



## 2. QUALITY OF TEACHING, LEARNING & ASSESSMENT

Are children engaged in high quality, self-directed and purposeful learning both inside and outside classrooms?

Children were clearly able and keen to choose what they wanted to do and those spoken to were able to articulate what they were doing and explain it well. They were very well engaged in activities in the classroom. A sense of 'buzz', excitement and enthusiasm was described by several governors.

PM observed children grouped into clusters engaged in play-learning activities. Pupils were keen to engage and explain what they were doing and show what they were learning (for example one child trying to show how he could count to 100, linked to what he had been doing in his play-learning). Others were making Play-Doh items, centred around ostriches and showed great excitement in displaying their work and linking it to related material elsewhere in the room and outside (PM was taken to see the ostrich egg on a bird's nest outside and its discovery recounted by one child).

JR observed children split into two groups, one in the Hall working on dance movements and the other working with clock adding hours.

The children working with the clocks had to set the time and then add either one or two hours to get the correct new time. Some of the children were very good at this and got the answer straight away whilst others needed some help to either set the correct start time or find the new one.

After working as a group they then could choose a maths related activity and work at this before being allowed some free time. The adults steered the children to an appropriate activity and all were engaged and working well.

The group in the hall had been looking at 'Little Red Riding hood' and were using movement to be either the girl or the wolves. They had to use a variety of movements and were quite imaginative. Various groups performed to the whole class and each watched attentively and applauded their efforts. They then returned to the classroom to do the activity that the others had done.

Are the children applying the skills they have learnt in class in their independent activities?

Outside of the classroom, learning was continuous. Preparation for lunch was done in an orderly manner. White and Brown Tigers were chosen in turn to use the toilet and wash hands before forming an orderly queue for lunch. Adults and some year 4 children assisted the FS children at lunch, encouraging them to eat well, main meal before pudding, a protocol the FS children understood and accepted. Each child took responsibility for their dinner trays and cutlery, putting them in the appropriate place for washing up.

At play time, again the children were orderly and despite wet weather had the opportunity to play for a short while in the covered area and were again well behaved and orderly in their return inside, effectively using their divisions of White and Brown Tigers.

Are the children remaining focused and on task for extended periods of time?

Some children could clearly remain focused on a given task, but others observed did have a tendency to flit more between activities. DC in observing a phonics class noted that as to be expected with a big class of 4 and 5 year olds there were a few times that children lost a little focus but this was quickly 'nipped in the bud' by staff and encouraged to get back on with the task. However, for the most part governors observed well focused children who were keen to demonstrate their learning and enthusiasm, indicating the time they had spent on a given activity.

Is there evidence of adults deepening/ extending learning through play/structured activities?

There were plenty of activities to develop learning for the children to choose from and the staff work hard at thinking of what to do. JE noted the children had many interesting activities to become involved in. Children were extending their maths by making patterns in playdough, with tweezers to pick up coloured counters and put them on a lit up Easter egg. They were also looking at containers empty, half full and full in the sand and water and telling the time to o' clock. The HLTA was using good

questioning in these areas. The children were having a lovely time in their role play area for Little Red Riding Hood and could tell JE all about the story in sequence and the characters and their good and bad traits. They told her she needed to look out for the wolf in school as they had seen his footprints!

DC noted that there are different tables/activities/classes for children with different abilities, for example children either writing their names to more able writing a sentence. Some were engaged in 'Dough Disco' (this is where the children use dough and do exercises to warm up their muscles), but DC noticed a small handful of children doing something different so asked a teaching assistant what they were doing and she explained as they are more advanced and better techniques they were doing more stimulating activities such as threading small objects through a piece of string. Phonics classes were also separated depending on ability. DC sat in on one group and was very impressed with the ability of the children, even though they were classed as 'middle range'. After group work they were asked to go and work independently on an activity putting together skills they had learnt just a few minutes prior.

PM observed a group of children who were writing with a class teacher. They had coloured egg shaped lined writing paper, linking in with other ostrich-related activities elsewhere. One child was trying to write the word 'eagle' and was encouraged by the teacher to apply her phonics knowledge and the child was able to do this and show PM how she could differentiate the sounds. The teacher also helped the child in her writing to think about the five principles of good writing, written on a picture of a hand and the child recognised that one of those principles, 'does it make sense', meant the sentence needed 'is a' inserted to make a proper sentence.

The teacher explained that reading is now being done one on one, as staff noted that in group reading it proved difficult to actually know where children were with their reading on an individual basis making it difficult to respond to their needs. Obviously reading one to one takes time, but JE noted that the children were responding well to questioning from the teacher and when reading and practising their buzz words.

