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Mrs Jackie White  
Headteacher  
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Dear Mrs White

### **Short inspection of Adderley Nursery School**

Following my visit to the school on 7 February 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 November 2012.

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

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

You and your deputy headteacher provide exceptional leadership of Adderley Nursery School. You, ably supported by every leader and member of staff, strive relentlessly to achieve the very best outcomes for every child. There is a deep commitment and shared vision of all staff to make sure that every child is seen as an individual, and that learning is specifically tailored to meet that child's learning needs. This is something which is achieved on a daily basis. The outstanding provision across the school has not only been maintained since the last inspection, it has been built upon and improved.

All staff have the very highest expectations of what children can achieve. As one member of staff said, 'We don't see children as empty vessels, we see them as future scientists or musicians.' An extremely rich learning environment supports children's learning. Staff provide a range of creative learning opportunities for children to develop their skills across all areas of the early years curriculum. This includes developing children's musical and artistic skills through the use of specialist teachers. As a result, children of all abilities make outstanding progress in all aspects of their learning.

Parents and carers spoke very highly of the school, especially the caring and nurturing nature of the staff. Parents were keen to share their views about the

school and gave many examples of the high quality of education at the school, such as: 'My child is safe, secure and valued,' 'It is a fabulous foundation for my child's education,' and 'I am so glad my child attends Adderley, it has changed her future for the better.' Staff form strong relationships with parents, and work very closely with them to ensure that parents also support their child's learning at home. Parents say that they are well informed about their child's learning and progress. They appreciate the opportunity to contribute to their child's learning log through the online system. The school is very much at the heart of the community.

At the time of the last inspection, you were asked to promote better punctuality and attendance so that children do not miss valuable learning. You explore and use every possible way to encourage high attendance and to make sure that children arrive at school on time. If a child does not attend school and parents do not inform you of the reason, staff call home to check where they are. In addition to this, home visits are undertaken if a child does not attend school regularly. During the induction process, you emphasise the importance of good attendance to parents, and follow this up with regular reminders. You also look for new and innovative ways to improve attendance such as the use of the 'traffic light' system. You take all possible measures to promote good attendance. This has led to some improvements in the overall attendance across the school.

You and your staff were also asked to further develop the outdoor learning environment. Since the last inspection, you have placed a high focus on developing this area to support children's learning in every aspect of the early years curriculum. This work has been extremely successful. The outdoor environment provides children with stimulating learning experiences, which are of a remarkable quality. There are a myriad of opportunities for children to read, write, develop their number skills, their personal, social and emotional skills, their creativity as well as their fine and gross motor skills.

Staff plan each activity carefully, also involving the children with the planning. For example, children wanted to have a petrol station, showed staff where they would like it to be set up, and then helped to develop it. Children grow fruit and vegetables in the allotment, which they then use to cook with. Children are immersed in exciting learning which supports the exceptional progress they make. The outdoor learning environment also helps children to develop their confidence when risk-taking. For example, the wooden climbing frame challenges children to climb, cross rope bridges and use slides. Children learn to manage their own behaviour so they can use this equipment safely and with confidence.

Governors are very proactive and provide excellent support, but also strong challenge, to you and your leaders. They are very forward-thinking and continually seek ways to improve the school for the benefit of the children and the community. Governors say, 'We do not bury our heads in the sand.' They see challenges, especially those related to future financial sustainability, as opportunities to grow and develop.

However, governors do recognise that a strategic and sharply focused business

model needs to be developed to secure the future of the school in the current financial climate.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

Safeguarding is a significant strength of the school. You and your staff take every step to keep children as safe as possible. Detailed checks are made on everyone working within the school. Daily risk assessments are carried out to check that the environment is safe. All staff go to great lengths to spot where children could be at risk of harm, and then take action to mitigate those risks. Staff work with a range of agencies to provide additional support to families where needed.

Children are taught to keep safe in a variety of ways. For example, regular fire drills are carried out so children know how to leave the building quickly if there is a fire. However, staff do not shy away from helping children to use tools, such as hammers and nails, safely in their learning. You and your staff work closely with parents to help them understand the importance of checking how their children are using computers at home, especially when they have access to the internet.

