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Mr Rob Nicholson
Headteacher
Eastwood Nursery School
168 Roehampton Lane
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Dear Mr Nicholson

Short inspection of Eastwood Nursery School

Following my visit to the school on 30 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 July 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 took up your post as headteacher shortly after the last inspection. Since then you have developed what was previously a virtual special educational needs provision into an actual provision for children with autistic spectrum disorder, providing specialist teaching in the base and supported integration into the mainstream Nursery. Your forward-thinking and highly reflective leadership has created a culture of continuous improvement. Governors are relentless in their drive and ambition as one governor told me, 'We are proud of the work the school does, but we do not rest on our laurels, we always want to be even better.' This is a sentiment clearly shared by staff.

Leaders and governors have developed strong and very effective links with the on-site children's centre. In order to help ensure that children are ready to access the wonderful opportunities open to them in the Nursery, you regularly teach a target group of two-year-olds in the children's centre. Parents put enormous value on the work of the school. They are very appreciative of the welcoming and inclusive ethos you have developed. They feel staff are always approachable, very caring and confident. Parents typically told me their children love coming to Nursery and, as one parent put it, 'Eastwood Nursery feels like a home away from home.'

At the time of the last inspection, you were asked to develop a system of coaching and mentoring so that the good practice in developing children's creative thinking was consistent. You have done this through developing staff knowledge and skills so that they deliver an effective curriculum. Staff have very high expectations of what children can achieve. As one teacher told me, 'There is no ceiling on expectation.'

This ethos was evident in the Nursery where a group of children, interested in bones, were making clay skeletons, using words like 'pelvis' 'skull', 'spine' and 'ribcage'. Children told me interesting facts about bones, such as how many there are in the human body.

Creative thinking has been developed through ensuring that the curriculum engages and excites children. For example, children who like building towers are engaged in learning about castles, those who enjoy role play sell real vegetables and handle real money in the classroom shop. The child who brought a fossil into the Nursery to show friends inspired the topic about bones, resulting in some very impressive modelling of an elephant's skeleton as well as very precise clay models of the human skeleton. Children are regularly involved in improving the learning environment. They helped plan and build a bug hotel to attract insects into the outside area, and planted a range of flowers to attract them. In addition, they have helped design and build a canopy area to provide shelter in the Nursery garden, using a range of problem-solving and creative-thinking skills. This ambitious approach to developing thinking is evident in lots of areas of the Nursery – for example, the water area has evolved beyond a water tray to an area full of tubes and pipes so that children can investigate the properties of water and gravity.

Safeguarding is effective.

Safeguarding is central to the work of the school. You know the children and their families well. There are robust systems in place to keep children safe. You have ensured that staff are well trained and vigilant about safeguarding. As a result, staff know what to do if they have any concerns, and use the systems that are in place appropriately. Your very thorough recruitment process ensures that all appropriate checks are made when new staff are appointed.

Governors are very effective in ensuring that the school meets its statutory safeguarding duties and that effective systems are regularly audited. They are also highly proactive in ensuring that posts such as those of family workers are funded so that support and advice are provided before situations escalate. Leaders work very effectively with a wide range of other professionals to ensure that no child falls through the net, absences are quickly followed up and there are rigorous systems so that concerns are addressed swiftly.

Inspection findings

- Throughout the inspection, my main focus was to explore and evaluate the capacity leaders and governors have to sustain the outstanding quality of education that had been reported at the time of the previous inspection. I found that you have worked closely with your skilled leadership team and governors to build on the many strengths identified to ensure that all children are well prepared to start primary school by the time they leave the Nursery.
- There is strong leadership at all levels. You and your team are rigorous in the ongoing evaluation of the provision. As a result, you are quick to see what things are working well. Where things need changing, you are quick to respond and

make changes.