All children received verbal feedback. They know they cannot leave the table when doing writing until work is checked. When the teacher walked through (having been away) a few children noticed her and were quickly up to show her their work. They were clearly proud of it and she gave excellent feedback and made them feel worthwhile.

There was lots of positive reinforcement – for example, being complimented on good sitting. The children clearly responded well to this, all then trying to sit well.

In the phonics class DC witnessed the children had to play a pass the parcel type of game where they had to pick an object out and place it on the correct card depending on the sound. Then the other children had to give a thumbs up or down depending if they agreed/disagreed with the choice of the child. One child got it wrong and the rest of the class disagreed and DC was worried this might dent her confidence but the teacher was quick to reassure her and praise her for giving it a try - the child seemed fine and carried on participating. Also whilst in phonics the children had to write a sentence, The teacher checked all work and gave feedback to all, whether it be praise or what a child needed to do. She re-iterated that she doesn't mind them making mistakes as long as they try. She asked the children and they all said "practice makes perfect".

PM noted this approach during the writing exercise he observed and the teacher explained that they do not try to correct every aspect of the pupils' writing. Rather they look to ensure at this stage that key principles are bedded in – so for example, the use of a capital letter at the start of a sentence; spacing between words and testing sentences to see they make sense. The key being to encourage pupils to make improvements.

What evidence is there of verbal feedback? Do the children respond to this?

<p>Do the children have the opportunity for reflection? (this could be of the work they have done or of a more spiritual kind)</p> <p>Are there high academic expectations from all adults? Do the children respond to this?</p> <p>Do the children receive 'Homework' – if so, what has the impact been on learning? How is assessment information being used to determine expectations of children?</p> <p>How do staff track pupil involvement in activities?</p>	<p>The children settled really well to their reflection time and they talked about endurance and things they have worked hard on which is the value of their reflection chair. The children were able to think carefully and articulate their responses with sensitive questioning by the teacher. Before the end of the day JW observed the children in the brown tigers during reflection time, lighting a candle (electronic) and passing a tiger around the group to whoever wanted to add something to the discussion. Most children respected others being keen to listen to what others were saying. There was some disruption from a minority of children after they had had their turn but this was dealt with quickly and effectively to allow all the children to have a chance to reflect on the day.</p> <p>There are very high academic expectations from the adults and they clearly strive to do the very best for the children they are teaching. There was plenty to suggest the children respond well to this and their progress from a low baseline has been extremely good. Before the children had their last outdoor play before bedtime, the HLTA gathered them all on the carpet to show examples of a good piece of work from the week and of work that “could have had more effort”. She was clear to point out that anyone who thought they could have done better could have a further go at that later in the week. No work was named and no child was singled out, but the children seemed to know if it was them that she was talking about.</p> <p>The teacher explained that each child receives homework on a Wednesday, including spelling and reading (there are also learning packs which get sent on a Friday). The homework is key and she explained that time constraints mean that there is only so much they can do and parental input is vital.</p> <p>The children receive homework that is tailored to the needs of the child, such as targeted phonics cards, identified as a need in following their last assessment. This shows good use of assessment to determine the progress and needs of individual children.</p> <p>The teacher showed PM some examples of writing completed by the most able pupils which were of a very good standard. She also showed an app on the tablet computer. This was designed to enable the teachers / assistants to capture evidence for pupils who weren't yet able to write. The app takes a picture of the student and a small recording of their verbal responses to questions. It was clear that there was differentiation between the methods being used to record the different abilities of the pupils.</p> <p>Using the iPad pictures are taken of children engaged in activities to aid in assessment and this information is added to the individual small steps sheets the children have.</p> <p>There is recording of activities the children have done, such as story maps, and children are encouraged to engage in particular activities if it is felt that they need to work in a particular area. JE noted a support assistant was asking children if they had taken part in some of the activities but was unsure how they then track that involvement.</p>
<b>3. PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT, BEHAVIOUR &amp; WELFARE</b>	
<p>Do the children appear happy, engaged and</p>	<p>Children did appear very happy and engaged. DC saw well organised and well behaved children who quickly sorted out their belongings onto pegs and went into class, a few stopping to talk with him respectfully and politely. DW noted a happy environment with an active group of children in a class bay requiring plenty of</p>

