

Reporting a Governor visit to Kea School

Name: Maureen Woodhouse	Date: October 2020
Purpose of visit This was a meeting about the Foundation Stage via the internet with the two teachers	
Links with the School Improvement Plan / 20 Questions No 11 – How well do we, as governors, listen to, understand and respond to pupils, parents and staff ?	
Governor Observations and Comments <i>We discussed the following aspects :</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The teachers both agreed that the children have settled well into their first term in school. Due to the Corona Virus, procedures are very different when compared with a year ago. However, in the words of these teachers, “the children do not know any different”. It was obvious from our discussion that staff are focused on the children’s happiness and well-being.• From the beginning the transition from home to school has been well managed with ‘Learning together’ (introductory getting to know you sessions) taking place on the school field instead of indoors. The groups of six worked well as the smaller groups enabled teachers to interact more on a one to one basis. Fortunately the weather was sunny.• The teachers contacted all the children’s pre-schools.• They met with the speech therapist and parents using Microsoft Teams• The Tapestry profiles (this is the assessment system used by the Foundation teachers) were started early so the transition sessions were recorded. The assessments are sent home more regularly now and parents appreciate this.• The videos of the classroom and grounds were sent home during the school holidays and were well received. Both teachers commented that it has been so successful they will use this in the future.• The classroom has been cleared of clutter with fewer toys and books. This has proved a bonus as they feel it is less distracting. They plan the use of equipment very carefully.• Strict hygiene measures are taken with cleaning and hand washing. It was mentioned that the children appear to have fewer tummy upsets now.• Prior to starting school the teachers sent a video home talking the children through the first day. On day one ALL the children came in together with no staggered entry as happened until a couple of years ago. This worked well. Parents do not come into the classroom now and the teachers feel that the atmosphere is calmer with fewer adults in the classroom, Furthermore, the activities start on time and the children are more independent without parents hovering. Most of the children settled within a week. They both feel the new procedures are a good blueprint for the future.• Learning has been excellent with really good progress in a short time. Children are beginning to write independently already e.g. ‘I am 4 I am ...’ and they are learning to write their names. The Maths Mastery approach is used and many children are understanding number up to 5.• Routines are very well established and friendships cemented.• During the first lockdown teachers worked hard (with the help of the head of Maths) and improved maths resources and linked them to maths planning. The maths resources are now plentiful.	

- They also worked on a better structure for medium-term planning and have developed a 'skills development focus'. Gaps in resources were identified and the support staff who were shielding were fully occupied making these.
- Topics for this term include 'All about Me'; 'Harvest'; 'Autumn'; 'Puppet theatre'. The teachers said (in their positive way), "Christmas will be a challenge but it highlights that there are different, and perhaps better, ways to do things".
- They are aware of some downsides to the present situation including the lack of bonding with the older children, no assemblies, no singing, no cooking, no ICT suite lessons. They felt it would help if the children have access to more Remote Control Toys as this would improve ICT provision.
- For the future they plan to have a joint data meeting and to complete baseline assessments for every child for each area of learning.
- They would like to have better resources/storage for outdoor play on the balcony. A Mud Kitchen is on the agenda too!

Throughout the video call the commitment of these two teachers shone through. Not a single 'moan' - just getting on with the job to make the best possible environment for the children.

I thanked them for their time and look forward to visiting their classroom soon.

Behaviour

No children were observed.

Safeguarding

The teachers are aware of this as a priority.

Any issues for the governing body

Improve resources for outdoor play, including providing helmets so the bikes can be used.