- Since the last inspection, you have worked with governors to make some key appointments, such as the teacher in charge of the specialist provision for children on the autistic spectrum. These children thrive in the base because of the high-quality teaching and pastoral support they receive. They make excellent progress from their varied starting points.
- Governors hold leaders to account. They ask searching questions about the quality of the provision and use the school's data and regular visits to check the impact of the school's work. Governance is a strength of the school. Governors have a wide skills base and ensure that their own training is up to date so that they can continue to play a significant role in shaping the future of the school.
- The second focus of this inspection was to evaluate how effectively leaders ensure that all children make good progress. I found that, together with high expectations and a rich curriculum, leaders use data well to ensure that all children make strong and sustained progress. Termly targets are set for each child. Each half term, teachers and leaders review the progress individual children are making against their targets. When appropriate, additional support is put in place. This support is regularly reviewed to ensure that it is having the impact needed for children to make good progress in the different areas of their learning. Leaders correctly identified that the data showed that boys had made better progress than girls. However, this was because boys' initial starting points were lower than those of girls. The school's tracking data very clearly shows the very good progress that both boys and girls are making. During our joint learning walk, we noticed that boys and girls both enjoyed the activities and learning available and were both equally engaged in all areas of the Nursery at various points throughout the day.
- In the specialist provision, key targets are set based on observations. Teachers note not only what children can do but also what they cannot yet do. This information informs their planning and ensures that all adults know exactly what each child is working on and trying to get better at. This very strong practice makes very clear links between observations, assessments and the next steps children need to achieve. As a result, children make exceptional progress.
- The Nursery has a very positive climate for learning. Strong and nurturing relationships exist between adults and children. Every child is taught to respect and value each other and the adults they work with. There is a real feeling of purposeful fun. Children are confident and absorbed in their play both inside and outside the classrooms. Staff consistently promote enthusiasm for learning. There are lots of opportunities to extend learning. For example, as children play shops in the role play area, they identify and name real vegetables, match them to name labels and recognise numbers by reading the price of each vegetable. They develop counting skills and language, while running the shop and having conversations with the adult customer.
- During our learning walk we agreed that although the activities engage children well, opportunities exist to develop children's skills still further by extending some activities. For example, adults did not make the most of opportunities to develop children's independence skills as they created a tall building for their

superhero. Opportunities were missed to extend children's learning further by providing them with more choices about what they wanted to use.

- We also noted that providing more resources for children to paint with would not only allow them to make independent decisions about the final look of their work but would help develop fine motor skills more effectively than using just one thickness of brush.
- Children thoroughly enjoyed the pizza-making activity. Staff promoted children's fine motor skills very effectively. However, we agreed that some children would have benefited from more opportunities to choose for themselves the tools to cut, roll and chop.
- One of the very striking features of the excellent practice across the Nursery is the quality of conversations that take place throughout the day. Adults skilfully allow themselves to become immersed in children's play, and allow children to direct and have control of the play. Adults are highly effective at creating learning opportunities within children's play.
- Throughout the inspection, children displayed excellent attitudes and behaviour. They concentrated well for long periods of time, sustaining real interest in their learning. Carefully planned learning opportunities created a range of situations for children to rehearse and practise their developing skills with each other. As a result, cooperative skills such as turn taking, sharing and supporting each other are very secure.
- During our joint learning walk, we saw some excellent examples of how well language and vocabulary are promoted. For example, there is very effective use of key words on display in some areas of the Nursery. However, we agreed that this is not yet consistent across the whole provision. We also noted that some practitioners were very skilled at extending children's learning by asking thought-provoking and challenging questions. We agreed that while strong overall, some practitioners do not use questioning highly effectively and would benefit from sharing the good practice that exists in the Nursery.
- Exceptional use is made of the local area to promote learning. For example, during the inspection, children in the specialist provision went out to buy satsumas. At snack time, adults skilfully promoted children's counting skills as they shared the satsumas. They developed children's language skills very well as they talked about and described the fruits. In addition, children were able to participate in a small-group social situation, taking turns with each other while developing fine motor skills as they peeled and broke the satsumas into segments.
- These visits are regular features of the Nursery's work. You told me how the staff use the local area as a resource to ensure that parents have opportunities to have quality shared experiences with their children. For example, the Nursery takes small groups of parents to the local theatre with their children and provides shared opportunities to promote children's language and social skills.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- children have more opportunities to select their own tools to develop fine motor skills and make more independent choices
- staff make the most of all opportunities to promote children's vocabulary and use challenging questions consistently to extend children's learning further
- the good practice in the specialist provision, which makes clear links between observations, assessments and next steps for learning, is shared across the setting.

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

Yours sincerely

Lou Anderson
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the visit, meetings were held with the headteacher, school business manager, deputy headteacher, special educational needs coordinator, teacher in the specialist provision, members of staff, a representative of the local authority, parents and members of the governing body. The inspector jointly observed learning with the headteacher, visiting all classrooms including the specialist resource base for children with autistic spectrum disorder. The inspector reviewed a wide range of documentation including evidence of children's work, performance information and tracking data, records and minutes of governors' meetings, safeguarding information, the school's action plan and self-evaluation documents.