Orrets Meadow

Governor Class Visit – Sharks

11th November 2021

I arrived at school just before lunch and had the opportunity to observe some additional support sessions (maths and handwriting) where the children were separated into groups based on their intervention needs. I noted how well the children interacted with their teacher and teaching assistant. I really enjoyed seeing how engaged the children were in the Talking Maths lesson. They used physical clocks with moving parts to show the time and the children interacted with each other, as well as their teacher, setting their own questions for each other. It was an interactive session and it was lovely to see how willing the children were to participate and how confident they were in speaking out loud in terms of answering and asking questions. Some inquisitive and interesting questions were also asked like “Is time even a real thing because what happens when the clock devices are broken?” showing they are thinking of the concept of time not just the hands on the clock. I also saw hoops and beanbags on the floor that had been used earlier for a class on fractions and again this evidenced the interactive nature of the lessons to engage the children. Before lunch the children helped tidy up the hoops and beanbags showing me that they were eager to be helpful.

The children were very welcoming to me when I sat with them at lunch time (where I had a delicious curry!) I wasn’t sure how the children would react to me being there as they had never met me before today but they were chatty, confident and polite. They asked me lots of questions and told me about their interests and the football teams they support and what their parents do and asked me to play guessing games with them. It was a very fun half hour. They also talked to me about the mobile phone policy at school (having spotted my phone) showing that they were aware of the rules around usage on site. They were enthusiastic when I asked them about their recent trip to Liverpool Museum. I was also very impressed with how they understood and complied with the rules around lunch (silence for Grace, queuing for food and clearing their plates away). It was very well organised and calm.

They were eager to show me the playground after lunch and I also met children from other classes who came up to speak to me and ask me about my rainbow lanyard. When they saw the poppy they asked me if I had observed the silence for Remembrance Day like they had done showing they had made the connections between the symbol and the importance of the day. The playground was very well supervised. The children were very well mannered and seemed to be having lots of fun.

I was very lucky to be there for clubs during the second half of lunch. The children each day specify which club (if any) they would like to join. There is a wide variety available (on the day I was there the choices were sewing, art, computers, Minecraft, sensory garden and football – so something for everyone) and a good mix of different types of club for different needs. I was shown around by Millie and she took me from club to club explaining what they were for and the children in the clubs were able to show me their work. One of the children is sewing a replica of the Titanic which I would love to see when completed! I was impressed with how quickly the lunch area was converted into a basketball court. It is great use of space and a super quick turnaround from a lunch hall. I also had an opportunity to visit the sensory outdoor garden and play Hide the Acorn with the children. It is wonderful to see how much the children enjoy interactive play with natural surroundings and I heard about the history of the garden and the plans for different areas.

After lunch I observed a judo lesson. This was the first judo lesson for the children. They waited patiently while the mats were laid out (with help from one of the children) and then listened carefully to the instructor. I was very impressed with how polite the children were, how confident they were asking questions, how well they followed instructions and how they reacted with peals of laughter to the instructor’s humour . What I was most pleased to see was how well the children interacted with each other and how much fun they had. There was no upset if they didn’t win, there was no reticence to engage in the activity, no-one seemed embarrassed if they got it wrong first time and whatever the instructor asked them to do, they did without having to be coaxed. It was wonderful to see children embracing a new physical activity they had not done before in such a confident manner.

Finally I observed part of a Dimensions topic on sand mandalas as part of Buddhist traditions. Before the session Mr Saul checked in with the children to see how they were feeling with quite a number of replies being “100 per cent!” The children watched a video of the making of a sand mandala and answered questions about what they had learned. They were then invited to colour a patterned mandala of their own using colouring pens. Each child could choose a different type of drawing with varying degrees of challenge. I liked this as each child had control over what they felt able to do in that session but they were all doing a similar task. I also had the opportunity to review one of the children’s workbooks in relation to the previous Athens v Sparta Dimensions topic on Conflict from last term. It was clear from this how interactive and visual the topic was drawing on lots of opportunities for the children to be creative and engage with the subject (making pottery, eating Greek food, visiting the Liverpool Museum to see Greek artefacts, trying out Greek sports) but also how they started to look at pros and cons of different issues and learned to debate them. The workbooks were full of colour and life and it was great to see all the photos and pictures relating to the topic.

I had a wonderful afternoon at School and the staff and children were so welcoming. The school is well organised and the children behaved so well. I said I would be back and one child said “missing you already” which made my day!