

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



30 January 2018

Ms Chris Lewis
Headteacher
Children's House Nursery School
92 Bruce Road
Bow
London
E3 3HL

Dear Ms Lewis

Short inspection of Children's House Nursery School

Following my visit to the school on 16 January 2018, 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 October 2013.

The school continues to be outstanding.

The leadership team has maintained the outstanding quality of education in the school since the previous inspection. You, your leadership team and governors have addressed the priority for improvement identified at the previous inspection. You have shared your best practice widely, and this has enabled you to bring new ideas and approaches to the school.

There is a constant striving for the very best at Children's House Nursery. This begins with you, and extends right through the school community, through practitioners, and through parents and carers, to place the children rightly at the very heart of all activities. The school is a dynamic place, a warm, supportive and caring environment, where children are nurtured and encouraged to explore and have fun. All children enjoy their time at school and make outstanding progress. Their parents agree unanimously.

The children have access to a rich and stimulating curriculum, which is seen in every room, across the school and outdoors. Fun and exploration are at the core of practice. Relationships are strong and supportive. Practitioners provide an exceptional range of stimulating resources and activities, which reflect and value the diversity of the children's experiences. Assessment information is accurate. Staff use this well to incorporate activities that challenge and extend children's learning. Parents engage strongly with the school. Because the curriculum and teaching are strong, and parents are fully involved, the children are happy, settled and engaged, and learning is rapid.

The behaviour of the children is exemplary in every respect. Children listen intently and are highly responsive, kind and caring towards each other. New arrivals in school settle very quickly because of the high-quality nurture and support provided. All children are highly motivated, showing curiosity, concentration and imagination. For example, during the inspection the children were enjoying a 'trip' to explore the moon. Later, children invited me to join their research activities in which they were finding out about puffins.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality. Staff manage children's well-being meticulously. Leaders work with outside agencies and liaise with them quickly in order to secure strong support for children and their families. Leaders manage concerns sensitively and effectively. All staff have a secure knowledge and understanding of current safeguarding guidance and procedures. Pre-employment checks on adults working at the school meet statutory requirements. Staff training is up to date and their safeguarding practice is effective. Governors carry out appropriate checks on safeguarding during the school year.

There is a culture of vigilance where children's welfare is actively promoted. Children are listened to and feel safe.

Inspection findings

- The first focus for this inspection was to evaluate the effectiveness of strategies to improve the teaching of literacy and phonics. You wanted to show this area as one of the many strengths of the school.
- The school is in an area of high deprivation. Most children join the school with delayed language acquisition. In many cases, children are at an early stage of learning to speak English, or speak no English at all.
- Through observations, I found that, from some children's low starting points, strong teaching of literacy, including early reading, mark-making and phonics, has enabled the great majority of children to catch up. In several instances, children exceed expectations by the end of their time in the Nursery. All children, regardless of starting points, are making substantial and sustained progress.
- The second focus for the inspection evaluated the accuracy of the school's assessments of children's skills and knowledge. This is because school records showed many instances of children making consistently high rates of progress in relation to their starting points, and I wanted to verify this.
- Together, we observed learning in classrooms and watched children's activities and interactions. I looked at the recorded observations of children's learning. Our visits to lessons provided strong evidence that assessment information is accurate. Staff observe and monitor children's learning very effectively. There is considerable detail in the records of progress that the school keeps. These records are comprehensive and are used carefully to plan and deliver challenging

activities for each individual.

- I also spoke with parents about children's learning and progress. Parents told me that they are closely involved in their children's learning and the school's assessment procedures.
- Finally, the inspection focused on how well leaders evaluate the school's work and plan for ongoing improvements.
- Leaders have an accurate view of the school's overall effectiveness.
- Planning has been very effective, reflecting a relentless pursuit of excellence.
- There is a deep-rooted and successful emphasis on continual improvement, which you lead and model well. The strong desire to move the school forward has led to a multiplicity of ambitious plans, which sometimes overlap unnecessarily. We agreed that some aspects of the school development plan could be simplified and refined.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the successful vision and drive to maintain the school at the highest level is supported by development plans which are concise, refined and highly focused.

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

Yours sincerely

Martin Roberts
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

The inspector carried out the following activities during the inspection:

- held meetings with the headteacher and deputy headteacher
- held meetings with safeguarding leaders
- met a member of staff who recently qualified as a teacher at the school
- observed learning in all the rooms and outdoors
- evaluated progress over time by looking at records of learning
- had a discussion with five governors
- met a local authority representative

- observed children in literacy and reading sessions
- evaluated recent information about children's progress
- considered the views of parents through face-to-face discussions and responses to Ofsted's questionnaire Parent View.