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Dear Fiona Dearman

Short inspection of Surbiton Children's Centre Nursery

Following my visit to the school on 7 June 2016, 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 outstanding in October 2012.

This school continues to be outstanding.

The leadership team has maintained the outstanding quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Indeed, this is the fourth time that Ofsted has judged the school outstanding. You and the staff are to be congratulated on this achievement.

You are passionate and committed to providing high-quality learning experiences for the children in a flexible way that meets the needs of their families. Under your excellent leadership the nursery continues to go from strength to strength as you embrace new initiatives. An example is the successful integration of 16 funded two-year-olds into the provision.

Central to your philosophy is the notion of a distinction between the education and care provided during the 15 hours children spend in the nursery school and any additional hours they may spend in the extended day-care provision. This philosophy is realised successfully through detailed planning which ensures that children receive a wide variety of experiences. Staff check carefully to see that learning opportunities in different parts of the provision complement each other so that children reinforce essential learning and skills without repeating experiences.

Close liaison and strong teamwork between staff ensure that the provision is seamless to children and parents. The flexibility of the extended provision for up to 40 children meets the needs of families whose children may attend for various amounts of time between 8am and 6pm each day for 49 weeks of the year. Parents

value this flexibility. The family atmosphere in the extended provision, which is intended to reflect a 'home' environment, works effectively as two-year-olds play alongside their older peers who provide a positive role model of language, learning and behaviour.

Parents speak in glowing terms about their children's experiences at the nursery, about your leadership, and about the commitment of staff. They recognise the nurturing environment you provide and the sensitive way that children are supported to behave and treat others. Several spoke of the gains their children have made, both academically and in their growing confidence. Parents greatly appreciate your efforts to engage them in their children's learning through the workshops on topics such as managing behaviour, getting ready for school, and numeracy.

The previous inspection required you to develop children's abilities to evaluate their own learning. You and staff have tackled this area for improvement with rigour. The impact of this work can be seen in the way that children talk readily about their learning.

You consider it is the nursery's role to be at the forefront of developments in early years in the area. So, you look outwards to support the development of high-quality early years provision locally as well as sustaining it in the nursery. You and members of your staff frequently provide expert support, guidance and training for staff at local primary schools and in early years settings.

Safeguarding is effective.

You place a high priority on keeping children safe. You and governors operate safe systems for recruiting staff, for vetting them and checking their suitability to work with young children. You ensure that staff receive a wide range of training so that they are alert to the many and varied ways that children might be at risk of harm. You have secure systems for logging and tracking any concerns that staff might raise about a child. You maintain effective liaison with external agencies through contributing to reviews of children, attending case conferences and monitoring children carefully. You track attendance rigorously and follow up concerns quickly.

Parents are wholeheartedly confident that their children are safe, happy and well cared for. This confidence is borne out in the actions of the children themselves. The way that children behave towards each other and their relationships with adults throughout the day show that they are secure and comfortable in the environment.

Inspection findings

- Leaders and governors have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for further development. Self-evaluation is thorough, accurate and based on a wide range of evidence.
- Governors are supportive of the school's leaders. They provide challenge too

and visit the school regularly to follow up actions in the improvement plan. The website does not contain all the information that it should about the work of the governing body.

- Close monitoring of the quality of provision helps you to identify priorities for school improvement. The school improvement plan covers one year only and does not encompass longer term initiatives, such as developments in response to the government's plan to provide 30 hours of childcare for three- and four-year-olds.
- Meticulous analysis of children's progress highlights individuals and groups of children who may need more focused support. Staff provide support or intervention promptly and to good effect. Analysis shows that all groups of children are doing as well as others; there are no significant differences in outcomes and most leave the nursery at levels that are typical or above typical for their age. They are ready for school.
- You are making excellent use of the early years pupil premium funding for eligible children so that they are thriving too. The benefits of providing places for two-year-olds are clearly evident in the outcomes of those children. By the age of three they had made up ground and developed the skills that were typical for their age. You now have higher expectations of what these children should achieve by the time they leave.
- The quality of provision both indoors and outdoors is broad, stimulating and exciting. The outside area with its different surfaces, levels, slopes, and challenging equipment promotes adventurous play and risk-taking in a safe environment. Shrubs and planted areas create secret places for children to explore and use their imagination. Many children live in nearby flats without a garden and so relish learning in this open space. Not surprisingly the children's physical skills are well developed by the time they leave. Indoors, the space is organised effectively to encourage children to make choices from the wide range of activities.
- A significant strength is the provision in the resource base for 10 children with social and communication difficulties. Here, the quality of interaction between adults and children is exceptional. Children are making great strides in learning to follow routines, take turns, and to communicate with each other and with adults. Many of the strategies used here to positive effect are used across the nursery. They include agreed approaches to behaviour management and draw on resources such as a system of signing key words and visual timetables.
- A key focus of training for staff has been the quality of interaction with children. This has paid dividends. Staff question and challenge children to extend their learning while providing a model of speaking for children to copy. The numerous and varied opportunities for imaginative role play reflect the school's strong focus on speaking and understanding, an area where leaders noticed that outcomes were relatively weaker.
- Other training for staff has focused around improving the quality of observations of children's learning and the way that staff record and analyse children's learning experiences. Much of this practice is exemplary. You continue to strive for total consistency in quality through your support for a small number of staff.

- The development of an online assessment system that parents can view at home and to which they can contribute their own pictures and information is working well. Staff are aware that some parents do this more than others. Similarly, some parents contribute significantly to their children's 'book of learning experiences' while others do not. You recognise the need to provide more support for some parents, especially those who do not speak English as their first language, to contribute to their children's learning.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the website complies with current requirements
- parents are supported further in contributing to their child's learning and assessment records
- the school's improvement plan reflects longer-term priorities.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body and the director of children's services for Kingston upon Thames. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Jane Wotherspoon
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection I held meetings with you and your deputy as well as a governor, and a representative from the local authority. I spoke briefly with parents as they brought their children to the afternoon session and I took account of the responses to the online Ofsted questionnaire completed by parents. I spoke informally with staff and children. Together, we observed teaching and learning in all rooms and in the garden and we looked at a sample of children's 'book of learning experiences'. I also reviewed a wide range of documents including the single central record, the school's self-evaluation and school improvement plan, and documentation relating to safeguarding.