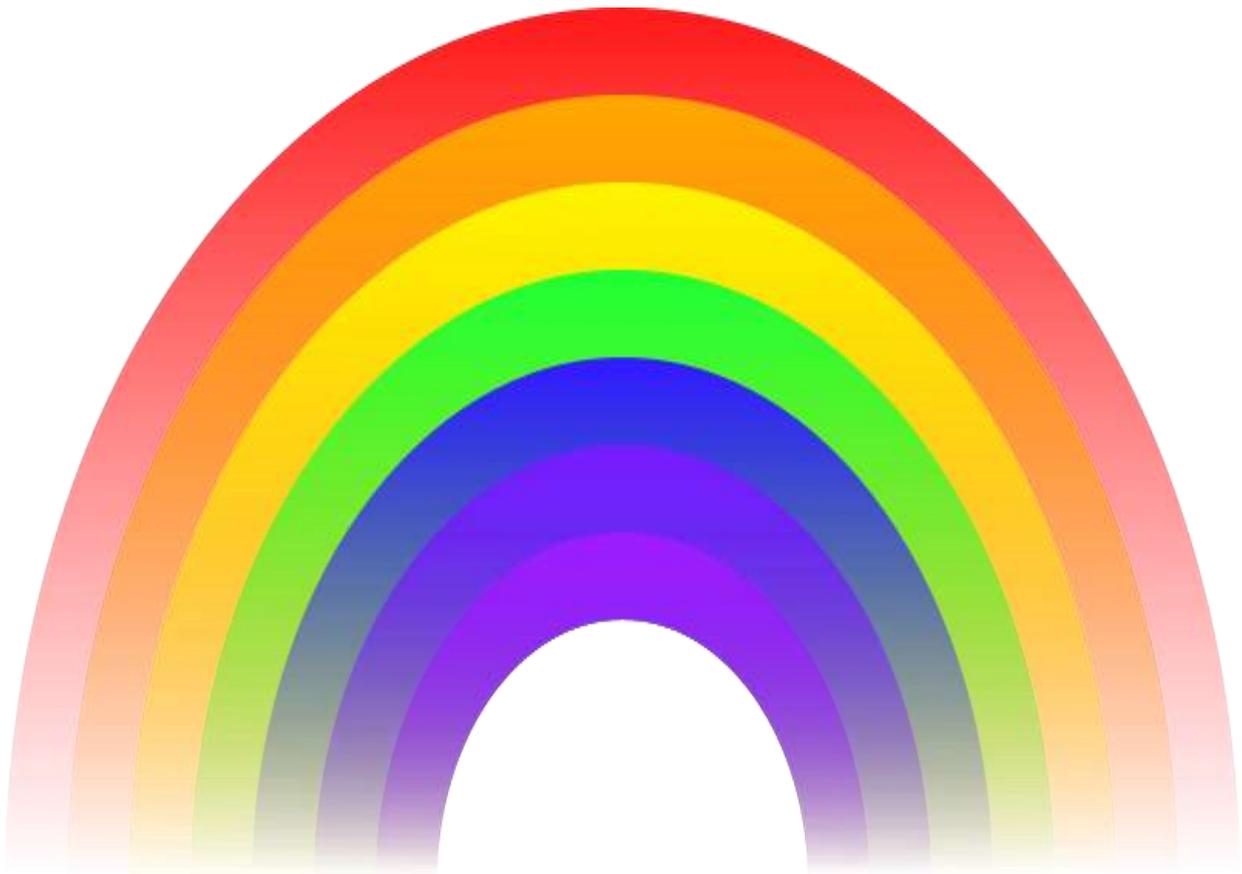
Loss or Theft of Pupil's Personal Property

We ask that pupils do not bring expensive items of personal property to school unless there is an agreed arrangement as we cannot guarantee the safety of such items or accept responsibility for them. When pupils are asked to bring money to school, it is collected at the earliest opportunity by the member of staff concerned. We request that all personal property is labelled so that it is easily identifiable.

Governors of The Grove School

Bob Curry	Chair	Local Authority Governor
David Hogg Chair	Vice	Parent Governor
Laurence Pearson		Community Governor
Penny Derries		Staff Governor
Glynis Gower		Local Authority Governor
Jane McLean		Parent Governor
Steven Scott		Local Authority Governor
Lee Waugh		Associate (Staff) Governor
George Murray		Co-opted Governor
Lorna Stevenson		Associate Governor

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The Grove School