

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234  
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Mrs Andrina Flinders  
Headteacher  
Fullbrook Nursery School  
West Bromwich Road  
Walsall  
West Midlands  
WS5 4NN

Dear Mrs Flinders

### **Short inspection of Fullbrook Nursery School**

Following my visit to the school on 8 November 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 outstanding in June 2013.

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

The leadership team has maintained the outstanding quality of education in the school since the last inspection. 'Friendly and helpful staff who care', and 'Staff provide opportunities to explore and learn through a variety of opportunities inside and out', were just two of the views expressed by parents when asked about Fullbrook Nursery. All the parents I spoke with and the vast majority who completed the Ofsted online questionnaire were complimentary about the school's work.

Teaching has strengthened since the previous inspection. The activities that you and the staff plan effectively sustain children's concentration because they are suitably challenging and inspiring. After the last inspection, leaders were specifically asked to focus on Pakistani boys and their understanding of number. Your information about children's learning and examples of children's work confirm that any variations between the achievements of different children diminish by the end of Nursery, including in mathematics. You fully acknowledge that while most children have the skills and knowledge expected for their age in the different areas of learning, further work is required to help improve some children's speaking skills.

You provide exceptional leadership. Your methodical approach to analysing the achievements of all children and identifying where improvements are required ensures that you and staff respond quickly to the changing needs of the children. Moreover, the way that you work with staff and governors to implement the necessary changes ensures that the school continues to go from strength to strength. You all work together cohesively to make sure that children of all ages

make excellent gains in their learning and development. An air of calm pervades throughout the Nursey. All staff set a positive tone at the start of the day. A warm smile, a conversation about the children and a brief discussion about the activities on offer ensure that everyone is immediately made to feel welcome.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

The safety of children is paramount. Staff make sure that children are well supervised and that the children learn how to keep themselves safe. Children skilfully climb, balance and travel with dexterity when using different equipment. Through their regular interactions, staff effectively encourage children to be friendly and to be gentle with their hands and feet. This approach successfully promotes an environment where children feel safe and behave very well.

You and the staff meet together once a week to discuss and share information about the children. These meetings enable you to respond quickly to any concerns and to ensure that children and their families receive the support that they need. Members of the governing body regularly walk around the school site to ensure that it is safe and secure. They also check and make sure that staff training is up to date and that when new staff are appointed, correct procedures are followed. The leadership team ensures that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and all records are sufficiently detailed.

### **Inspection findings**

- You and the governors have a precise understanding of the school's strengths and the aspects in need of development. The school improvement plan correctly identifies what could be even better in relation to teaching and children's learning.
- You encourage staff to play a leading role in school improvement by giving them the chance to lead projects that are aimed at further raising children's achievement. These projects give staff the chance to deliver training and share effective practice. This approach not only has a beneficial impact on the children, it also empowers staff and gives them ownership of the changes taking place in the school.
- The members of the governing body use their skills well to provide an effective level of challenge and support. They keep themselves well informed through regular meetings and discussions with staff. Additionally, you provide them with accurate information about the school's work. This enables governors to ask insightful questions and to carefully check the impact that staff are having on children's learning and development. The school's current website does not contain the most up-to-date information about the school. Governors are in the process of changing the website provider and intend to ensure that the most recent documentation is made available.

- In your role as headteacher, a specialist leader of education and a Walsall early years hub leader, you are often asked by the local authority to help local schools. Staff from other schools regularly visit Fullbrook so they can observe effective practice. The local authority advisers I spoke with were very complimentary about the impact of this support.
- In September 2015, Poppies Playcare expanded its provision for two-year-olds. This is situated on the same site as Fullbrook Nursery and overseen by the Fullbrook governing body. You lead the team, supported by the manager, to ensure that the same high-quality provision is provided as at Fullbrook. Some of the parents who spoke with me explained that Poppies helped to prepare their children well for learning at nursery school.
- The children make excellent progress from their different starting points. The large majority of children leave the school on track to achieve a good level of development, and some above this. Nevertheless, you recognise that some children's achievement in speaking is not as well developed as would usually be expected. During my visits to classes, I noted that occasionally staff did not give children the time to respond to their questions. Sometimes, staff accepted a nod or a gesture instead of encouraging the children to give a verbal response. This prevented the children, and especially those in the early stages of learning to express themselves, from using talk to share their views.
- You regularly check how well different groups of children are learning. Staff use this information well to identify the gaps in children's learning and to devise activities that provide a suitable level of challenge. Children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, for instance, benefit immensely from tailored activities that build on what they already know.
- Disadvantaged children achieve exceptionally well because the use of early years pupil premium is carefully planned. In one example, you and the staff focused on the achievement of the most able disadvantaged children in mathematics. The children were given the opportunity to visit a national forest centre, where they learned about numbers and shapes in the outdoors. The most able disadvantaged children also received extra support. As a result of this, all the children acquired the skills that would be typical for their age, and the majority exceeded these in mathematics.
- The school motto, 'where every day is a new adventure', is indeed a reality for the children. During the inspection, the children were completely captivated as they gathered 'ingredients' for their magic potions. The children combined apples, leaves and herbs while the member of staff encouraged them to use the correct language to describe the shapes and smells of the different items. This activity successfully encouraged the children to use their imagination and on this occasion it helped to extend the children's vocabulary well.
- The actions taken to raise children's achievement in mathematics have proved highly successful. Staff use a suitable range of equipment to help children learn to recite numbers and to use the correct terminology to describe the shapes and positions of different items. In the 'nursery shop', the children counted the vegetables accurately before 'selling' them to customers.

- Children enjoy drawing to express their ideas. A group of children were particularly keen to show me their pictorial retelling of the story 'Room on the Broom'. The children worked meticulously as they used drawings and marks to depict different characters and events in the story. 'The broom is about to break,' explained one child.
- You and the staff actively promote reading for enjoyment. Children have access to a wide range of books to read in school and books that they can share with their parents at home. Consequently, children very quickly learn to take a keen interest in stories, rhymes and poems. The most able children are effectively helped to recognise and say the initial sounds in words.
- The outdoor area provides children with an abundance of resources that broaden children's experiences. The 'little explorer's area', for instance, helps children to explore and learn about the environment. In the school garden, children plant fruits, herbs and flowers. Most recently, the children picked apples from the school grounds and with the help of staff learned to make apple crumble.
- You and the staff place a strong emphasis on working in partnership with parents to help children to become well-rounded individuals. For example, staff have devised a list of 18 things for children to do before they are four. This list has been shared with parents and includes jumping in a puddle, growing a flower from a bulb, walking through crunchy autumn leaves and catching a snowflake on your tongue. Children and their parents enjoy sharing what they have done through discussions, drawings and photographs.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- all staff help to further develop children's speaking skills
- the school's website contains the most up-to-date information about the school.

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

Yours sincerely

Usha Devi  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Information about the inspection**

During this inspection, I met with you, the vice-chair of the governing body and one other governor, and a local authority representative. I had a telephone conversation with the chair of the governing body and an early years local authority representative. You joined me on visits to all classes. I spoke with parents at the start of the school day. I spoke with children throughout the school day. I reviewed a range of documentation, including the school's own evaluation of its performance, information and photographs about children's learning, and documents related to keeping children safe. This inspection focused particularly on how well staff meet the needs of different children, the achievement of disadvantaged children and the information available to parents about the school.