**Focus – Dimensions Curriculum**

**Governor Class Visit – Wolves**

**Monday 10th February 2020**

It is always a privilege to visit in the children in their classrooms during the daytime. My thanks to the staff and pupils for making my visit an enjoyable one.

It was useful to be able to visit the class during science week. I know from our governor meetings that during the afternoons the Dimensions curriculum will usually be on the timetable. During the school year the children will have targeted weeks to ensure all elements of the curriculum are explored. Delivering the additional units in a more targeted way helps the children become immersed in the subject and this helps them to learn more effectively.

The lesson I was able to observe on Monday was all about materials. The teacher began with introducing me to the class so that the pupils knew who I was. The teacher then went on to use the widgets on the visual timetable and did registration. Each pupil was greeted after the lunch break and again she asked them how they were feeling. Most pupils were happy to quote ten which meant they were happy. If anyone indicated they were less than happy she acknowledged how they felt and said that later one of the staff would have a little chat to see if they could find out how they could help.

The teacher gave clear instructions using the visual timetable and she explained what activity they were going to do. She did a group activity in which a variety of objects on the floor fell into three different categories. Each child was asked if they could decide what material an object was e.g. a spoon, was it metal or wood etc. All the children enjoyed this and they were very good at sharing the space and waiting for their classmate to answer a question. Any pupil that struggled was encouraged and information was repeated so they had a second chance to understand.

The children then participated in round robin, I asked what this was and I learnt they split into very small groups e.g. 2 or 3 and they then had a time slot to try different activities. A group worked with the teacher placing pictures of different objects into different groups in their books e.g. wood, glass, plastic metal. One pupil needed to touch and feel objects not just look at a picture he benefitted from this immensely. The children cut out the pictures so they could practice their fine motor skills and then decided what picture went in each category and stuck it in. The teacher supported and spoke to each child so they could think about their answers. A group went with a teaching assistant and repeated the group activity undertaken earlier, however, there were different objects so that children had the option of touching and feeling items to make their choice.

The adjacent classroom next to the room we were in was set up with different tables so the children could touch and feel objects and then decided where to put them. The addition of ceramics and rubber expanded their understanding of different types of materials room also had scales and a magnet so children could explore further. Lastly one group went on a treasure hunt to identify what type of materials were in the school. They looked at windows, laptops, desks and chairs, cooker and washing machine. There were some good detectives in the class and they loved going round trying to spot different types of materials. They put their answers down on a work sheet.

The group activities lasted approximately 10 – 15 minutes so the children did not become distracted, moving to the next group activity kept them excited about what they were learning. The instructions from the adults was clear and delivered with care so that each child understood what would happen next and the information was repeated so this gave the child a second chance to hear the right answer.

I had the opportunity to speak with the teacher and she explained the varying needs of each pupil and how they flexed their approach so that it supported learning and helped them emotionally to engage with their learning. She explained that two of the children were selected mutes, however, with the right type of input they were beginning to speak.

I feel the caring and structured lessons are a testament to how Orrets can help children to make progress. Each child is treated differently and the in depth knowledge of the staff about the pupils in their care ensures that any potential issues can be deescalated quickly.

Even though the activities were timed appropriately it was giving the children the information in multi-sensory way.

The time went very quickly and I was able to stay to see how the children were prepared for their journey home. A going home song was played and the children enjoyed the little cartoon of a hen singing about how they had fun and it was time to go home. Each child then was told to get their coat, hat books etc. and the behaviour was very good. They sat quietly waiting to be collected.

The skilled staff and caring environment fosters a sense of feeling safe and secure. All the children worked well together and accepted that everyone had different ways of doing things.

Thank you very much again for making me feel so welcome and this lesson had underpinned for me why the school delivers outstanding practice. The learning is at the heart of everything, however, it is also tempered with an excellent understand of each child and how best to engage them in their activities.

I look forward to visiting again in the summer term. The children are wonderful and a pleasure to visit.

***Cindy Cooper***

***Governor***