

Reporting a Governor visit to Kea School

Name Maureen Woodhouse	Date October 2017
Purpose of visit To get to know the two Foundation Stage teachers and the support staff in the Foundation Stage. To review resources. To understand more about the teaching of phonics.	
Links with the School Improvement Plan Improving the curriculum. Are resources well used? Is behaviour contributing to good learning? Is there continuity between the teachers who job share? With reference to 'Governors' Twenty Questions' number 20 (Are we having an impact on outcomes for pupils?)	
Governor observations and comments I visited the Foundation Class on two consecutive mornings. Two teachers job-share. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The children follow the same routines with the two teachers. There is evidence of good planning and co-operation between these members of staff and also between the support staff. Support staff speak highly of the way the teachers involve them and they play an important role in ensuring there is continuity for the children. All the staff work hard to provide a caring and welcoming atmosphere in which the children can flourish.• The children arrive promptly and enter the classroom independently and are obviously settled and happy at school. This is a credit to the staff who have worked hard to ensure there has been this smooth start to school life. The children follow routines which build their independence, such as hanging up their coats for themselves, looking after their own possessions, making lunch choices, settling to initial activities. Staff assist the children but do not do things for them.• Personal development is fostered by the Proud Chart where parents record examples of their child's achievements and these are displayed on a display board. This provides an excellent home-school link.• Teachers report that the new admission process is working well. In the past children have had a staggered entry with the older children starting before the younger children. They felt this led to an inequality so this year all 30 started on day one. The process was handled well with the support staff assisting with the smooth start.• Literacy plays a prominent part as each day there are Read Write Inc activities. The children were enthralled with the puppets who help them to read letters and learn sounds. Children read to adults who praise their efforts. They enjoy stories such as The Little Red Hen and they could re tell the story to me with enthusiasm. Flash cards are used to revise the sounds they have learned since September. The phonic sessions are well planned and there is excellent pace with the children listening and staying 'on task'. Support staff test the children on the sounds they know and record progress. Since September there has been excellent progress with phonic knowledge. The children were also being assessed on their progress with writing and copious notes are made on achievement and what the children need to do next. Due regard is placed on letter formation. The response of the children to their teachers is excellent. The teachers praise and encourage the children.• After the phonic session the children can choose activities such as playing on the balcony where there is sand, toys, water play, or in the classroom where small word toys such as knights, building and construction toys, role play, drawing, play with sponges are provided. Sometimes the activities are linked to the phonic work with drawing letters in sand, colouring outlines of letters, forming letters with paint etc.• The children cooperate well e.g. taking turns at water play, sharing the sieves. They follow the example of the adults and speak politely to each other and show a caring attitude. They tidy up really well and this is helped along by the 'tidy up' song! At snack time staff ensure children sit by different friends each day. Name cards are placed on the tables to assist the children with recognising their names. They wash their hands, say please and thank you, and snacks are 'healthy'. Cards which impart healthy messages are placed on the tables e.g. 'To	

keep healthy brush your teeth'. Each day a different person is chosen to be the 'Special Person'.

- Emphasis is placed on learning mathematics in a meaningful way . The children have been on a maths walk and recorded shapes, they count the number of children present and work out how many there would be if there was one less or one more. They hold up 7 fingers and say the days of the week and sing number rhymes.
- They enjoyed time in the school hall moving to the of sounds different instruments. The teacher emphasised the importance of exercise in keeping healthy.
- A Foundation Stage development plan has been written. The teachers have plans for the future which include:
 - A) improving the resources - especially in the role play area. We discussed the possibility of the children making some of the resources from large boxes, material etc.
 - B) Enlisting more help from parents e.g. a parent has offered to come into school to tell the children about Diwali.
 - C) Improving the balcony area
 - D) Developing Mathematics through the 'Mastery' system and planning using 'White Rose'

I also observed playtime before school. The headteacher is present at this time. She ensures the children are safe and the older children are reminded to care for the younger ones.

I spoke to a number of parents who all praised the school and the staff.

One parent whose child has additional needs spoke very highly of the consideration shown to his family. He was particularly grateful for the time the headteacher had spent visiting his child at home prior to starting school.

Behaviour

The children's behaviour is excellent. They take turns and listen to each other. They participate in their work enthusiastically and share information with their classmates and visitors. The classroom is well ordered. The children are focussed on their learning and they take great delight in the behaviour chart and could explain it to me.

I am very grateful to the headteacher and staff for the warm welcome.

Any issues for the governing body

In an ideal world the balcony area would be covered and made more sheltered. It is a pity the children do not have **free** access to a woodland or garden area where they could explore the natural world.

It may be possible for some of the Governors to assist in a practical way by attending special project days where extra hands are needed? Or assist with helping to improve the balcony area?

In the future Mathematics needs to be a focus as the main focus for this visit was English

Any issues arising for the governing body