

Governor Visit to Maple Class

(Key Stage 1)

Wednesday 15 June 2011

Focus of Visit

The main focus of this KS1 Link Governor visit to Maple Class was to review how the outside environment is incorporated and utilised in the current rolling curriculum programme.

We also decided that both KS1 Link Governors would carry out this visit as it had been recommended to us via governor training and fellow governors that pairing-up can be advantageous in garnering information and ideas.

At the start of our visit Miss Bush informed us that the class had an important experiment that they needed to get underway, and so both link governors offered to assist the children in their activity. Therefore the focus of our visit may need to be revisited at a later date.

Observations

Classroom Displays

There were some really colourful and eye catching wall displays in Maple Class. It was obvious that their subject of learning is Mini-Beasts and there was strong evidence that the subject had been explored using a variety of resources. As an example, the pupils had created their own reference books containing information on a mini-beast of their choice.



The children used their handwriting and drawing skills when describing their animal. They had used their computer graphic skills to create the front covers.



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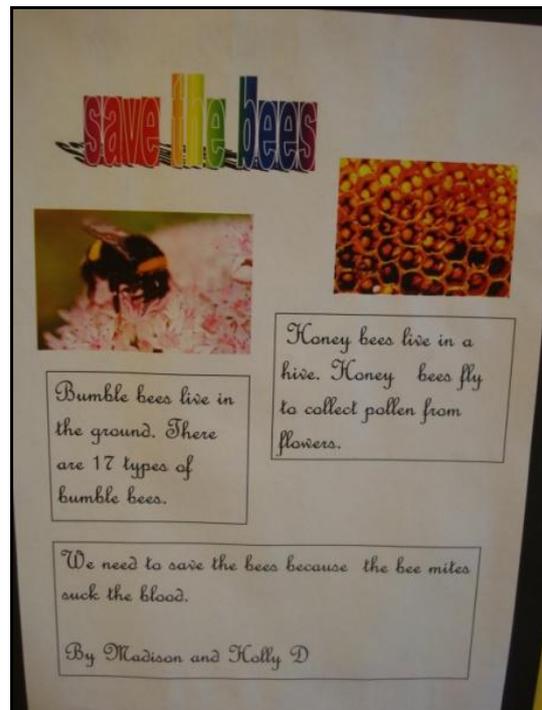
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It was clear that the children had been specifically looking at diurnal and nocturnal animals from a large display depicting bugs, bats and spiders etc. The children had made the bugs from recycled materials.

Another display showed 'Save the Bees' posters that the children had produced with a partner. One of the pupils informed us that they had created them on the computers using 'Word', and they had 'found the photos searching on Google Images'.



Class Activity

Miss Bush read to the children from a wonderfully illustrated book that explained the life cycle of a caterpillar to a butterfly. The children were engaged and many asked relevant questions and contributed to the discussion of the process.

She then explained to the children how the caterpillar kits worked, and what they would need to do in order for their caterpillars to thrive. The pupils were all very attentive during this stage, and many asked pertinent questions about their activity. The children then worked in groups of about six children per group.

The following steps were carried out by the children:

1. Make air holes in plastic lid
2. Add caterpillar food to jar
3. Add the caterpillar (Miss Bush helped here)
4. Secure special paper to lid (where chrysalis will hang)
5. Place lid on firmly.

Once the caterpillars were securely placed in their tubs, the children used magnifying glasses to observe them.

The children were then told how to look after them, i.e. not to shake them! The next stage would be to wait for the chrysalis to appear and then transport them to the butterfly cage, before setting the fully fledged butterflies free.

When the children had finished, Madison approached me and said "I really enjoyed that experiment".

Discussions

Outside

A small group of children took us outside to very proudly show us their Minibeast Hotel that Maple class had constructed during Creative Week. They had worked in groups to create each layer of the hotel. The children told us that different people had donated the materials for the hotel, these included tiles, pipes, logs, bricks etc.

The children explained that the top layers have been loosely assembled to make inspection that bit easier. Miss Bush later explained that she hoped the bug hotel would remain for children to inspect the bugs throughout all the seasons.

We also took the opportunity to have a look at the newly refurbished swimming pool, which looks fantastic, including bright fresh paint to the pool and some of the fence and a great new

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table and chair set. Some finishing work is still to be done on the surrounding area. The pool has already been enjoyed by a number of children as the swimming pool timetable started this week.

Summary

Although we didn't necessarily focus on the outdoor curriculum during this visit, there was some strong evidence to show how well the rolling curriculum programme is being implemented.

As an example, it was obvious that the theme of metamorphosis was prevalent all over the school this week. The day before this governor visit Ms Hodges had been in assembly as a parent helper and the school were talking about what changes were happening to them. The Year 6 children are moving on to different schools and the current reception children are not the youngest anymore as the new reception children attend their story time with Mrs. Brawn etc. In Willow class, the pupils had been creating life-cycle posters of frogs, and in Maple class, they were actually nurturing caterpillars and watching their transformation into new creatures. The consistency of themes across the school seems to work very well, and it was interesting that the subjects of learning can easily relate to the children's own personal development too.

Many thanks to the Miss Bush, Mrs Rundle and Mrs Walton for letting us join in with their activities.

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(Link Governors – Key Stage 1)*