### **Inspection findings**

- Governance at Adderley Nursery School is exceptionally strong. Governors are very knowledgeable about the school's performance. They know how the school has developed since the last inspection, what the quality of the current provision is, and where it needs to develop next. You provide governors with detailed information about the school's performance, which they then check carefully. For example, governors visit the school regularly and talk to staff to ensure that the information provided accurately reflects what is happening in the school.
- Governors continually look for ways to develop their own skills and expertise, including through careful recruitment to the governing body to close any gaps in skills identified. Their effectiveness has been further enhanced by a range of training. The development of an induction pack to support new governors enables them to become effective in their roles quickly. Consequently, governors provide a high level of challenge to leaders, which ensures that the quality of the provision and, therefore, outcomes for children continue to improve further.
- You have high expectations of yourself, and all staff. These expectations are reflected in staff's appraisal targets, which they respond to positively. You provide staff with excellent support to help them develop their skills. For example, staff work together to coach and mentor one another. Staff never shy away from striving for the very best. You give them time to embed the very best practice to ensure that it is securely and consistently applied, but then look for the next steps to improve the provision even further. You make sure that training opportunities are closely matched to the changing needs of the children. For example, in response to some children's special educational needs, all staff were provided with training so that they understand the additional needs and how to support them. Your focus on providing bespoke professional development has resulted in the quality of teaching and learning improving year-on-year.

- As well as your sharp focus on maintaining and further developing the quality of teaching and learning, you also have a clear focus on ensuring the future sustainability of the quality of leadership and management. All leaders within the school receive support and training to develop their expertise. This ever-evolving leadership team supports the continued improvement of the school. Leaders said, 'We must be prepared to adapt to every situation.' You take every step to ensure that the school is ready to respond to any change and any challenge it faces. You and your leaders have a wholehearted commitment to always look forward and to strive for the very best. The school improvement journey is continuous. This means that children at Adderley Nursery School get the very best possible start to their education, one to be cherished and one which sets an example to all.
- Staff's knowledge and understanding of every child's individual learning needs are quite exceptional. They use what they know about what children can do and plan meticulously to take children's learning forward at pace. Children show a high level of sustained concentration in all their learning activities, a level way beyond their years. This is because staff match stimulating learning activities so well to their needs. Staff inspire a true love of learning in every child.
- Staff respond instantaneously to children's learning, providing both support and challenge of the very best quality. Staff are highly skilled at using questions to encourage children to think and find things out for themselves. No minute of learning is lost. For example, children were asked: 'How many dolls were in the dolls' house?' 'How many would be left if a teddy fell out of the bed?' 'What was yesterday if today is Wednesday?' Children were also encouraged to describe how the clay felt. Staff also know exactly when to intervene to support learning when children start to struggle. As a result of this superb teaching, children make outstanding progress from their relatively low starting points and are exceptionally well prepared for the start of the Reception Year.
- Behaviour at Adderley Nursery School is excellent. Children show a high level of respect to one another and all adults. Staff model good behaviour, including saying 'please' and 'thank you' during lunchtimes, and children respond brilliantly. Routines and structures are embedded right from the first moments that children start school. Staff provide very effective support to some children who need additional help to manage their behaviours. Consequently, children have very mature attitudes to learning and no learning is disrupted by poor behaviour.
- Support for children who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities is especially strong. Very careful adjustments are made to learning environments to enable all children to fully participate in the learning activities. As a result, children who have SEN and/or disabilities flourish and make excellent progress. As one parent said, 'All staff are passionate about making a difference in a disabled child's life.'

## **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- a strong business model is developed to ensure that the current outstanding provision is maintained in the challenging financial climate.

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

Yours sincerely

Ann Pritchard  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Information about the inspection**

During this inspection, I met with you and your deputy headteacher, four members of the governing body and your school support partner. You joined me on brief visits to lessons. I talked to children and observed their learning. I observed children's behaviour at lunchtime. I spoke to parents before school. I reviewed a range of documentation, including the school's own evaluation of its performance, the school development plan, documents relating to keeping children safe and the most recent information about their achievement. I considered parents' comments made through the text message service. There were five responses to Parent View, the Ofsted online survey. There were no responses from the children or staff questionnaires.