**Orrets Meadow**

**Governor Report**

**Friday 25th February 2019**

Focus for class visit – Phonics

As always it is a pleasure to visit my adoptive class 2. My thanks to Mrs Billington, staff and children for making me feel very welcome.

From the curriculum and governor meetings I was aware that phonics is taught daily every morning. Regular lessons gives the children the opportunity to develop their memory skills supporting them to become more confident in spelling.

The lesson began with the register. The teacher asked each pupil how they felt, 10 being they were happy and they would score lower if they felt uncertain or unhappy about anything. This took place before the lesson actually started. Following registration the children had a few minutes of mindfulness, they concentrated on their breathing and flexed their fingers. These short exercises set the tone for the lesson and the atmosphere so children felt comfortable to engage with their learning.

The teacher began using visual prompts on the wall, it ensured the children were aware of each step of their learning activities.

Children each had a pack with all the letters of the alphabet and an arch. Pupils placed the letters in the correct sequence. Everyone then repeated the alphabet rap, all the children knew it and took part. Pupils were all able to place the letters in the appropriate space and the pace of lesson gave them enough time to think about the activity and make any alterations if they needed to. Emphasis was put on checking letters had been put the right way round as well as in the right order.

The teacher discussed vowels, both as a letter and the sound they made when combined in a word with another vowel e.g. mad and made. Visual and auditory exercises were used to aid developing strategies. Sounding out letters, in addition the teacher wrote them on a small board. The teacher gave the children plenty of opportunity to ask questions and she reinforced at each stage what they were doing. The lesson was very supportive, positives were reinforced at every opportunity, and she encouraged the children to think confidently about themselves. In addition, children worked in their tracker books. This activity meant that children had to pick out the words so they had to read and pick out the letters that made the word. They used a pencil to circle the words and the pupils I spoke to said they enjoyed doing this activity and they were getting quicker. I was able to appreciate how this activity would support the reading skills. All the children engaged with their learning and it was clear they were enjoying the tasks she gave them. Some pupils worked with the teaching assistants on a table, the relationship between adult and pupil was relaxed and supportive.

I had the opportunity to speak with Mrs Billington and she informed me that the phonics work helped the children to develop strategies to become better at spelling. Slowly the duration of the phonics lesson was being increased as the children became more confident. Mrs Billington closed the session by repeating the learning objectives and this gave another opportunity to ask questions. She asked each child to rate the session using the traffic light system.

The lesson was well structured and all the children knew exactly what to expect. The behaviour was excellent and no child did not engage in the tasks. When I spoke to the pupils they were happy and pleased they were making progress.

I look forward to returning on another day to share some of the lesson with the children.

My thanks to Mrs Billington, staff and all the pupils for making my visit a pleasant one. It is always useful to see first hand the practical applications of what is discussed in the meetings. It deepens my understanding of the school and the values.

*Cindy Cooper*

*Vice Chair of Governors*