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Mrs Diane Lister
Executive Headteacher
Slough Centre Nursery School
Buckingham Avenue East
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Dear Mrs Lister

Short inspection of Slough Centre Nursery School

Following my visit to the school on 21 June 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 December 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 are highly experienced in early years education. You and your team are committed to ensuring that the school continues to flourish.

Yours is a very nurturing and caring school. All parents who responded to the Ofsted survey, Parent View, would recommend the school to another parent. One parent expressed the views of many by saying: 'Staff are exceptionally attentive and extremely caring. They have a great understanding of my son's needs.'

All members of the school community feel valued. Staff work tirelessly to ensure that children receive the very best standard of teaching. All those who responded to the Ofsted staff survey say that they are proud to work at this school.

Children enjoy their learning. Each morning they come into school talking excitedly about what they will be learning. One reason why children do so well is that your record-keeping is detailed. All staff monitor and track children's development meticulously. Evidence in learning journals shows that children make excellent progress from their starting points.

The two nursery schools within the federation work well together. The local authority greatly values the work you do. You share your expertise with a range of other schools, including the Slough Nursery School Network.

The last inspection in 2013 identified governance as an area to improve. You

needed to ensure that governors provided greater support and challenge to leadership. This has been addressed. Governance is stronger due to the support of a national leader for governance. Governors have been well trained and understand how children are progressing across all areas of learning.

Your school is continually striving to improve. For example, you track children's personal development particularly well. This is due, in part, to you utilising your research link with Leuven University. You have identified a next step to further improve provision, in order to develop the skills of those who start school at an early stage of learning English.

Safeguarding is effective.

You have worked to successfully create a culture where safeguarding has the highest priority. The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and that records are detailed and of high quality. There are effective arrangements in place to ensure safe recruitment of staff.

Staff have received updated training on different aspects relating to children's welfare. These include extremism, child abuse, and female genital mutilation. Staff are fully aware of the procedures they need to follow if they have any concerns about a child. Designated leads for safeguarding ensure that systems for monitoring the welfare of vulnerable children are thorough.

All parents who responded to the Ofsted survey, Parent View, say that their children feel safe at this school. Children and parents who were spoken to confirm this.

Safeguarding provision for two-years-olds is effective. Supervision meets and exceeds statutory requirements.

Inspection findings

- A focus for this inspection was the impact of leaders in maintaining the school's strong provision. You continue to provide an exceptional standard of education. Children who attend your school have the best possible start to their learning. Your committed staff meet regularly to discuss the progress that children are making. They make sure that all children make rapid strides in their learning.
- The school's use of the early years pupil premium funding was a line of enquiry. We found that currently there are too few children to report on without them being identified. However, over the years it is clear that you use this funding well. You have a very good understanding of the barriers to learning that these children face.
- During the inspection I checked if children continue to make outstanding progress. It is clear that children make excellent progress. Most enter the nursery with skills and abilities that are below those typical for their age. They leave at least in line with, and often above, the usual expectations.
- Due to the excellent quality of teaching children quickly develop their early

communication skills. In storytelling, children can follow and act out stories, such as 'Jack and the Beanstalk'. Skills are carefully developed through exciting activities. For example, children learn to grip a pencil and make marks when engaging in role play. You give a high priority to helping children to develop a love of books. Many know the sounds that letters make and are beginning to blend them together to make words.

- We found that children do well in developing their skills in mathematics. Staff are meticulous in their approach to teaching children about numbers. Children learn the names of basic shapes, such as triangles and squares. Adults ask stretching questions to develop children's reasoning and understanding.
- Those who are two years old enjoy a strong provision. Staff are skilled in understanding their needs. You provide activities that fascinate children. One example of this is when some goats came to school so you could re-enact the story of 'The Three Billy Goats Gruff'.
- Children who attend the specialist provision benefit from excellent teaching. Activities are interesting and capture children's imaginations. Several parents were keen to praise the excellent support that their children receive. A typical comment was: 'We are delighted with the help and support the school has given my child, we have already seen him make huge strides in his learning.'
- The exciting outside environment captures children's imaginations. Role-play areas are very well resourced. Supportive adults encourage children to explore the different activities on offer. These include the planting area, musical section and climbing frames.
- We agreed to check the quality of communication between the school and parents. I found that parents consider that your staff know their children extremely well. They are delighted with the provision and consider that communication is very strong. Parents feel that they are well supported in helping their children's learning at home. One parent said: 'There has never been a day when my child said she didn't feel like nursery today, this is due to the positive experiences caused by the hard work and commitment of staff.'

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- school plans to further develop the skills of those who have emerging English skills are implemented.

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

Yours sincerely

Liz Bowes
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this inspection, meetings were held with you, your senior leadership team and governors. A meeting was held with two representatives from the local authority. Informal discussions were held with children regarding whether they felt safe and happy at the school. I spoke to some parents at the start of the school day and took into consideration 12 responses to the Ofsted online survey, Parent View. We visited all the classes and looked at children's learning journeys. A range of school documentation was checked including: leaders' evaluation of the school's performance and plans for further improvement; assessment and behaviour information; the single central record of pre-employment checks; policies and procedures; and minutes of governors' meetings. The 18 responses to the Ofsted staff survey were also considered.