

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



26 July 2018

Mrs Amanda Brown
Headteacher
Aspiring Foundations Federated Nursery Schools – Warrington Road Nursery School
Naylor Road
Warrington Road Children's Centre
Widnes
WA8 0BS

Dear Mrs Brown

Short inspection of Aspiring Foundations Federated Nursery Schools - Warrington Road Nursery School

Following my visit to the school on 10 July 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 2014.

This school continues to be outstanding.

The leadership team has maintained the outstanding quality of education in the school since the last inspection. This is the fifth consecutive inspection at which the school has been judged outstanding.

The school feels calm and focused on learning. Children participate happily and very positively in a wide range of worthwhile activities. They are deeply involved in their learning. Children have excellent relationships with one another and with staff. Children's comments and behaviour show that they feel very positive about themselves and their schooling. Teaching over time remains of a high standard. Children continue to achieve very well. They gain an outstanding start to their education.

The single recommendation set by inspectors at the previous inspection was to improve the teaching of reading. This has been achieved fully. Leaders and staff have reviewed their work in depth. They have made important amendments to the way that they support and develop children's early reading skills. Governors have reviewed the pace and scale of improvements closely. Children gain much from the staff's extensive and successful work to develop their knowledge and understanding of rhymes, books, stories and letter sounds. Staff ensure that high-quality books for children are commonplace throughout the school. They make certain that reading areas are inviting and used profitably by children.

Leaders, staff and governors share a determination to keep on refining and raising

the quality of what they do. Leaders actively and successfully seek opportunities to assist the work of other schools and early years settings. They make sure that staff learn from one another's successful practice, as well as observing teaching in other schools. Staff also learn from studying up-to-date research about early years education.

Governors have considered diligently how the school's new arrangements for federation with another nursery school will benefit Warrington Road. This arrangement is only seven months old, but has already brought a sense of excitement and renewed ambition to the work of all involved. Staff morale remains high. Teachers and teaching assistants feel fully supported in their work. They say that leaders manage the workload for staff successfully.

Mostly, the curriculum for children at the school is organised and developed expertly. However, the curriculum is not explained fully for parents on the school's website. Children learn to respect differences between people and communities, for example through the diverse range of stories they read. Relationships between children are harmonious. Even so, leaders do not make certain that children learn enough about the culture and religion of different people and communities.

Safeguarding is effective.

Communication between each child's key person and parents is comprehensive. Staff and leaders know individual children's strengths and needs in detail. They know which small changes in behaviour may indicate that children are worried by what they have seen, heard or experienced. Children's behaviour at Nursery shows that they feel at ease with staff. Leaders give parents information about how to keep their children safe at home, for example when using the internet. Parents are happy with the work of the school; as one said: 'The nursery environment is safe, secure, clean and organised.'

Leaders double-check that all safeguarding arrangements are up to date and suited to the needs of the school. The school is well placed to advise parents about accessing early help services. This is because the building is shared with the local children's centre. Information about independent telephone advice lines is visible on walls around the premises. Governors conduct a range of checks to determine that the school meets its responsibilities for safeguarding children and staff. Leaders keep records diligently of staff concerns about children and the school's links with other agencies. Staff have a clear grasp of their duties for the care and protection of children. This is because leaders ensure that staff complete regular training on safeguarding. Leaders regularly discuss with staff a range of national and local updates about child-protection issues. Staff teach children regularly about safety, for example highlighting the importance of police officers and the fire brigade.

Inspection findings

- A main focus for this inspection was to consider how successfully leaders are maintaining the strong teaching and outcomes identified at the previous inspection. Teaching remains very successful and children achieve highly. Staff

use a range of assessments to check children's speaking and communication skills thoroughly. Staff use information precisely to focus their teaching, so that children receive the help that they need. Leaders give staff scope to visit other schools to gain new inspiration and ideas. After studying the work of a professional symphony orchestra in another school, a teacher made excellent use of her own learning by teaching a group of children to practise their singing with confidence and skill. She helped children to match the rhythm of their singing to clear, simple sheets of music. Children learned very successfully how to become singers.

