April 2022

Quality of teaching.

A total of 6 lessons or part-lessons were visited. The covered all year groups from Y1 to Y6. The duration was between 30 minutes to an hour. A range of subjects were shared across the morning and afternoon; maths, English and science.

Where there were obvious strengths:-

* An assessment for learning activity in science. Colleagues had a range of charts, photos and equipment to judge children prior knowledge for the project that started today. This was particularly important following the disruption to children’s learning over the last two years, where for understandable reasons, some topics and concepts might have been covered in greater depth than others. The activity quickly showed where there were gaps in knowledge.
* In science with very young children, the critical role of adults in supporting and extending children’s use and range of vocabulary. For example, use of transparency, the use of fabric as a sock, why some materials would not be suitable.
* Good use of on-going assessment to clarify misconceptions. An example in maths was the concept of four but also equal parts when identifying 1/4s. It was also good to see different representations of fractions with practical equipment to support learning.
* Use of focused small group teaching after the main teacher input (aka a guided group). Children were also given opportunities to re-join independent activities with their peers, once they had “got it”. This maximised the opportunities for direct teaching of concepts through first whole-class delivery, then small group support.
* Teaching assistants were actively involved in all activities, either in delivering small group sessions, on supporting individual children during the main input to support concentration and understanding.
* Children were eloquent and confident when talking about their learning.
* A range of learning styles was evident.
* Sustained concentration and learning was generally very good
* Behaviour for learning was generally good at all times (cf below). A range of techniques was used (positive praise, team points, role models etc)

Areas for further thought.

* Behaviour for learning: on rare occasions, in one class, two children were reluctant to engage during the delivery of lessons. It is important that boundaries are known and children focusing on the teaching input. Trying to teach when part of the class are not fully engaged will mean some children will then say “what are we meant to be doing?”
* Modelling your own handwriting that mirrors school policy.