



Governors Monitoring Visit - 2021/2022

Focus Monitoring Area: Early Reading

Name of Link Governor: Lucy Bowdler

Names of Staff and Student Council member (if applicable): Luisa Potter

Date of Visit: 28/02/2022 and 7/03/2022

Reference to School Growth Plan:

Priority 1 '...to mitigate against impact of school closures on our disadvantaged children, particularly in reading..... standards in phonics and % reaching expected standards.'

Documents (I should have but since have) **looked at to prepare for this visit:**

The Principles of our Kingsholm Curriculum.

Kingsholm Phonics Expectations.

Follow up points from last visit: N/A as this was a first visit.

Initial Planned Questions for this visit:

Please explain to me how you are teaching Early Reading.

Findings/Evidence seen and discussed:

Mrs Potter explained to me that the school has its own prescribed system to teach reading, based on the 'Letters and Sounds' programme. The government are encouraging schools to use particular 'validated' schemes. These are being looked into to see if any would suit the needs and ethos of Kingsholm.

Consistency in how phonics is taught across the school is emphasised, as prescribed in the teaching and learning guide. Regular annual staff training across the school for teachers and support staff encourages this consistency of teaching.

Mrs Potter gave me 'Kingsholm Phonic Expectations' which clearly sets out in detail when and how the 6 Phased programme is taught from Nursery to Year 2, and beyond if necessary.

Daily sessions are planned using the framework 'Revisit, Teach, Practise, Apply' each session.

I saw this in action when I visited a Reception phonics lesson, being taught by Laura Turner, and a Year 1 phonics session in Shawnie Bignall's class. In both classes the children were engaged in varied and fast-moving activities (flashcards, whiteboards, clapping, bright illustrations, movement and looking in different places). The teachers obviously knew the individual children's level of understanding and gave support and challenges as appropriate, all wrapped up with enthusiasm and encouragement.

All children are assessed regularly so that gaps in individuals learning and understanding can be quickly picked up and consistent interventions made to fill the gaps. All children in the bottom 20%, up to stage 5, read daily to an adult.

Evidence of impact:

As Matt reported in his January 2022 Headteachers report: 'Year 2 completed the Phonics Screen with all of their children in November, this was statutory and due to the cancellation of the screen in Year 1 last academic year. 84% of the children passed the screen. Our last screen in Year 1 in June 2019 we had 77% pass, Year 2 in June 2019 we had 94%. This reflects the success of the Growth Curriculum with phonics and ensuring all gaps were addressed.'

Particular strengths that the Phonics screen highlighted were:

- An increase in children passing the screen in year 2 in November: 84% in Nov '21 compared to 69% in Nov '20.
- Disadvantaged children (28 children) outperformed non-disadvantaged in November '21.
- Boys outperformed girls - a priority from our '19 screen - in November '21.

There is a need for phonetically decodable books to be available for home reading, but until a decision is made to implement, or not, a 'validated' learning scheme, there is no point in buying books that may not be used for long. Currently books for home reading are to encourage the children's overall enthusiasm to read.

Thank you to Mrs Potter for increasing my understanding of Early Reading!

Evidence of School Vision/values:

Our school has a real and deep concern for each individual, rooted in our ethos which...affirms everyone. Children were encouraged to support each other if they were struggling with their learning; this could be by asking a friend for help. Encouragement from the whole class was given to all who tried to answer particular questions.

'Learning and teaching is to be ... personalised in order to meet individual needs.'

This was very obvious when I was in the classroom. I saw children being given different resources and challenges according to their needs. For example, in Reception, some pupils with poor motor skills who could not yet write letters, were given magnetic letters to 'write' with, when others were using pens and white boards.

Questions/follow-up points for discussion with headteacher and for future visits:

Keep informed of assessment results and responses to them.

Know if/when a decision is made to implement, or not, 'validated' learning scheme.

Date for next visit: