

**Letchmore Infants and Nursery School**  
**Governors' Focussed Monitoring Visit Day: Summary Report**  
**Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> March 2024**

Members of the school's Governing Board Visited for the day on 20<sup>th</sup> March to provide personal oversight and monitor progress on key priority 2 from the School Improvement Plan: Curriculum (linked to Quality of Education)

Governors were freely able to observe all year groups classes at any time during the day, including playtimes, lunchtime and PE lessons. We met with members of the senior leadership team (SLT) and support staff as well as having in situ discussions with teaching staff across the whole school.

**Writing, Reading and Assessment – key Observations and learnings**

- The pupils seen were clearly enthusiastic about learning and this was evident in their eagerness to share their writing journals with the Governors. This was also reflected in their responses when asked about their favourite part of school which included 'spelling' 'reading' and 'writing'.
- **Pupil Voice** *"Reading at school is helping me learn things I need to know for the future."*
- It was clear a wide range of resources were used to encourage the development of confident writing. We observed small group and 1-1 interventions, display boards with examples of model writing and story planning templates to support with structure good evidence of appropriate topics were set to engage boys i.e. astronauts to narrow attainment gaps.
- The staff spoken to regarding the Pupil Premium Policy had a good awareness of the strategy. The 'one page overview' was visible in the staff areas and the staff had an excellent knowledge of the pupils in their classrooms with SEN
- We saw a working wall which provided sentence starters, ideas and was used for sharing ideas, suggested vocab and appears to have had a big impact.
- Teachers were visibly very proud to talk about the wall and the children echoed its usefulness.
- Classrooms had a definite buzz of activity and felt energetic and engaging. Students were keen to show us their handwriting either from formal activities or their own time.
- Emphasis was also placed on including on the walls the 'best work' of all the children to include a range of abilities; Governors felt this was excellent as it can both inspire (seeing other children's work) and motivate (seeing own work) children across the range of abilities.
- Presented information on the current topic. Use of spelling/word cards to help students if they got stuck; saw great use of this where these were on the

tables and lots of sharing between students, including leveraging suggestions from others nearby.

- Children clearly enjoyed their writing activities and writing their own stories.
- **Pupil Voice** *"Sometimes reading is not just stories, it's about history and facts."*
- Children also appear to strongly remember sentence rules from reception (capital letters, finger spaces, does it make sense, full stop) across all classes.
- Children said they enjoyed reading for the stories and enjoyed doing writing.
- **Pupil Voice** *"I like writing stories at school so much, I want to become an author when I grow up."*
- Assessments -Pupils work towards an end of year document, considering levels of spelling and building creative depth and self-editing.
- Independent writing very important in assessing progression and considering the child's own journey and how they perform against expectations set at the individual level.
- Assessment driven by both formative ("temperature checks") and summative assessments. This allows staff to focus on areas where improvement is needed over the year.
- Where gaps are identified across the groups (e.g. missing capitals or mid word capitals) these can then be worked into the learning.
- **Pupil Voice** *"I read a lot of chapter books now."*
- Children have recently started a writing journey they take through the school where children in year group all do the same activity to enable cross assessment.
- Teachers can use this to discuss across the year group and later in handover to next year and can also use to compare vs writing standards/curriculum.
- Formal meetings are held regularly throughout the year.
- Saw use of a phonic/soundboard more in class.
- Assignment models are modelled to the highest standard and children who are ready will pick up the extended requirements and run with it e.g. moving from "I can see..." to "There are" or "The house is" and using wider variety to words.
- Often saw children changing activities in own learning over time; boys generally enjoy outdoor play and girls indoor creative play in autumn, but teachers explained that this becomes more fluid over the year.
- Non-structured learning is critical, teachers facilitate and provide variety of things to do but avoid directing allowing children to explore.
- Teachers also rotate station/location each week during own learning to see different children/activities. Highlighted the importance to avoid pushing things like writing too quickly (writing hardest thing to learn) given strength/coordination requirements.
- Clearly the teachers understood that If pushed too much, children don't enjoy and disengage. We saw a great example of letting children do their own learning here with four boys writing at an easel. One boy disappeared under a sheet of paper where he was writing a sentence.

- **Pupil Voice** *"We write a lot of adventure stories at school and use our imagination."*
- Also Teachers stated it is important to know and understand each child and their situation when assessing their work done in particular where English is not their first language.
- Teachers will benchmark and discuss the cohort in ad hoc meetings with more formal moderation toward end of year.
- Inclusion TAs were also used to help stretch the stronger children in addition to working with children who require more attention.
- Governors met with the school council who were visibly enthusiastic about making the school an even better place and clearly understood their role They actively sought suggestions from their peers and kept everyone up to date on progress. They also felt their ideas were listened to by the teachers and were open to compromise.
- **Pupil Voice** *"I like showing the teacher my work because the things she says are helpful."*

#### **Recommendations and Next Steps:**

- To help all TAs to understand the requirements and aims of the Pupil Premium Policy.
- Consider use of 'model' answers (e.g. where to find information and be able to show this to person asking question).
- Have list of set questions which could be asked of the staff with regards to PP, Safeguarding and LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer)
- Create a one page go to sheet for Sports Premium (akin to PP)
- Enhancing environment through further presentation of children's work on the walls in their classrooms.
- Highlight Best practice across the school year.
- Also allow teachers to see/observe best practices on writing teaching styles through exposure to approaches across the classes.
- Continue the empowerment of the School Council as a voice for all school children's ideas.

*"The best bit about reading at school is we get higher and higher-level books as we get better at it."*