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Mrs Debra Redpath  
Executive Headteacher  
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Hampshire  
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Dear Mrs Redpath

### **Short inspection of Haven Early Years Centre**

Following my visit to the school on 31 October 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 judged to be outstanding in January 2013.

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

The leadership team has maintained the outstanding quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Leaders work together to develop new ways of working that continually improve the outcomes for children. The staff team ensure that all children get the best they can every day. As a result, children make great progress and get an excellent start.

Children's best interests are at the heart of Haven. Parents are enthusiastic about the level of care their children receive. Many describe Haven as 'the best place' for their children. The extremely high level of care children receive results in happy, confident learners who make great progress. The carefully planned environment gives them great opportunities to learn. The 'family group' approach gives each child the support and confidence to make the most of their time at the nursery. The excellent staff ensure that parents get the information and support they need to help their children do well.

Children love their time at the Nursery. Parents say they settle quickly and staff treat them like their own children. Exciting learning spaces, both indoors and outside, give children a wide variety of choice. Staff provide excellent support that nurtures their learning and enables them to develop independence. Staff know exactly when to intervene and when to let the children get on with it. As a result, children make very good progress because they are engrossed in activities that really interest them. I saw a good example of this during my visit. A small group of children were investigating a pumpkin. Supported by a member of staff, they cut and opened the pumpkin, talking about what they were doing. The member of staff

developed their language skills, their thinking and their use of tools during an activity that captivated the children's interest.

Haven is highly ambitious for all children. This is particularly true for children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Leaders make sure that staff thoroughly understand the needs of the children and the approaches the nursery uses to meet their needs. Staff are then able to share this with parents and other schools to ensure that children make the best progress they can. Staff see working with parents and other providers as essential to their work. They sum this up by saying that they want children not just to cope, but to thrive.

The school has improved since the last inspection. This is because leaders make more decisions based on evidence. They have also developed more innovative ways of working. A good example of the impact of these two developments can be seen in the new approach to staff development. Highly effective monitoring provides useful feedback on what staff know and can do. Targeted training helps staff further improve their skills and knowledge. The enthusiasm and commitment of the staff result in a team who work well together and support each other. This has created a staff team who are dedicated, skilled and knowledgeable.

Governors are strongly committed to the vision of the school and to ensuring that every child gets a great deal. They have provided strong and determined leadership during a period of some uncertainty. Governors are well supported by the local authority and are working closely with them. They have ensured that leadership is very strong across the Nursery. They now need to ensure that they hold the most senior leaders closely to account to ensure that the current highly effective practice is maintained during any changes in leadership.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Systems and records are detailed and of high quality. They are regularly monitored by governors and leaders.

Children are secure and happy in their family groups. Parents say that children see their key people at Nursery as family. The training that staff receive is regular and thorough. Staff have a good understanding of the things they do every day to ensure that children are well looked after and stay safe. As a result, there is a strong culture of safeguarding among staff.

Children with additional medical needs are very well cared for. Staff have very effective systems to enable these children to fully participate in the learning while also having their medical needs met. Parents really value the genuine care their children receive. They say that staff treat the children as if they were their own.

### **Inspection findings**

- At the start of the inspection, we agreed to look in particular at the following aspects of the school's work:

- the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements
  - how well leaders have addressed the recommendations of the previous inspection
  - how successfully leaders have ensured that the assessment of what children know and can do is manageable and accessible
  - how well children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported to make outstanding progress.
- Leaders have introduced individualised training and development for all staff. Mentors very effectively provide staff with regular support. Leaders have set down the standards they expect from staff. They regularly monitor staff and provide them with feedback. Sometimes leaders monitor staff together to make sure that their judgements are fair. The staff are proud to work in Haven and value the support they receive from leaders. They are committed to doing the best that they can for the children. As a result of the support they receive, staff are expert in meeting the needs of the children in their care.
- As at the time of the last inspection, children of all abilities do exceptionally well, often from low starting points. This includes children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, as well as those who receive additional funding. Children make excellent progress in all areas of learning, particularly in how well they get along with other children and adults.
- The assessment of what children understand and can do is thorough and well moderated. Assessments made by staff are regularly checked for accuracy. This information is shared with parents, who value this information. This information is also used effectively to identify how to further improve the progress that children make. A good example of this is the introduction of spaces that encourage boys to write. Leaders could see that boys were not writing as frequently as girls. This has improved following the introduction of an area that boys enjoy using.
- The provision for children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities remains outstanding. Staff are committed to improving the life chances of every child and the care and support they provide are exemplary. Leaders ensure that the Nursery meets the needs of these children. The development of rolling targets ensures that staff look for secure progress over time. This results in very secure learning, particularly for children with more significant needs and disabilities. A good example of this is the development of the Acorn room, which provides a quieter space for those children who need additional support. In this environment, the work of leaders and staff enables children to make excellent progress. One member of staff accurately summed this up when she said, “magic happens here”.

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

Yours sincerely

Phil Minns  
**Her Majesty’s Inspector**

## **Information about the inspection**

During this inspection I met with you and other leaders to discuss how the school has developed since the last inspection. I spoke to parents in the morning and talked to children during the day. I visited classrooms with leaders, looking at children's work. I also spent time watching the children learning in different areas of the nursery. I met with two members of the governing body and a representative from Hampshire local authority. I reviewed school documentation, including the school's policies and procedures for safeguarding. I took account of four responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, with four written comments. I considered 13 responses to Ofsted's staff survey. I also considered one letter received from parents.