

Roberttown CE (vc) J&I School Governor School Visit Record

Name: Helen Wells	Date: 1 st December 2022
Purpose of visit:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To collect evidence of equality in practice at school 	
Structure/Timetable of the visit:	
1-1:15pm Learning walk around the school. 1:15-1:30pm Meet with KS2 children 1:30-1:45pm Meet with KS1 children 1:45-2:15pm Meet with SENETAs 2:15-2:30pm Meet with KS1 teachers 2:30-2:45pm Meet with KS2 teachers 2:45-3:00pm Observe Rock Kidz 3:00-3:15pm Feedback with Mrs Baker	
Key Staff to see:	
Position	Name
SENDCo	Mrs Baker
SENETAs	Mrs Balbontin, Mrs J Wood, Miss West and Mrs Oldfield
KS1 teachers	Mrs McCann, Ms Burgin, Mrs Horner
KS2 teachers	Mrs Glaves, Mrs Bordman
Key Questions/Issues for Governors to explore:	
<p>The following points from the Equality audit were explored through discussion with children and staff:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are calm low sensory areas available in the setting? Are classrooms using a lower cognitive load approach? • Are auxiliary aids used to ensure pupils with SEND are included in the curriculum? • Do staff have high aspirations of pupils with SEND? • Do staff have regular and updates training regarding additional needs and how needs can be met? • Is a graduated approach used to meet pupil needs? • Do class teachers/PE staff know how to include pupils with SEND and disabilities in PE? • Are pathways around the setting and parking arrangements safe, easily accessible and well signed? • Do all staff understand the needs of the pupils and support them accordingly? • Are all signs and symbols in Braille for pupils with visual impairments and in picture form for those with communication difficulties? 	

Governor's Observations/Evaluation

The following points were raised in the resulting discussions as evidence of the Equality practice taking place during daily life at Roberttown J&I School;

Points to note from the learning walk:

- Mrs Baker described the work that has gone into creating low cognitive load environments to support learners with executive functioning difficulties, such as working memory deficits. This includes staff training and staff planning sessions to work towards agreed non-negotiable approaches to displays, teaching strategies and resources. This includes standardising visual timetables, simplifying displays, tidy/clear workspaces, using colour coding and standardised symbols across school as visual supports. Some of these approaches have been informed by the speech and language therapy specialists employed by school to help support language development and accessible learning throughout the school. It was noted that this was evident in most classrooms but there is still some variation in approach across year groups that may need to be addressed to support transition and the effectiveness of the low cognitive approach.
- Mrs Baker pointed out accessibility of learning resources for children to choose to use themselves, developing learner independence. As well as table top resources being of high quality and relevant to individuals and class targets, other resources around the classroom are appropriately labelled according to language needs (with supporting visuals of concrete and symbolic natures according to developmental levels in the class). To develop and standardise this further throughout school, a digital resource called Widgeits has been recommended and may be considered in future depending on funding.
- Mrs Baker explained that whilst classroom layouts must vary due to the nature and size restrictions of the classrooms, staff carefully plan how to arrange seating and other furniture in the room to enhance learning for the children. In some cases this includes personalised independent workstations for some pupils who learn best with minimal visual distractions.
- Mrs Baker showed how some support is planned around personal interests to 'hook' learners and play to their particular interests. This includes developing personalised emotional literacy strategies so that individuals can share how they are feeling (and express a need for support or an altered approach if they are beginning to feel dysregulated), so that children are supported to be ready to learn. Mrs Baker explained how school have worked with family commissioned therapy services to facilitate support and learn strategies planned for home that may help individuals at school too.
- Work continues to be done on metacognitive skills, including thinking skills displays in intervention rooms and classrooms, deeper learning about language such as morphology and other literacy skills to transfer to other learning areas (such as technical vocabulary in topic work). To work on these skills all children access Lexonic intervention in Y5 or Y6 and the progress data from this shows a good impact on literacy skills.
- Mrs Baker highlighted the success of the 'Amazing Things Happen Here' display boards in classrooms, in which children are able to peg a personal recent highlight in their work to the board, allowing autonomy and pride in their work.
- Mrs Baker explained some of the additional planning and needs support that has happened for all children to be able to take part in special events in school such as the nativity, Rock Kidz visit and MarioKart Day; such as planning how to tailor activities and use resources so that children with sensory issues can still have a fun and enriching experience. Although plans were made, staff were also able to be responsive to needs on the day.

Points to note from discussion with children:

- Children described using the display boards in their classrooms to help with their learning, such as history timelines and working walls for core subjects. Children in both key stages

seemed to like to use the visual timetables in their classrooms to help them feel in control of their day and know what to expect next.

