

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



1 December 2017

Mrs Heidi Bullock
Headteacher
Bushbury Nursery School
Bushbury Lane
Bushbury
Wolverhampton
West Midlands
WV10 8JP

Dear Mrs Bullock

Short inspection of Bushbury Nursery School

Following my visit to the school on 21 November 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 good in February 2013.

This school continues to be good.

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

Since your appointment in March 2017, the strong collaborative culture you have created means that staff share ideas to enable high-quality learning. The nursery continues to provide a good quality of education for all groups of children and staff work well with parents and carers to ensure that they are true partners in learning. Parents that I spoke to during my visit were highly complimentary of all the help that they receive and all that is done for them. They appreciate the good systems of communication that you have introduced. One parent, speaking for many, said, 'I receive more texts from the school than I do from my friend.'

You and your staff ensure that the school's mission statement, emphasising that children in your care are the first resource for the future, underpins all aspects of your work. You do this through setting high expectations of both your staff and the children. This is reflected in the improvements that have been made to the monitoring of teaching and learning, which are very thorough.

You have created a true 'learning community' within the school. Staff are researching best practice in the teaching of mathematics, critical thinking and problem-solving. The impact of this is seen in the many activities, both indoors and outdoors, that require the children to ask questions and solve problems. For example, when exploring

volume, children ask questions such as 'Why does the cup look full of water when I put my hand in it and when I take it out the water has disappeared?' You have ensured that, through activities like this, children develop their vocabulary by learning new words such as displacement and overflowing.

Opportunities for developing curiosity contribute to children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. You have improved the outdoor provision by developing a forest school where children explore, problem-solve, practise pre-writing skills using a variety of natural resources and build dens for dragons. The improved use of resources that you have purchased for the outdoors ensures that children have lots of opportunities to solve problems, for example comparing the effectiveness of a range of different materials used for building bridges for the Three Billy Goats Gruff.

You have improved the teaching of mathematics by training staff on the importance of children's mark-making to record their understanding, and using the language of mathematics in a variety of situations. When learning about three-dimensional shapes, children made different sizes of circles from aluminium foil to make bracelets for their mothers, exploring the differences in wrist sizes.

Children are happy and engaged in their learning because of the excellent relationships that they have with the staff. They are valued for their uniqueness and parents are delighted with the supportive learning environment, knowing that their children are well looked after. Children feel secure in their learning and, as a result, they are willing to try new experiences. They are proud of their achievements.

You have ensured that children's low starting points on entry do not prevent them from making good progress. Children leave the nursery reaching expectations for their age and several exceed expectations in mathematics, speaking and listening, early writing and reading.

You have very secure systems for monitoring teaching and learning. You observe staff regularly and give them helpful pointers for improvement. You provide good-quality training to ensure that the quality of teaching is kept at a good standard. Your system of appraisal is thorough and regular and is having a positive effect on improving teaching over time. The appointment of a teacher who has responsibility for developing teaching and learning has improved planning. All staff are clear as to the learning opportunities that underpin the activities that children undertake.

You have rightly emphasised the importance of creating firm foundations on which to build children's knowledge and skills in all areas of learning over time. You and the teacher in charge of teaching and learning have improved the systems for undertaking detailed observations of children's learning, which are regularly shared with parents.

You have recognised that your systems for tracking the progress of children are cumbersome. You are rightly developing a more powerful tool to help you analyse information from observations undertaken on all groups of children, so that you can track them even more effectively from their starting points.

You have addressed the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection effectively. Urgent action has been taken to ensure that practitioners have the help that they need to spend more time teaching calculation and problem-solving skills. You have trained staff in helping them develop children's thinking in the outdoor environment and this is having a positive effect on the children's speaking skills. You have ensured that governors now visit the school on a regular basis and you provide them with detailed information on the improvements made to the quality of teaching and learning. They are now able to monitor all aspects of provision more effectively because of the clear success criteria identified in your school development plan.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality. All staff strongly believe that children cannot learn unless they feel safe. Parents say that the school is secure and the systems for collecting children are very tight. They are well informed about policies and procedures and know what to do should they require any information about safeguarding.

All policies have been recently updated by the governors and are displayed on the website. The photographs, names and contact details of the designated safeguarding leads are clearly visible. Parents and staff know what procedures to follow should they have any concerns. You provide weekly briefings to ensure that all staff understand the latest guidance on keeping children safe in education by providing a quiz in staff meetings.

You have established a culture in the school where all staff are fully aware of their duty of care. When staff have needed to act on a concern, they have done so without fear or favour. You have very secure systems for managing medicine, first-aid treatment, fire safety and site security. Risk assessments are regularly undertaken, including in the forest school, so that children run, climb and jump in puddles safely.

