Adopt a Class Visit

Today I visited school to watch some of the children using the Clicker 6 computer software. There were 4 children from Class 4 using laptops with headphones. The children were doing work on time connectives.

The program is very sophisticated using predictive text which helps children select correctly spelled words. Once typed in, the program reads the sentences to the children to ensure it is what the children want to say. The children focused well on the task. They could import pictures but were less happy about going back and editing their work.

I then visited other classes to hear the views of other member of staff who have been using the program and saw some of the work that had been done using it. It seemed that the Year 6 staff found it more accessible to the older children. One member of staff was very positive about the program saying she uses it in lots of their work. Most staff were concerned that the children would lose handwriting skills if they use it too much.

Having used computer technology in schools since the early 80s, where concept keyboards were used to support children with their writing and where teachers had to input the words to be used, this looks like it would be far more accessible to produce quality work. I hope staff work at developing this program which would have to help children in their reading, writing and spelling. The use of the speech recognition software aspects is an area of the program which could be encouraged so children can quickly get their thoughts down which then can be edited and show the higher levels of English composition.

I look forward to seeing this program develop in the school. Thank you for the opportunity to see the program in use.

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