**Tigers class Governors visit 17th October 2024 - Phonics focus**

I had the pleasure of visiting Tigers Class today, arriving during the registration period. The atmosphere was calm and focused, with the children engaging in table-based activities. The class uses the Zones of Regulation during registration, allowing children to share how they were feeling and the experiences that contributed to those emotions. It was heartwarming to see how eager the children were to express themselves and engage with this system.

The visit coincided with Multisensory Thursday, and the session began with a Body Alphabet activity. Children used large, gross motor movements to explore the shapes of different letters, with staff modelling the actions. The children were enthusiastic and confident in exploring these movements, which encouraged a strong sense of participation. Throughout the morning, Widgets were used effectively to display the visual timetable, supporting the children’s understanding of the day’s schedule.

Following this, the children moved on to phonics cards. Each child took turns reading the cards and confidently verbalised the letter names and sounds. The class discussed digraphs, specifically the concept of “two letters, one sound,” which the children grasped well. This phonics session was followed by a fine motor activity, also referred to as "finger gym." Staff members provided positive reinforcement, ensuring the children were engaged and motivated to develop their fine motor skills, which are essential for strengthening their hands.

Sensory breaks and ear defenders were made available as needed throughout the session, ensuring the children remained comfortable and focused. The importance of fine motor activities was explained to the children, who understood that these exercises help make their hands stronger. It was impressive to see how well the children could articulate the purpose of their activities.

Next, a memory and recall activity involved practising writing letters in the air with their fingers and tracing them on the table. During this activity, Mrs. Gordon temporarily distracted the class with a fun story about sharks, which helped refresh their focus before the children successfully recalled the letters they had learned. One child even identified that these were vowels, demonstrating a strong grasp of the lesson content. The class then explored the sound of the week, “sh,” using a large word bank displayed on the whiteboard and individual copies on the tables. Children read through the words at their own pace, with adults providing support where necessary.

The session concluded with an outdoor learning activity, where the children engaged in a fun exercise, throwing a ball while recalling words from their word bank and adding their own “sh” words. The morning wrapped up with a sensory circuit, ensuring the children remained physically active and engaged until the end of the session.

It was an absolutely lovely morning, and I was impressed by the children’s enthusiasm, the staff’s support, and the overall structure of the session. I look forward to my next visit to Tigers Class.

Miss Frodsham