**Orrets Meadow – Governor Class Visit**

**Bears Class - Tuesday 22nd October 2024**

**Autumn term**

It is always a pleasure to be invited into school to observe the children when they are having a lesson. Each term the governors pick a subject they would like to focus on, we decided this term to look at Phonics.

Phonics is taught as the first lesson of the day so I joined the class at registration.

The class had soft music playing in the background so when children entered their classroom it was peaceful and relaxed. During the registration the teacher greeted each child and asked how they were feeling. As part of the zones of regulation each child will pick a colour to represent how they are feeling at that time. To reinforce this and to ensure that the child has a voice not only did they give verbal feedback but each of them had a bear that they placed in a pot at the back of the classroom, each pot had a colour e.g. blue, yellow and red. If a child stated they did not feel at their best the teacher acknowledged this and said they would work hard to change that during the day. The whole environment was one of positivity and a culture of caring. The atmosphere promoted a nice feeling of a positive learning space. After the registration the children all joined together at the front of the class and sang a song about friendship, they stood up during this time so could move about and do a little dance if they wished. It finished with them returning to their seats and they did a few minutes of brain gym to wake up their minds.

The activities began with a rainbow arch all the letters of the alphabet are placed in an arch so that the children can view all the letters of the alphabet. Each child had their own alphabet and rainbow. The children worked in small groups and had access to the sensory room for time out. A time of three minutes was agreed using an hour glass so that children did not stay too long, however, long enough to relax them and encourage them to return to the lesson. A few of the children were unsettled this morning but with encouragement, use of the sensory room and positive feedback all the children participated in the lesson.

The adult pupil ratio is high so each child was kept on task was well as being supported and joined in the activities the small group learning really does make a difference. No child is left out and the adults teaching them know the child as an individual. The group work focused on letters and particularly the sounds that the letters make. Cards were used and children had the opportunity of writing, sounding and selecting different letter combinations from the cards that the adults held up. Each activity was enabling the children to learn about letters, sounds and how the sounds help form words. The group activities were designed so that each table was working at a similar level. Pictures showing different items e.g. parrot, peg, pencil were discussed. The sound the letter made and what the beginning of the word sounded like.

The children worked in their books and at the end the activity there was the opportunity to revisit and revise what they had learnt. The difference between capital and lower case letters was also included. At the end of the session children marked their books to indicate if they understood the lesson, if they needed a bit more help or they did not understand. They do this using the traffic light system. A small dot is placed at the top of the page by the child. The pupils I observed coloured green so when the teacher looks at their work later they would be able to see if the activity had been understood.

The pace of the lesson was structured so that children had plenty of time to participate and practice their knowledge, coupled with moving them on so they did not become bored or anxious.

The whole lesson had a variety of different activities so that it kept the interest going. At the end of the session the teacher had all the children in a group and she drew letters on her board and the children put their hands up if they could tell her what the letter was, the sound that it made and an example of a word beginning with that letter.

Afterwards the children took a short break outside in the outdoor area, which was full of a variety of activities. The canopy was erected last year and is a wonderful asset to the classroom. Having a covered in area the children can access outdoor learning for much longer during the year and supports their mental health and wellbeing.

It was time for me to leave I said goodbye to all the class and I look forward to seeing them later on in the school year to see how they are progressing.

Thank you again for letting me join you all.

**Cindy Cooper**

**Class Governor**