

THE GROVE SCHOOL

Learning Walk Autumn 2016

Focus: Is Communication/Speaking and Listening evident in teaching and planning across the school?

It was highly evident from the onset that this school works closely to create an ethos of openness and collaboration where everyone is treated the same and where the Headteacher involves everyone in her 'clear vision with the whole school.'

Middle leaders step into the role of leading whenever necessary as they are familiar with the classes, students and are accepted through the HT's 'professional, fair, open door and non-judgemental approach.' Regular meetings and speech and language training aid this cohesion where everyone is involved. They have their areas of development – school council, creative Arts and PE/outdoor learning to ensure the children benefit from initiatives, for example, singing has been brought on rapidly through Makaton in which the staff receive training. They believe the school is being 'driven forward in a different way resulting in a happier, relaxed atmosphere.'

Planning was to hand in every classroom with log books containing targets across the curriculum, pupil profiles with individual target sheets and daily timetables. The classrooms were stimulating and well devised with good use of open space technology. Teachers and CSAs worked in harmony and obviously knew the children well. The school had a good sense of continuity and flow. Students were happy in their classrooms, working individually on their letters and sounds with ipads, in pairs or small groups. Older students worked well in larger groups given time to think about relevant issues such as healthy diets and resources enabled children to respond such as the 'Mack' switches.

All staff and pupils acknowledged the HT was in evidence every day with a friendly 'good morning.'

Notes and prompt sheets were utilised as the children were taught.

Teachers had high expectations and were differentiating work, for example, children described feely box items with teacher as scribe before writing out their suggestions later, either through words or longer descriptions. Everyone was happy and relaxed in their work:

'I love this school – it's a very caring school. Everybody matters.'

This was borne out with a philosophy/thinking skills session where the teacher elicited good responses from the older students in a very calm atmosphere, as they listened respectfully to each other. Children helped tidy up their areas, washing and cleaning crockery. Everything in its proper place. New staff were supported by a very experienced team.

The children were very happy to show their work and files, discussing the diploma they are working towards and how they develop the skills to get there. There is lots they like about their school including maths, topic work around Dinosaurs, building confidence, cooking – and eating the results – and reading. They loved the prom and the resident trip to Kielder.

Prefects took pride in their school which had so many excellent areas to develop children's learning in creative ways: light works room – which they operated – library, soft play room and hydra pool.

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