You have ensured that, outdoors, children have the opportunity to exercise their bodies and develop their creative play in a safe environment. Your attention to detail has ensured that all information about children's medical problems, including food allergies, is shared with staff. You work well with agencies such as speech therapists and social workers. This ensures that children requiring the help of outside agencies receive the support that they need.

Inspection findings

- This is a good nursery school where staff strive to give the children in their care the best start in life. Much care and attention have gone into ensuring that children's interests are built into meaningful activities and that learning through play is purposeful. This contributes to the outstanding behaviour and personal development maintained since the last inspection.
- Since the last inspection, you have created provision for the 'Terrific Twos'. These children also make good progress because of the high quality of adult intervention

in learning. These young children make rapid gains in their personal, social and emotional development and in their speaking and listening skills. They pick up the nursery routines very quickly and settle in well to their learning because of the interesting activities that are provided for them, such as threading felt shapes and making different-coloured lollipops. In no time, they play alongside the older children outdoors, learning quickly how to take turns and play cooperatively. From having virtually no language when they enter the nursery, they are soon talking in sentences and chanting a range of favourite rhymes.

- Children are valued as individuals and every step is taken by staff to understand their social, emotional and physical needs. This is because staff are now trained to undertake accurate and detailed assessments, based on a clear understanding of children's developmental needs. This enables them to build up children's confidence and resilience in learning, by providing just the right amount of support when undertaking new activities.
- Children trust adults in the setting and respond well to them. Children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are very quickly identified and effective support is offered to parents. Every opportunity is taken to help parents who need to attend courses so that they can learn how to deal with particular types of special needs at home. In your dealings with parents, you make it very clear that you and your staff are ambitious for their children. The many thank-you cards that you receive are testament to the appreciation felt by parents.
- Since the appointment of the new leadership team, you have introduced new systems for planning, the tracking of progress and observations of children's responses to learning. This has helped adults plan even more effectively for the different stages of children's understanding in their family groups. Your focus on how to get the best from every situation and everyone's talent is a key driver of continual school improvement. Your evaluation of the nursery's effectiveness is accurate because you confirm your judgements with the local authority adviser.
- Teaching is vibrant and exciting. When learning about 'stinking fish', children were mesmerised by the difference between fish skeletons and those of humans. They discussed whether it was better to be a human than a fish. This is just one example of how you bring learning alive for all groups of children.
- You have ensured that learning activities are supported by the use of good-quality resources. Children making birthday cakes with glittered dough spontaneously sang happy birthday to one another and to adults in the nursery. They shared their 'pretend' cakes with their teachers and their friends.
- You have set up a calendar of school visits for your governors to involve them in all aspects of school life. They are very keen to support the work that you do and act as critical friends by gaining an independent view of school life. Consequently, they challenge you about the way in which resources are targeted for those children who are eligible for the early years pupil premium funding. Governors have high expectations of the school performance and are mindful of the well-being of staff.
- All groups of children make good progress in their learning but there are some missed opportunities to challenge children with high prior attainment to extend their thinking even further. This is because the present system of tracking progress is

very cumbersome and does not give teachers the precise detail of what progress these children have made in relation to their starting points. Furthermore, when undertaking observations of children's learning, some adults do not use the next steps identified in the subsequent planning of activities. You have recognised these issues and are in the process of upgrading your tracking system, so that it gives you even more precise information on the progress of all groups.

- Very few parents and staff responded to Ofsted's online survey but, in my conversations with them, it is clear that they value the wide range of training that they receive to help them become better parents and teachers.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- information from the new assessment systems is used effectively to challenge those children who have high prior attainment to undertake even more challenging activities.
- ensure that staff use the information from observing children learning in subsequent tasks in lessons.

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

Yours sincerely

Bogusia Matusiak-Varley
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you and your lead teacher. I also met with two governors, four parents and the local authority education adviser. I carried out short observations in different areas of the nursery, including the provision for two-year-olds and the forest school.

I paid particular attention to several key lines of enquiry, including progress made since the last inspection, the use of the outdoors, progress in mathematics and how well the school develops children's thinking, investigation and problem-solving skills. I also looked at the school's provision for safeguarding, the quality of teaching, the impact that this has on the progress of different groups of pupils and how information from this informs the school's development planning. I looked at the quality of success criteria in your school development plan and how this information is shared with governors.

I looked at a number of documents, including the school's own evaluation of its

performance, improvement plans, records of checks of the quality of teaching, analysis of attendance and several school policy documents, including curriculum planning and anonymous targets for performance management. I also looked at external validation of the school's performance from the local authority education advisers.

I checked the school's website and the procedures for keeping children safe. I asked members of staff and parents for their views on safeguarding matters.