**Visit to Tigers class 8/6/2023**

Today’s class was focused on RE. The topic was about special people. The children were invited to explore the themes of what makes someone special, who is special to me and who is special in our community. After an initial whole class discussion the children were each given a sheet with four boxes on it and they were encouraged to draw pictures of people who were special to them and write words to accompany the pictures (helped with spelling when needed). They were divided into three groups (four, three and three in number with an adult supporting each group). The lesson was interactive and most children had similar ideas (friends, family and pets). One child drew Jesus, the Earth and Everyone as those who were important to him. Another child spoke about how much he liked Capybaras and showed me pictures of one on the laptop. It was lovely to see how excited he was on the subject and his desire to share his knowledge confidently with me.

After about half an hour one child from each table volunteered to put the books away and the children played a wake up game of “Mrs Gordon says” (like Simon says). The children then took turns being the “*{name}* says” and there was a fun opportunity to be playful. One child said “*{name}* says be a washing machine” and everyone had to shake like a washing machine which caused much hilarity.

The second half of the lesson focused on what special jobs people do in the community to make them special to us. There was a whole class discussion about volunteering and the concept of “pay it forward”. The children then all worked together in their individual groups on a large sheet of paper to draw and colour pictures of special people. The individual group discussion encouraged the children to think about their daily lives and who helps them (gardener, train driver, bus driver, taxi driver, teacher, caretaker, police officers, firefighters, dentist, doctor, priests etc). They showed great teamwork skills making their poster together. The children were then asked to clear the table and put pencil cases away. Each team nominated one child in their group to stay on the table (using the rock paper scissors method to resolve any conflict as to who that should be) while the others moved on to another table. The person who remained then shared with the new people on their table all the team’s thoughts and explained the drawings. This showed how well the children were at listening skills and presentation skills. They all seemed comfortable and confident moving to different tables and explaining their work.

When we reached the end of the lesson, which was also the end of the school day, the children were starting to get their things ready for home time. One child went over to the Zones of Regulation board to move the tiles for each child back to the base in readiness for the next day. Mrs Gordon said to the child “I can see you are trying to help and be special in our community” which was a lovely way of relating simple tasks and responsibilities the children have in the class to the topic under discussion. It was also great to see the children interacting with the Zones of Regulation as a way to inform the adults in the room how they were feeling and also to chart progress of an individual child. Mrs Gordon mentioned that one boy was always in the red zone at the beginning of term but as the term progressed and he gained more confidence he sometimes moved into the yellow or green zone. Mrs Gordon explained that the children use the Zones of Regulation in the morning and after lunch, which are the main transitions points during the day, but they do also use it themselves at other points during the day to signify how they are feeling which is a useful tool in the classroom.

I also had an opportunity to chat to Mrs Gordon about the presentation she gave to the other governors at the Curriculum committee and about the current SACRE scheme of work which will also include humanism going forward. Mrs Gordon explained that the delivery of the SACRE scheme has become much more of a Big Question approach based around ideas and discussion with golden threads flowing through it. The move makes it much more accessible and creative.

I also had an opportunity to review the workbooks showing what the children have studied in RE. They have covered so many topics: Islam, Buddhism, Christianity, Judaism and Hinduism. The books were full of pictures of the children on class visits to places of worship, doing traditional Bhangra and Buddhist dancing, making and sampling Indian food and unleavened bread, meditating, making clay buddhas and drawing wonderful pictures of menorahs. I was really impressed with the watercolours the children had painted of temples, really quite stunning. A whole section was devoted to Christmas Week and the children had learnt about the advent wreath, the history of the Christmas Tree, German markets and had made gingerbread men. It put in context the history behind many of our own Christmas traditions. The books are a wonderful reflection of how interactive the learning is for this subject and the children have had fantastic learning opportunities. The final thing I looked at was a mind map created by the children of all the religions mentioned above setting out the main points on each and what the children had learnt. Lots of hard work has clearly gone into this subject and I was very glad to be able to review the workbooks to see the vibrant evidence of this.