- Children in school explained that some of them who need extra help with their learning get support from adults in class but also access interventions in the Rainbow Room with Mrs Robertson. They explained that the help can be in lots of areas including phonics, spelling, writing, maths, and also other types of support such as managing emotions (such as Emotional Literacy with Mrs Babontin), mindfulness and making friends. They also described some of the resources that are used to help them, such as fidget boxes, personal iPads, laptops, personal workspaces, phonics maps, key word sheets, number lines, coloured overlays and reader pens.
- Children confidently said that staff expected them to work hard and try their best, challenging them but giving support where needed.
- Children described how staff support them with special events such as sports visits, nativity and swimming. They were able to explain how staff give them extra help in PE, adapt Go Noodle activities, how everyone can take part in the Daily Mile (including in wheelchairs), and how Sam from Legacy Sport is very good at knowing all the pupils in school well and adapting his sessions so that they can take part fully.
- Children in KS1 talked about how their teachers use Makaton hand signing to support some children with language needs, and how the rest of the class are encouraged to use them too.
- Children described liking the opportunity to improve their work and develop skills, especially with practices like 'green pen' marking, and having chances to do challenges if they finish the main task in a lesson.
- Children talked about enjoying structured play in KS1, in which they can choose an activity that they are good at or find fun.
- The children in both KS1 and 2 described how lots of skills and attributes are celebrated in school, in show and tell and celebration assemblies where certificates are awarded for development of skills, perseverance and children can share their successes from outside of school.
- The children described other special experiences in school such as 'top table dinners' in which children are selected to eat lunch with Mrs Smith for good behaviour and attitude at lunchtimes.

Discussion with SENETAs and teachers:

- Staff were able to confirm many of the measures outlined previously by Mrs Baker and the children in school, including the measures to reduce cognitive load in the learning environment and standardising of visual supports such as visual timetables. SENETAs were able to share the positive effect this had had on some children with significant needs who had one to one support and how children in class increasingly look to solve their own problems in their learning by choosing resources or using working walls.
- Some visual support systems have been shared with families to use at home to help support children with additional needs in their home settings and to ensure continuity of approach.
- They described how individualised approaches such as reward charts are working for some children who have specific learning or conduct goals, and how specific resources such as fidget toys or ear defenders were used by children to self-regulate and manage sensory stims to be ready to learn. Staff commented on the use of other resources such as technology like iPads and reader pens not only assisting learning but giving learners a self esteem boost as they felt successful and independent in their learning. They were also able to give other examples of how all children are included and able to showcase their strengths in school, such as a child with limited verbal speech teaching the rest of their class how to sign a song in Makaton for their class collective worship.

- Staff expressed an ethos of high expectations and aspirations for all learners-that all children are expected to do their best with an aim of developing independence and resilience, but also providing support where needed. They echoed the children's comments on how many skills and talents are celebrated in school, not just the academic.
- Staff noted that the introduction of sensory passports has been a useful tool, especially for continuity of approach, for example if a supply teacher is in class. This has been informed by recent autism and sensory needs training.
- Staff were able to describe the comprehensive systems in place that follow the Graduated Approach for children with additional needs, including reviews, pupil progress, SEND planning meetings, including how other stakeholders such as parents and outside agencies are involved at each stage. A particular area of strength and effectiveness was the practice of daily and weekly planning time between teaching and support staff, to be able to be responsive to learning needs and plan approaches for new learning and for catch up work.
- Senior management commented on the accessibility of the building and grounds and the funding limitations creating challenges year on year. A disabled toilet/changing space would be a priority if funding allowed.
- At the moment there is not a specific need in school for Braille resources or hearing loop systems, but this is something that would be explored and best endeavours would be made to have in place if a pupil with such needs entered the school.
- Staff felt that communication between teams was good and facilitated continuity of support, for example between Breakfast Club, Rascals Club, PE coaches and after school club leaders.
- Key subject leaders described their work on curriculum coverage in terms of equality-making sure representation in activities, resources and topics is broad, challenges stereotypes and highlights bias and privilege to children so that they are aware of the challenges faced by groups outside of their own experience, given the relative lack of diversity within the school community. This includes celebrating positive role models, learning about experts from various backgrounds, examining prejudices in history and checking curriculum coverage and expectations, for example following a PE deep dive; checking the PE opportunities or expectations are not affected by gender.

Culture observed in the school

- Children and staff celebrate a range of talents and strengths, acknowledging that there are many ways to be smart.
- There was no discernible stigma detected in children's comments around needing extra help. There seems to be a culture of acceptance that everyone has challenges and you should be helped and supported with them, by both adults and peers. Children appreciated feeling able to ask for help and confident they would receive it. This reflects the school Good Samaritan ethos.
- There are high expectations and aspirations for all, and children are encouraged to develop independence, resilience and metacognition in their learning.
- There is a drive to ensure an informed (low cognitive load) approach is standardised across school to support all learners and target some hidden needs in school. This is facilitated by strong staff training and a commitment to deliver quality first teaching and learning environments.
- Alongside an inclusive SEND friendly approach to teaching and the learning environment, additional needs are further supported in individualised person-centred planning and delivery of provision.

Any Key Issues Arising for the Governing Body:

- Although in-house training has taken place and non-negotiables set by senior management team, there remains some variation in approach to low-cognitive load environments between the classrooms. Mrs Baker will plan how to monitor this to ensure continuity during transition and ensure the effectiveness of an informed consistent approach throughout school.

Action Following Governing Body Meeting:

- Helen Wells to follow up in Spring 2023 with Mrs Baker on actions taken to standardise classroom environments further.
- Resources Committee to consider accessibility to the school grounds/disabled toilet plans in the future.

Signed:H Wells.....Governor