

5 June 2018

Mrs Diane Hetherington  
Headteacher  
Broomhall Nursery School  
4 Broomhall Road  
Sheffield  
South Yorkshire  
S10 2DN

Dear Mrs Hetherington

### **Short inspection of Broomhall Nursery School**

Following my visit to the school on 22 May 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 nursery was judged to be outstanding in October 2014.

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

The leadership team has maintained the outstanding quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You responded swiftly to the recommendations of the previous inspection and have continued to develop and improve the nursery. You have created a stimulating learning environment both indoors and out, with a focus on problem-solving and reasoning. You are always open to innovative ideas, and constantly research to identify and implement new and more effective ways of working. You have rightly been identified by the local authority as a centre of excellence for children who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities. Staff are extremely well trained in supporting these children and, as a result, they make as rapid progress as their peers. The nursery community is clearly totally inclusive, and these children and their families feel welcomed because you and your staff treat everyone as individuals. As one parent said to me, 'children are encouraged to be themselves'. This was supported by the other parents in the meeting, and in the responses to the online questionnaire.

You are exceptionally well supported by the extremely skilled and knowledgeable governing body. They use the high-level data analysis and your reports to challenge you rigorously. The nursery's own evaluation is accurate, and the areas you identify for development are well reflected in the school development plan. However, the way you describe the impact of any actions could be more sharply focused on outcomes for children, to enhance the monitoring of the plan.

You correctly identified that knowledge and understanding of the world was an area where outcomes were lower historically, using your knowledge of the children in the

past few years. You have risen to the challenge and introduced a quality curriculum around this area of work. The learning environment is awash with scientific experimentation and observation. You rightly recognised that this also reflects the importance of spoken language across the curriculum. You have introduced a wider, more scientific vocabulary and, through the input of a skilled volunteer, ensure that there is adult-led experimentation available twice a week. We watched children dressed in their lab coats experimenting with colour and using pipettes to move and measure the liquids in their test tubes to produce different shades and hues. They experimented changing the colour of flowers through capillary action and then reinforced this learning by moving liquids from one beaker to another, using absorbent materials. Alongside this, you have developed staff confidence and understanding of science in the everyday, meaning that their observations and assessments are now identifying these areas more clearly. Parents are really impressed by the way you have promoted a love of this subject, particularly in girls. Many parents highlighted this work as a strength of the nursery, in their responses to the questionnaire.

The highly skilled, experienced and reflective staff ensure that their practice continuously improves. I saw how they precisely identify their own improvement areas during feedback. With your insightful observations supporting them, the quality of teaching is extremely strong. Parents are impressed by the way you integrate learning into the children's play and make learning fun. They say that their children positively want to be at nursery every day all day. In every observation we undertook together, we clearly saw progress for each child.

Children's behaviour is exemplary. They are polite and well mannered. When asking each other for resources, they consistently use please and thank you in their speech. At all times, they remain engaged in their learning and show that they know the routines to follow. They listen carefully to instructions. They willingly communicate with each other and with adults. They know how to stay safe when out and about, from visiting officers focusing on road safety, to designing simple circuits for traffic lights. They learn how to play safely when they are outdoors and they challenge themselves. For example, when climbing a tree or being taught to use the scramble net, they go further each time.

Children arrive at the nursery with a variety of starting points, but the majority are at stages of development that are below those typical for their age. By the time they leave, the majority are at least at expected levels or higher. The vast majority make good or better progress because staff are accurate in their assessments and provide the right amount of challenge and support to drive progress.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. You ensure that safeguarding is a priority at staff and governing body meetings. You monitor the training in this area of work to make sure that it is continually being updated for all staff. You check out the impact of learning and training on staff practice by giving them a variety of scenarios to explain how they

would act. This ensures that you are secure in knowing that staff are alert and up to date.

There are generally low levels of absence. Where there is an unexpected absence, you swiftly follow this up with phone calls and include home visits where there are concerns about a child. This ensures that these children remain safe.

Your paperwork and records are detailed and up to date. You work well with partners, including the police, and always make sure that any actions that have been agreed on to support vulnerable children are consistently followed up.

## **Inspection findings**

- Children are extremely confident whether speaking to each other or to a member of staff. They listen intently and follow instructions closely. They tell their own stories and understand that words carry meaning. They are taught how to hold a pencil and form letters correctly. You promote this love of literacy through the provision of high-quality fiction and the many opportunities for writing, from stories to scientific instructions.
- Vulnerable children's progress is closely followed. Data and observations demonstrate that these children make substantial progress and meet, or better, their individual targets because you make sure that they receive the support to which they are entitled. You have also enabled staff to train in specialisms such as autistic spectrum disorder and speech and language support to enable them to deliver interventions that make a strong impact on children's progress. Parents of these children say that they are completely integrated into the provision.
- The relatively small number of children who are entitled to the early years pupil premium funding cover a spread of abilities. The budget is wisely spent to ensure that they all make at least good progress. These children are closely tracked to ensure that their progress does not falter, and that any barriers to their learning are being addressed.
- The vast majority of children make rapid progress during their time in the nursery and are exceptionally well prepared for the next stage in their education. The most able children are achieving some of the early learning goals before they leave, well ahead of their chronological age. Children recognise sounds and letters and are beginning to read short sentences. They use their phonics knowledge well to read and write simple words and sentences. The most able are beginning to write their own stories. They are developing their understanding of number and all the different ways to make 10. Language acquisition is a focus of the work you do. Children who are at the initial stages of learning English as an additional language swiftly develop their vocabulary because staff know precisely how to do this in everything they deliver.
- Relationships with parents are extremely strong. Every response to the questionnaire and every parent spoken to could not praise the nursery, you and staff more strongly. The many ways you communicate with them, from the informal chats at the beginning and end of sessions, or the more formal parent consultations, mean that parents feel very secure in the knowledge of their children's progress, and in how they can support this at home. To further

enhance this, you have introduced 'Day books' to give examples of what the children have done every day. You also have freely available photograph books to show all the areas of learning, and how children tackle a variety of challenges. Parents identify the workshops you run as a useful source of information and ideas. The use of information technology, the new website and the translation instantly available into community languages, means that your communication with parents continues to strengthen.

### **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the success criteria described in the nursery development plan are sharper in order to further enhance monitoring and challenge by the governing body.

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

Yours sincerely

Geoffrey Dorrity  
**Ofsted Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

The focus of the inspection was to check whether the outstanding effectiveness identified at the previous inspection had been maintained and to find out how well children were progressing. I held a variety of meetings with you. I observed adult-supported and child-initiated learning jointly with you in the nursery. I considered a range of evidence, including the school improvement plan and leaders' self-evaluation. I also reviewed other documentation.

I met with four members of the governing body and spoke with the local authority senior adviser for early years. I considered the 29 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and met with six parents. I also took account of the three responses to Ofsted's online staff questionnaire.