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Mrs Lesley Savage  
Headteacher  
Frizington Nursery School  
Main Street  
Frizington  
Cumbria  
CA26 3PF

Dear Mrs Savage

### **Short inspection of Frizington Nursery School**

Following my visit to the school on 11 October 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 to be good in December 2012.

#### **This school continues to be good.**

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You provide effective leadership to the school and are relentless in your drive to ensure that all children do their best. You and your staff have created a culture where the unique qualities of all children are recognised and respected. The close-knit family atmosphere that you have created is evident in relationships at all levels. You are not complacent and rise to the challenge of dealing with any underperformance. For example, you have identified that standards in writing could be higher and that children do not have enough opportunities to learn about other faiths and cultures. I would agree with this analysis and already the wheels are being put in place to consider how both of these issues are to be addressed.

You have the support of your dedicated staff. From my discussions with staff, it is evident that they work well as a team and that morale is high. You give good levels of support to newly qualified teachers and encourage your staff, at all levels, to develop their roles in education.

Parents hold you in high regard and give you their full support. They told me that their children enjoy coming to school and they are quite rightly proud of the progress that their children are making. Parents also appreciate that your staff are 'approachable and happy to help' if they have any problems. I believe that the following comment sums up parents' views of the school: 'an amazing school which always goes over and above my expectations'.

The learning environment, both indoors and outside, is inviting and contributes to children's positive attitudes to learning. Resources are of good quality and within reach, allowing children to make independent choices about their play.

Frizington Nursery School is a lovely, calm place for children to learn and play. Children are delightful and well-behaved. It is clear to see that friendships are being formed as children play cooperatively, share and take turns. During my time at your school, I observed children who were happy, confident and independent.

At the last inspection, you were asked to provide children with more opportunities to solve number problems and develop staff's use of questioning to challenge children's thinking. You have embraced these challenges and provided effective support and training for staff. The impact of your work was evident at this inspection. I observed some staff making good use of open-ended questioning to drive forward children's learning. In addition, I observed simple mathematical problems being posed, as part of the daily routine, for children to solve.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

Top of your list is ensuring that children are safe. Clear systems are in place to make sure that that staff and visitors are approved to work with children. The safeguarding policy has recently been updated and reflects the most recent guidance.

From my discussions with staff, it is clear that they have a good awareness of all safeguarding issues, including the most recent national concerns over radicalisation, sexual exploitation and female genital mutilation. Staff are aware of the link between poor attendance and potential safeguarding issues. All staff have read part one of 'Keeping children safe in education'. Those who have responsibility for safeguarding and recruitment have completed training at the appropriate level. As designated lead for safeguarding, you ensure that either you or your deputy are on the school premises at all times to deal with any safeguarding concerns. Children's entry and exit to the school is monitored. Documents that I examined, during the inspection, relating to safeguarding are of the required standard and fit for purpose.

### **Inspection findings**

- You and your staff are all reflective practitioners and are always looking at ways to improve the quality of education offered at your school. You all have a clear understanding of the underlying principles of early years education and of the importance of learning through play. You know your school well and are crystal clear about its strengths and what needs to be done to improve it further. These priorities are set out in your school development plan and staff training is securely linked to these goals.
- Your teaching commitment ensures that you are able to keep an eagle-eye on the quality of teaching. Your staff appreciate the feedback that you give, from formal and informal observations, to help keep their teaching skills fresh and up to date.
- From their different starting points all groups of pupils, including the most able and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, make strong gains in their learning. These gains are most notable in children's personal, social

and emotional development and in their communication and language skills.

- Learning at your school is meaningful, fun and reflects your school motto to 'open children's minds to many possibilities that empower each and every child to flourish and grow in all aspects of their life'. During my walk around the school I observed children who were inquisitive and keen to learn. This was exemplified as children filled and emptied containers in the water tray to develop their awareness of capacity. Others giggled with delight as they developed their fine motor skills using tweezers to pick up small objects, including feathers and baubles. Confident, smiling children eagerly told me 'the fireman is coming to see us today'. On questioning the children further, they told me that firemen 'help and rescue people'. Looking at books is a popular activity which children enjoy, either on their own or with friends or staff. Children have as much fun outdoors as they do inside. For example, they engaged in meaningful role play as they pretended to be firemen putting out a fire. Children enjoyed working together to explore how they could make water flow through the plastic tube which represented the fireman's hose.
- An effective key person system is in place. As a result, staff know their key group of children well, including their likes, dislikes and capabilities. This knowledge is instrumental in helping them plan activities which meet the needs of all groups of children, including the most able. In addition, children are streamed for phonics sessions, which again ensures that activities are pitched at the right level to meet the needs of individual pupils, including the most able.
- The website is bright, colourful and provides valuable information for parents. However, it does not meet the current requirements set out by the Department for Education with regard to the information that must be published. The special educational needs report is not dated, which makes it difficult to assess if it is updated annually. In addition, the report does not evaluate the effectiveness of the provision provided by the school for children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The information relating to governors lacks detail. The actual date that governors were appointed has been omitted and any business or pecuniary interests are not listed. Furthermore, governors' attendance records at committee meetings or full governors meeting have not been published on the website. Finally, the school's complaints procedures is also missing from the website.
- Careful consideration is given to how the early years pupil premium money is spent. The number of children entitled to this funding is low but fluctuates from one year to the next. You are well aware of the barriers that impact on the learning of this small group of children. As a result, you ensure that this money is spent wisely to support children academically and socially. Case studies show that disadvantaged children, including the most able, achieve well in relation to their starting points.
- Good procedures are in place to ensure the smooth transition of children into the nursery school and on to primary school. Parents appreciate the home visits prior to the children's starting and the valuable opportunities they have to contribute to their children's learning journeys online. Close relationships have been established with the school's main feeder primary schools. We are in agreement that there is

potential to strengthen these relationships by working with schools to track pupils who have attended Frizington Nursery School until the end of the Reception Year. This would allow the school to monitor the impact of its work more closely.

- You work well with a number of schools in the locality to support and challenge each other. Local private day nurseries also benefit from your expertise and the help you provide to their staff in developing their practice and improving outcomes for children.
- Governors know the school well. They are aware of the school's strengths and priorities for development. They act as a critical friend, offering you support and challenge in equal measure.

### **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- standards in writing continue to rise for all groups of children, including those who are the most able
- opportunities are planned to help children appreciate the diversity of the world in which they live
- senior leaders work with local primary schools to monitor and track the progress of pupils who have attended the nursery school until the end of the Reception Year
- the website meets the requirements on the publication of specific information and is checked regularly to ensure that it continues to do so.

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

Yours sincerely

Sheila Iwaskow  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, I held meetings with you and members of the governing body. I also had informal discussions with a group of parents and staff. I spoke to a representative of the local authority on the telephone. I went on a tour of the school to see the learning that was taking place. I listened to children read and observed behaviour at different times of the day. I reviewed a range of documentation, including the single central record, and the school's self-evaluation and development plan. I also took account of the responses to the online Ofsted questionnaire completed by parents.

I considered how well the school had responded to the areas for improvement that were identified at the last inspection. The progress and achievement that all groups of children make were also considered. I looked at what steps had been taken by you to ensure that the quality of teaching remained good. I also considered whether safeguarding arrangements were effective and up to date. Furthermore, I reviewed the spending of the early years pupil premium to ensure that it was having a positive impact on those children who are entitled to it. Finally, I considered the work of the governors to assess the level of support and challenge they offer to the school.