- Leaders give staff expert training to update their knowledge of the early years. Staff gain from formally observing one another's work. Leaders' detailed guidance to staff improves the quality of teaching. For example, a teaching assistant ably supported some children as they painted pictures of flowers. She used her comments and questions effectively to provoke children to think and to make decisions. Children were learning how to pause and how to solve problems. Leaders' records show that these insights are typical of teaching at the school. School information shows that children start Nursery with skills and abilities below those typical for their age. However, by the time they leave one year later, they make excellent progress.
- Given the limited information for parents on the school website about children's studies, I wanted to check how fruitfully leaders and staff are developing the curriculum. Children at the school gain much from the wide range of carefully planned and meaningful tasks which staff provide. Warrington Road is a school where staff are deeply interested in children's fascinations and interests. Staff give children lots of opportunities to create, construct, investigate and discuss their play and group work. Staff understand the physical development needs of young children. They teach children to become adept at climbing, running, cycling and balancing, particularly outdoors. Staff also give careful thought to making sure that children develop skilfully in activities that they may not seek out for themselves. For example, staff establish that both boys and girls learn to write and to develop their skills fully in mathematics. Teachers arrange worthwhile wider experiences for children, such as trips to farms and parks. Staff and children celebrate charity events. They also celebrated the recent royal wedding.
- As identified at the previous inspection, parents praise leaders and staff for the quality of education which they provide. They said that staff prepare their children ably for primary school. One response, typical of many, was: 'My child has been to other nurseries...but there really is no comparison with the staff, facilities and the high-quality way in which the children are taught at Warrington Road... From the day my child started they have loved attending...they have come on leaps and bounds in their confidence, their knowledge and their interest in writing and reading. They always talk about Nursery, other children and the staff so positively... Any issues are resolved immediately. I can't thank them enough.'
- Children at the school learn to respect differences between people, for example they learn about the positive skills of people who have disabilities. Parents of children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities said that staff

include their children fully. They said that staff help their children to make substantial progress in their learning. Staff use stories and non-fiction books appropriately to teach children about diversity. Leaders make sure that books for children also show print in different languages. They ensure that images on the walls around the school celebrate diversity, for example showing children who have disabilities and people from a minority ethnic heritage. However, the curriculum does not give children a well-developed range of activities to learn about the different cultures and religions in modern Britain.

- I looked at how soundly staff and leaders are improving children's reading skills. Staff teach children to identify, talk about and remember sounds around them. They model clearly to children how to listen and to communicate. They teach children lots of different rhymes. Children grow rapidly in their skills and confidence to use the many high-quality books in Nursery that grab their attention and interest. They learn to talk about the features of books, such as the illustrations, with confidence. Leaders' improved links with other local schools assist staff at the nursery to strengthen their teaching of the sounds that letters represent. As a result of the wide-ranging and successful teaching in place, children move to primary school ready to refine their reading skills further.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers extend opportunities in the curriculum for children to learn even more about the different cultures and main religions in modern Britain
- the school website sets out information to explain the school's curriculum for parents.

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

Yours sincerely

Tim Vaughan
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you and the assistant headteacher to consider your self-evaluation, your work since the previous inspection and your improvement plans. You and I looked together at information on the school's website. I spoke with some staff about their work. With you, I visited the classrooms and outdoor area to observe children's learning. I met with five governors, including the chair of the governing body. I spoke with a local authority adviser who works to support the school. I considered the 21 responses from parents and 13 free-text responses to Ofsted's online survey Parent View. I spoke with some parents as they brought their children to school. I

considered 18 responses from staff to an Ofsted survey. I discussed safeguarding with you, an office administrator and a selection of staff. I reviewed the single central record of checks on the suitability of staff, governors and volunteers to work with children. I considered a sample of the school's safeguarding records.