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Mrs Liz Jeffrey  
Headteacher  
Scarcho Nursery School  
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Dear Mrs Jeffrey

### **Short inspection of Scarcho Nursery School**

Following my visit to the school on 24 January 2017, 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 March 2013.

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

The leadership team has maintained the outstanding quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You and your staff have made sure that children continue to flourish and achieve exceptionally well from their generally below-typical starting points. Children settle into school routines quickly and confidently. The school is particularly effective in making sure that every child has the individual support they need to learn effectively. Children learn to communicate very effectively and listen attentively. They love school and want to learn, seeing every day as a fun-filled adventure. They are well cared for and feel valued, saying, for example, 'You get stickers if you be good.' Children are very proud to show off their achievements. A high proportion of children exceed the levels of attainment expected for their age by the time they transfer to the next stage of their education. They are extremely well prepared both in their learning and their personal development.

Classrooms and outside areas are well resourced. Staff place a strong emphasis on making sure that all children try everything on offer to maximise their learning. The school has high ambitions for its children to succeed, and they do. Staff are meticulous in making sure that every day is rich with activities and experiences to support high-quality learning. The foundations of children's literacy and numeracy skills develop very effectively, step by step. Many children have only been in school since January but quickly learn to follow the example of older children. They have confidence to ask for help if needed, such as with learning letters and sounds and

with their writing and number skills. Accomplished teamwork among staff remains at the heart of everything that the school offers.

Over time, teaching is of high quality. Staff monitor children's progress very closely so that they can modify the curriculum to match each child's needs. This vigilant monitoring enables staff to identify early where individual children need specific additional support, including from external agencies, such as speech and language therapists or other specialists. Disadvantaged children, who might face significant obstacles in their lives, are a high priority. These children do as well as their classmates.

At the last inspection, the school was asked to do more to involve parents in their children's learning. Parents are now kept fully informed about what their child is learning at school as well as how they can support learning at home. They speak highly of the way the school elicits their support. 'Stay and play' sessions, for example, provide opportunity for parents to introduce their children to school and to meet staff. Attendance at open days, parent consultation meetings and numerous school events is very high. Attendance at the various workshops organised for parents has not been as good, however, but staff continue to encourage parents to promote their child's learning in every way they can. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school and how staff support children and their families. This partnership between home and school is highly valued. Even so, there remains scope to communicate more regularly and with greater clarity to parents as to how well their children are doing.

Staff assess, record and track children's progress in great detail. This information clearly confirms that children make rapid progress. However, leaders do not always consider to what extent individual children's attendance affects how well they achieve, given that some children attend more sessions than others.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

Arrangements to protect children and families are given high priority. The school takes good care of children and is vigilant in making sure that those who are particularly vulnerable receive effective support. All staff have received the required training to carry out their duty of care responsibilities effectively. They know the procedures to follow if they have any concerns about a child or its family. Leaders are quick to seek advice and guidance from relevant bodies where issues arise particularly among those facing complex difficulties in their lives. Designated leaders for safeguarding are trained to a high level. All staff have undertaken first-aid training to care for young children, know how to handle children appropriately and know how to administer medicines under parental guidance. Staff understand risks to children and families, such as domestic violence and the dangers of exposure to drugs and to extremist views. Parents are wholly confident that the school takes excellent care of their children. All the necessary checks are in place to make sure that staff are fit to work with children.

## Inspection findings

- As headteacher, you have high expectations of staff, children and parents. You strongly believe that the education of children is a team effort and, to this end, you ensure that forging successful partnerships between home and school are a priority. You are particularly successful at making sure that every child achieves the best they can. The support each child receives is exceptional.
- Through your vigilant eye on classroom practice, you make sure that teaching is consistently of a high quality. You and the governors make sure that staff receive the training they need to extend their knowledge and skills to accommodate the needs of all children, particularly those who are new to learning English or who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Staff are particularly well qualified and very experienced in knowing how young children learn and building their knowledge and skills effectively, step by step. Teachers plan activities that are engaging, instructive and fun. Whatever teachers ask of them, children continually try their best.
- The teaching of phonics is exceptionally well managed. Even after only a short time in school, children are eagerly and confidently reading and writing their names and telling stories.
- Numeracy is currently a high priority. Teachers extend children's number skills through games and counting activities, such as how many children are having lunch or how many children are away today. Many children already understand the different ways they can make 10, and count accurately beyond this. They say, 'Counting to a million is fun!'
- You and your staff know your children well and the difficulties some experience in their learning and development. This does not stop you from having high expectations, particularly of the most vulnerable. The pastoral arrangements of key staff looking after small groups are highly effective. This high level of care ensures that children grow in confidence and independence. Children learn to understand the world around them through the experiences you provide. They acquire a love of learning that will stand them in good stead in the future.
- Older children are excellent role models to the younger ones, showing them how to behave, listen and learn. The younger ones catch on quickly, increasing their confidence and ability to learn.
- Children's behaviour is impeccable. They show kindness and respect for others, share toys and books happily and take turns sensibly. At lunchtime, it was delightful to see every child eating with cutlery, waiting patiently to be served and saying 'please' and 'thank you' without being prompted. A child stated quite emphatically, 'I love hot dinners, love school and love reading.' The atmosphere in the dining hall was a joy; over 40 three- to four-year-olds all conversing happily and politely.
- The school's arrangements for introducing children into school are very effective. Home visits, open days and other activities ensure that children are ready for school when they start. Children settle and adjust to school routines quickly and make a flying start to learning. The arrangements to support children when they move on to their primary schools are also, overall, very effective. Children transfer to many different schools, and, although this presents some additional challenges in achieving a consistent approach, parents confirm that they are very

happy with how this transition is supported.

- You have forged very good partnerships with local schools, working with them, for example, to moderate assessments and to share good practice. Your assessments of children's achievements are both accurate and reliable. Records of children's progress are very detailed, informative and targets that lay a strong foundation for the future are clear. Staff are clear how well children are doing. However, you know that there remains scope to be even more precise in your analysis of this information and to communicate children's progress to parents even more regularly.
- Governors are well informed, have a good understanding of the school's work and contribute effectively to school improvement. The new chair and vice-chair are very experienced in early years education. They know what children at this age can achieve. Nothing short of the best is acceptable. Governors' expertise is invaluable to the school. They are in a good position to support you and the staff, but also hold you to account for the progress of children.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- information about children's progress is analysed even more precisely, particularly to establish the extent to which attendance affects how well children achieve
- communication with parents about how well their children are doing is more regular and easy for them to interpret.

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

Yours sincerely

Rajinder Harrison  
**Ofsted Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During this one-day inspection, I met with you, your teachers and other staff, the chair of the governing body and a representative from the local authority. I spoke with the vice-chair of the governing body by telephone and spoke to a number of parents and volunteers in school. I listened to children read and spoke with them formally and informally during breaktimes and in lessons. We jointly observed sessions in all classes. I scrutinised safeguarding policies and practice, discussing case studies about vulnerable pupils. I also considered other information and documentation, including the school's improvement plans and self-evaluation statements. I examined policies and information posted on the school website. I evaluated the work in children's learning books and records of their progress and

achievement. I also took into account the views of 26 parents from their responses to the free text facility and the 27 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, 'Parent View'. There were no responses submitted by staff or children.

I evaluated how the school engages with parents to involve them more in their children's education and considered the school's procedures for induction into nursery and transition to primary school. I also reviewed the school's procedures for the assessment and tracking of children's progress and how this information is disseminated to parents and receiving primary schools.