<p>purposeful?</p> <p>Do the children appear to be independent and resilient, taking responsibility for their learning?</p> <p>Do the children appear to enjoy the lesson and know what they are learning?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Ask them to explain what they are doing and why.</b></li> </ul> <p>Do the staff have high expectations re behaviour and if there are any low-level disruptions or behaviour issues, is this well managed and do the children respond appropriately to it?</p> <p>Is the working 'noise' level acceptable?</p> <p>Are attitudes positive towards</p>	<p>organisation and planning. Not all activity stations had adult supervision, but children were happy to get on with the activity that had been set.</p> <p>EB saw one child was so engaged with his activity, he was sad not to be able to finish it, but it was put in a space with his name next to it for him to finish later and although initially sad during story time he soon became engaged again and enjoyed the story.</p> <p>During play the children were excited, enthusiastic and yet well behaved. The play leaders were in evidence in the playground ensuring safety was paramount.</p> <p>Children were very confident in talking with governors and when asked remembered they had seen us at the governor's assembly.</p> <p>Children went quickly into their daily routine. One child was not sitting during the taking of the register, but putting things away. Staff explained that each day a child is asked to be a helper and another a line leader and the children are clearly responding well to this and taking on the independence and responsibility well.</p> <p>JE noted in one activity some children were challenging themselves to see how many chickens they could pick up with the tweezers which was extending their fine motor skills.</p> <p>Children always appeared to be enjoying their lessons and when asked, responded positively about what they were doing. Although not always clear about the purpose, the fact they were enjoying what they were doing was a good sign.</p> <p>The children were clearly inspired by their lessons and were very enthusiastic about the topic. For example on the topic centred around the big bad wolf, when asked which fairy tale the wolf was from the children knew it was the story of red riding hood and the 3 pigs and could talk about what part the wolf had played in the story. When asked about the story map they were then doing one child said it was 'to help us remember the story'.</p> <p>JE noted the children were having a lovely time in their role play area for Little Red Riding Hood and could tell her all about the story in sequence and the characters and their good and bad traits. They told her she needed to look out for the wolf in school as they had seen his footprints!</p> <p>As also mentioned above, children were always articulate and enthusiastic in describing what they were doing and to show what they were capable of.</p> <p>Staff have high behaviour expectations and work hard towards this, communicating clearly to the children what is expected. The use of the bell was effective as all children stopped what they were doing and helped with tidying up. Any low level lack of attention observed was quickly noted and dealt with by the teacher. Specific incidents were quickly noted and dealt with appropriately, as noted by several governors. As one example, DC observed that before going on morning break as the HLTA said she had an important message and all children except one listened. The teacher noticed this child was not listening and playing so she took her to one side and asked what had been said. Obviously the child didn't hear what was said so the teacher told her again and emphasised how important it is she listens.</p> <p>Yes. On several occasions they were asked to use their "quiet" voices as due to increases in volume level, to which there was an immediate response.</p> <p>The children governors spoke with were polite, engaged and enthusiastic and clearly liked and respected their teachers. The children were all busy and confident to talk</p>
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<p>peers, staff and visitors? <b>How well do they respond to your questions – are they respectful?</b></p> <p>Do children have opportunities to reflect on their feelings? ('Feelings Tree')</p> <p>What programmes of support are provided for pupils with very specific needs?</p>	<p>about what they were doing. They were working well with each other and displaying good sharing and listening skills. PM particularly noted this in a group of pupils colouring paper bunnies and chicks. Once they had coloured them they needed to write their names on the back, cut them out and use sticky tape to fix them to a lollipop stick. There was much excitement with this task and the children were competing for pens and sticky tape, yet the nature of interaction was always respectful. One pupil was helping another cut out his bunny whilst another helped where there were problems with the sticky tape.</p> <p>One child took PM over to the board game area. He wanted to show PM how to play one of the games and they used a dice and counters, taking turns to throw and move our respective counters according to the numbers scored. He was keen to point out where my counter should move. Another child then came to join in. The first child wanted to restart the game, showing an incredible level of tolerance and respect: first to let her join in and second to restart the game so that she had an equal chance to play.</p> <p>Reflection time provides an opportunity for this, mentioned above. No specific mention of the 'Feelings Tree' was made.</p> <p>An LSA works with children who are seen by the speech therapist. Extra support is given to vulnerable children all the time. The teacher showed PM the tracking sheet they have been using to monitor progress of the SEN pupils since they entered foundation stage last year. The single A4 sheet related to one child. The teachers and the teaching assistants all talk frequently to share their observations. Evidence is then recorded on the tracking sheet against various competencies – e.g. reading, writing etc. The child shown as an example had made great progress upon the very low level that she had started from.</p>
<b>4. OUTCOMES FOR CHILDREN</b>	
<p>Are all children making at least expected progress from their starting points?</p> <p>Are any children making good or better progress?</p>	<p>All children have made progress since the start of the year, but not all are making expected progress; however, the children are in a much better place than the start of the year.</p> <p>Many children are making accelerated progress, although in many cases this is from a very low starting point. There are some children making better than expected progress and there may be some children who exceed the ELGs, which wasn't considered likely at the start of the year.</p> <p>Reading has been a big focus this year, and from a very low starting point, good progress can be seen, with most children now taking home a reading book.</p> <p>For those children making smaller steps, The teacher has developed a way of tracking their progress against the age related expectations. This will allow them to identify what areas need addressing to help those children make progress.</p> <p>There are still problems with PSHE (Personal and Social Education), with a feeling this is harder to address with the time available and staff numbers. A good level of development is measured across the main areas of development but currently PSHE will stop many of the children reaching this good level of development. As a result of this, the teacher has looked at the progress in more detail, breaking it down for each key area of development.</p>

