

Report from Jackie Acres on her school volunteering:-

I started as a volunteer listening to children reading on 13th October 2008 with Squirrels class, year 2 at Courthill First School. At first, all the children looked very similar in their smart yellow sweatshirts, but gradually, I was able to put a name to a few.

There were about 6 children who usually sat in the middle at the same table together. One little guy said, 'When am I going to read to you?' Since then Josh has come on leaps & bounds & is a super little reader. These children were slightly weaker in their reading & they are the ones I have sat with mostly.

Sometimes we play a children's form of monopoly & the children read the cards, as in Community Chest. On one occasion, Ellie's counter landed on a tortoise & the card said that if she had one of these in her garden, she could collect 2 counters. 'I don't have a tortoise in my garden' she said. Jonas then said 'But she IS going to move!'

Sometimes the teachers ask me to do other little jobs e.g. filing etc, which I'm pleased to do. However, the children then come out & ask, 'No reading today?' So I say, 'You can be 1 next time' & they certainly don't forget.

At Christmas, we made Christmas cards. Henry was very neat & measured each piece before cutting it. I passed the comment 'We have a budding civil engineer here'. After asking me what that was, he said, 'Well I am quite clever'. Angel informs me that she is left handed & artistic. Apparently, 'Most left handed people are artistic'. I bow to her superior knowledge!

Elliot & Lewis are very similar in looks to me. Elliot says he doesn't mind if I confuse him with Lewis as most people confuse him with Sammy.

Sometimes I'm asked to sit in the class & they talk to me as though I am one of them. On these occasions, there is a chorus of "Thank you Mrs Acres" as I leave.

We recently went off on a day trip to Brownsea island in Poole harbour. As a volunteer, I had 5 children to 'keep an eye on', 2 girls & 3 boys.

It was a truly amazing day with 'I'm hot Mrs Acres. When are we having lunch Mrs Acres? What time is it Mrs Acres?' I loved every minute. The children were good. We walked a long way around the island & all went home weary but happy, having had an enjoyable day.

Shortly the term ends & these little people will be moving on.

How they have grown; not only in stature, but also in confidence!

Jackie Acres