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29 May 2018

Mrs Cathy Bignold
Headteacher
Warwick Nursery School
Coventry Road
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Warwickshire
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Dear Mrs Bignold

Short inspection of Warwick Nursery School

Following my visit to the school on 9 May 2018, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. The visit was the first short inspection carried out since the school was judged to be good in October 2014.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Staff including your nursery teacher, business manager and governing body very ably support you. Together, you have been relentless in your drive to ensure that the school's motto of 'Playing, Learning and Achieving' underpins all aspects of provision. You have created an ethos of trust by putting children and their families at the heart of all that you do.

The parents and carers that I spoke to are unanimous in their praise for the good progress that their children have made in the time that they are with you. They said that they feel very supported by you and your staff, because you always give good advice and signpost them to any extra help that they might require. You and your dedicated staff are very quick at identifying children who might need early help. This is due to the excellent relationships that you have developed with both parents and support agencies. As a consequence, children and their families are able to access the help that they need in a timely manner. Parents who responded to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, and those that I spoke to said that their children are happy, safe and well looked after.

A contributory factor to the school's success is the fact that you, as a teaching headteacher, model best practice and you ensure that staff receive well focused training. The impact of this support and training is seen in the expert way that adults question children and model extended sentences, which help children improve their vocabulary and their speaking skills. Careful monitoring of teaching

and learning and your accurate school self-evaluation have ensured that any areas for development are quickly identified.

Your recent emphasis on 'planning in the moment' has ensured that children's interests have become a focal point for learning. Your system for scribing children's stories has had a very positive impact on their speaking and listening skills, as children are very eager to share their stories with you. Well-structured routines, a vibrant learning environment both indoors and outdoors, and exciting learning opportunities enable all groups of children to make excellent progress in speaking and listening and in their personal, social and emotional development. Nevertheless, there are some missed opportunities for most-able children to record their learning and to practise their letter and number formation. In some practitioner-led sessions, we saw that the planned work was sometimes a bit too easy for them. This was because information from assessments had not been used precisely enough to identify the skills that these children need to learn next.

You have worked hard at addressing all the key issues identified in the previous inspection report. You have ensured that key workers keep a careful check on children's achievement. We saw the amount of work that they put into recording what children have done in the children's learning journals. These provide an excellent record of the tasks that children have undertaken; however, there is limited information about what children's next steps of learning should be. You have ensured that staff learn from one another's best practice through peer-to-peer observations. You have addressed the issue of children using technology throughout the day. We saw children using a range of technical equipment including laptops, tablets, calculators and recordings of stories. They also used the interactive whiteboard to develop their early skills of reading, writing and mathematics.

Safeguarding is effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding throughout the school. The leadership team has ensured that safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. You have increased the number of designated safeguarding leads. They keep a careful check on all matters pertaining to children's safety. You have ensured that staff have regular training and know that protecting children is everyone's responsibility. You make timely referrals to outside agencies and you keep clear records of all contacts between them.

You undertake regular risk assessments of learning opportunities both indoors and outdoors and your risk assessments are very detailed. Children are taught how to keep themselves safe when learning. In the forest school, they follow instructions very carefully and know that they can only observe pond life when accompanied by an adult.

You are keen to ensure that children develop a mature understanding of personal safety and independence. Practitioners use age-appropriate resources such as 'Turtle Stuart' (an acronym for step back, think, understand action, reflect and then talk). This helps children reflect on their actions and has a positive effect on their

behaviour and reasoning on why certain courses of action are better than others.

Parents and carers say that the school is a very safe place and that they get lots of help with understanding how to keep their children safe online.

Inspection findings

- All groups of children generally achieve well in relation to their low starting points. Your tracking records show that children eligible for the early years pupil premium have made accelerated progress in all areas of learning. This is because you have carefully identified their needs and targeted resources appropriately. For example, timely help is sought for any children with speech and language difficulties and parents and carers are informed of the steps that they can take to support their child. This results in children making rapid progress in acquiring vocabulary and speaking in full sentences.
- Adults create exciting learning opportunities using both the indoors and outside environment well. Activities are carefully organised and closely monitored so that there is consistency in children's experiences. Nevertheless, there are times when planning of precise skills to be taught is not clear enough. This is because, on occasion, staff do not record the skills that different groups of children acquire while undertaking activities.
- The outdoor provision is particularly impressive and contributes significantly to developing children's independence, curiosity and imagination. You have planned plenty of opportunities for children to learn about their natural environment through forest school activities. Children have the opportunity to dig, plant, transport soil, splash in puddles and make potions in the mud kitchen. Children use the bike track to develop their skills of coordination and turn-taking.
- Your work on developing a sustainable environment is exemplary. You have engaged the whole school community in recycling. The Nursery has gained an Eco Silver Award for finding ways of using a variety of materials for different purposes, such as old wellies for planters and socks for tree decorations. As a result, children have thorough knowledge of recycling.
- You have created a harmonious learning community. All staff work well as a team and parents and carers are seen as true partners in learning. Roles and responsibilities are clear within the Nursery and each adult works hard to ensure that the children learn effectively. Children have lots of opportunities to participate in practical mathematical experiences to develop their knowledge of number, shape, space and measure. For example, in the forest school, children were estimating as to how long a piece of string might have to be to wrap around a fir cone. This contributed to children's emerging knowledge of length.
- You have introduced a new electronic system for tracking children's progress, but it is in its infancy and does not yet easily give you the precise knowledge that you need about the progress of different groups. Staff know the children very well and have secure knowledge of their achievements. However, not enough is done to identify the next steps of learning for individual children and the development of skills is not being clearly identified in the planning of activities.

- You meticulously check that teachers provide stimulating environments for learning and every area is well resourced with books that children eagerly browse. This has had a very positive impact on children's knowledge of the structure of story. Parents and carers are delighted with the opportunity to use the toy library and the reading library.
- Staff and governors are aware of the school's priorities and everyone pulls together to give children and families the best start in life. Teaching over time is strong and staff keep a very watchful eye on any children who might be struggling, giving them the support that they need.
- Governors robustly debate decisions and this is well reported in records of meetings. Governors also support you well by asking relevant questions when scrutinising your headteacher's report. They regularly access training provided for them by the local authority, which is having a positive impact on gaining an independent view of the school.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the most able children are consistently given harder tasks and have more opportunities to practise their letter and number formation
- staff focus more precisely on the skills that children need to acquire in relation to their starting points, and clearly identify the next steps of learning in their planning and children's learning journals
- leaders seek ways to make the tracking of progress of different groups more manageable.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Warwickshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Dr Bogusia Matusiak-Varley
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you, several members of your staff and two members of the governing body to discuss your evaluation of the school's performance. I had a telephone conversation with your school adviser. I spoke to parents bringing their children into Nursery and considered 35 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey. I talked with members of staff during my tour of the school. You and I visited indoor and outdoor activities. We observed teaching and learning and looked at planning and children's learning journals. I examined a range of documents, including your evaluation of teaching and learning and peer

observations undertaken by staff. I looked at the school improvement plan, information about children's achievement, behaviour and welfare policies as well as procedures relating to safeguarding and health and safety. I also considered governing body records and reports from the local authority.