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Mrs Amanda Bannister  
Executive Headteacher  
Brunswick Nursery School  
Young Street  
Cambridge  
Cambridgeshire  
CB1 2LZ

Dear Mrs Bannister

### **Short inspection of Brunswick Nursery School**

Following my visit to the school on 15 March 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 2012.

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

The leadership team has maintained the outstanding quality of education in the school since the last inspection.

Parents are very pleased with the education you provide for their children. They say how happy their children are at school and describe the rapid progress their children make as a result of excellent teaching. Parents were overwhelmingly positive in their Parent View questionnaire responses. One typical parental comment was: 'This is an amazing school.'

You, the deputy headteacher and governors have a very clear view of the strengths and areas for development in the school which provide evidence of sustained outstanding provision. You have developed strong teamwork among your staff; they are proud to work at the school and staff morale is high. As a result, staff are committed to promoting children's learning and well-being and want the very best for all children. This ensures that children thrive and develop as confident learners who are well prepared for the next stage of their learning.

Children's behaviour in school remains outstanding. Children quickly settle into their routines and demonstrate a real love of learning. They show natural curiosity and develop new knowledge, skills and understanding very quickly. I observed the children enthusiastically engaging in their activities, dressed as their favourite characters to celebrate World Book Day. I saw 'Harry Potter' writing the word 'Harry' with pride on the picture he drew of the castle he helped to build out of large blocks. In every

session I observed well-motivated children who are proud of their achievements and eager to share, take turns and join in.

Since the previous inspection, your school has entered into a formal federation, which is known as the Cambridge Nursery Federation, with Colleges Nursery School. You have been appointed as the executive headteacher of both schools, and you are ably supported by a deputy headteacher in each school. A single governing body for both schools is in place. Governors effectively support the work of the school and provide appropriate challenge for you and the staff. You have also developed the school as a teaching school for training teachers. These reorganisations have a very positive impact on developing staff expertise through the sharing of best practice and support the improvements in teaching, learning and children's outcomes.

At the previous inspection it was recommended that assessment procedures were further developed. These procedures are now highly effective. Currently, you are working to ensure that the additional funding for children eligible for the pupil premium has a positive impact on their development.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

You, your staff and governors are fully committed to ensuring the safety and welfare of children and ensure that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Staff are vigilant and maintain high levels of supervision and thoughtful engagement in children's activities throughout the day. As a result, children are safe in school. You have implemented rigorous systems to check the suitability of all staff and visitors to work with children. I wanted to check on how well you implement specific policies such as e-safety and the acceptable use of computers, i-Pads, mobile phones and cameras. During the inspection, I scrutinised these policies and noted how you and your governors ensure that these policies and your procedures, together with training in every aspect of safeguarding, are up to date. Staff new to the school praise the thorough safeguarding training they receive as it ensures that they consistently implement the school's procedures to protect the welfare and safety of children.

You rigorously assess all potential risks for the premises, for all indoor and outdoor learning activities and for school visits such as to the allotment and forest school. Your systems for recording incidents or concerns in the school are equally thorough. Your records are detailed and well organised. You also showed me how closely you work with parents to promote and check children's punctuality and attendance in school. Discussions with your staff, parents and the local authority all confirm their view that children are safe in the school.

### **Inspection findings**

- A key focus for the inspection related to how effectively leaders spend the additional funding for the small proportion of disadvantaged children at the school. Your records show that the number of disadvantaged children has increased significantly this year. You provided additional practical resources for the outdoor learning area. You are doing this in order to develop the children's communication

skills as they play with these resources. However, it is too early to measure the impact of these recently purchased resources on the development of children's communication skills. You have included a thorough review of the impact of this spending, towards the end of the summer term, in your well-conceived school development plan.

- I examined how well leaders work with all staff to sustain high-quality teaching and learning, the impact of the school's status as a training school and as a newly federated school. Leaders provide excellent guidance and support for staff to develop their practice. The new federation of schools has a positive impact on sustaining outstanding teaching and learning. Staff from both schools share and model good practice in teaching across the federation and attend joint training sessions to promote the very best outcomes for children. Recently appointed staff and trainees in teaching greatly benefit from the regular mentoring and support from senior leaders and their work alongside outstanding practitioners. This ensures that staff continuously develop their practice to ensure that children continue to make outstanding progress.
- The proportion of children achieving a good level of development is well above average. You have established very effective procedures to observe, record and assess each child's learning in order to provide activities that secure rapid progress. Staff use assessment information extremely well, to extend and deepen children's thinking. For example, I observed children being encouraged to count when threading beads and to say how many would be left over if two were taken away. I also saw the most able children, who were filling baking trays with cupcakes, challenged to use a larger tray, holding 20 cupcakes and to count how many there were. You are always striving to make further improvements to the teaching in your school, especially in the consistent use of assessment and use of practical resources to develop learning.
- I also checked how well the nursery involves parents as active participants in their children's learning and development, including the contribution to learning journey year books. This was an area for improvement identified at the previous inspection, which has improved considerably. Parents say that the school now effectively encourages them to be involved in their child's learning. Records show that parents participate regularly in the forest school trips and join in a wide range of school activities. You encourage parents to read with their children at home, and those parents who speak English as an additional language are invited to come into school and read with their children in their home language. On these occasions, many other children join in, showing a natural curiosity and appreciation when they hear different languages spoken. Your records show that during home visits, you ask parents for their views on their children's learning, and involve parents in recording their children's skills, knowledge and understanding in order that staff have an accurate view of children's attainment before starting school. You also showed me examples of photographs taken by parents and their written comments, demonstrating the progress their children make at home. This information helpfully supplements the school's own assessments of children and engages parents as very important partners in their children's teaching and learning. Your staff team are currently trialling a new computerised assessment system to increase the involvement of parents in their children's development.

## **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they review the use of the additional early years pupil premium funding and measure its impact to ensure that disadvantaged children achieve as well as they can.

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

Yours sincerely

Declan McCarthy  
**Ofsted Inspector**

## **Information about the inspection**

I met with you, your deputy headteacher and three governors to discuss progress since the previous inspection. I held telephone conversations with your chair of the governing body and a representative of the local authority. I held a meeting with your staff and met eight parents who were collecting their children from school, to seek their views. I also considered the 42 questionnaires and 32 text responses to Parent View. I looked at your safeguarding and child protection procedures, your records of assessing any potential risks to children, the records of the checks you make on the suitability of staff and regular visitors to work with children and your records of training. I scrutinised attendance data, exclusion rates and logs of incidents relating to behaviour and the use of physical intervention. I examined a variety of sources of information including your school development plan, minutes of governors' meetings and assessment information. I undertook joint visits to learning sessions indoors and outdoors with you and the deputy headteacher in the morning and afternoon. I looked at the work children were doing and spoke to them about their learning in each session.