What are staff doing for those disadvantaged/ vulnerable pupils in order to accelerate progress?

There are several children well below the expectation for their age, almost all who are SEN or PPG, and there is a new provision being put in place for these children to help with their PSHE, which seems to be a major factor in holding back their full development. This will comprise of 4 lots of 20 minute sessions per week at the end of each day. The idea is to help build their confidence and self esteem. Especial effort is being put into working together with the parents of children with identified specific needs, although in many cases these attempts to work with the parents is proving difficult.

### **Overall Comments and Recommendations**

All governors were made welcome by all staff and pupils. All staff were knowledgeable and had a clear understanding of what was expected of them. You could tell there was structure and purpose to what they were doing. Indeed, all governors clearly enjoyed their visits and spoke of the enthusiasm of the children and staff. The confidence, yet respectfulness, of the children was particularly noted which made the visits, in the words of PM, 'an overwhelmingly positive and uplifting experience.

There were a great variety of different play-learning activities. A large number of these activities linked into the same overall theme to consolidate the pupils' comprehension of writing and talking. Activities were sufficiently different and graded to allow children of all ability levels to become engaged. Noise levels were good and problems of noise or behaviour dealt with quickly and effectively. Outside of the classroom learning and behavioural expectations were maintained. All this made for an excellent learning environment.

From a difficult starting point, excellent progress has been made with many of the children and the staff are highly responsive to individual needs and to changing methods to suit the cohort. The FS leader is really on top of the data and the children have really come a long way since the beginning of the year. There are still many children below age expectations in different areas; however this is due to the very low levels of the children coming in as opposed to any lack of progress. The FS leader has tried to put more things in place with the nurseries to get children to a better level of attainment; however this has been met with some resistance in certain places. This is something that needs addressing with the increasing expectations being put on the children at a young age - currently only St Botolph's and Oxley are interacting with the nurseries. If the other local primary schools could get involved too this may help the nurseries develop better approaches.

The collaboration with the trust appears to be working well and this should be developed more, even over the learning partnership and Shepshed alliance as this will be more beneficial for the school and the children over time. Is there a need, however, to focus on the most beneficial groups and think strategically about our long term aims and objectives?

The FS leader noted that she does not currently have a specific governor contact for the overall reports, beyond those responsible for English and Maths and given the work and focus in this area, we need to consider if a governor should take this on. Teaching is very well tailored to the different levels of the children, but given the challenges in this and much effort needed in some one-to-one teaching that has been found necessary, is there a need to review staffing levels? It was noted that from interaction with the feeder settings, next year's cohort are expected to have similar issue to the current cohort, adding to the question of additional staffing to help the dedicated but very stretched current staff in this context? There is also a need to help parents to offer more support to their children.

The increased intake was also noted – with implications not only for staffing, but also for physical space. What measures do we need to consider in relation to what looks set to be a pattern of large intake?

### **Points requiring further discussion at full governors:**

- Can we have more effect on the nurseries feeding into school?
- Are we part of too many groups now?
- Is there a need for a Foundation Stage governor?
- Is there need for additional staffing, given the needs of the intake that is predicted to be similar to the current year?

- Having seen a lot of good practice in the Foundation Stage how does the school make sure that this good practice continues into year 1?
- How can we encourage greater parental involvement?

In addition:

The sheltered area outside is one that due to its construction restriction in size creates a high volume of play noise. This would be something to give full consideration to should there be any further developments to this area of the school in future as it is barely large enough for the growing cohort experienced in FS.

There has been a new playhouse installed and there is concern for the access to it given the very wet conditions experienced this winter. When possible a suitable non-slip foot access to the playhouse would make it better accessible. In addition the creation of an outside quiet contemplative area is a desirable addition to the outdoor play facilities.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
**(Governor)**

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
**(Headteacher)**