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Ms Anne Kibuuka and Ms Sarah Porter
Headteachers
Kay Rowe Nursery School
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Dear Ms Kibuuka and Ms Porter

Short inspection of Kay Rowe Nursery School

Following my visit to the school on 25 September 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 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, together with a highly skilled and effective staff team, continue to ensure that all children get the very best start to their education at Kay Rowe.

Underpinning the school's continued success is highly effective leadership at all levels. A key strength is the way in which leaders enable all staff to continuously develop their skills. You have invested much time and effort in supporting and mentoring volunteers, teaching assistants and new staff to achieve higher qualifications and some have taken up teaching posts either in your school or in other settings.

You are always looking for ways to improve and have extremely high expectations of the staff. They respond to this because they support your vision and want the very best for all children. Partnerships among staff, and with other professionals who work with the school, are very strong. This work ensures that all children, no matter what their starting points, are very well supported to make excellent progress in all areas of learning.

The school's strong reputation in the community is very well deserved. Parents and carers are extremely positive about the contribution your school plays in their lives. Your work with the most vulnerable families, including those who are new to the country and those who speak English as an additional language, is particularly effective. Parents describe the school as 'amazing' and are particularly

complimentary of the staff, their expertise and the support for children who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities. Many parents remarked how quickly their children settle and are delighted with the resources, outdoor area and the kind and supportive staff.

The school's happy and welcoming ethos stems from the extremely positive relationships among staff, children, and parents and carers. You have worked effectively to create different areas within the school for children to enjoy, explore and investigate. Staff provide opportunities for children to take risks, try new things and be imaginative. During the inspection, some children were only in their second week at school, and others were on their settling-in days. Their confidence and eagerness to play and have fun was testament to your well-established routines and staff's understanding of children's individual needs and interests.

Governors work closely and effectively with leaders. They bring a range of expertise to the school and use this efficiently to hold leaders to account for children's outcomes. You, together with governors, have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and priorities for improvement. For example, the school's assessment procedures have been revised recently and you are looking for ways to make these even more efficient in capturing children's all-round progress.

Since the previous inspection, you have all worked together at deepening the curriculum with even more memorable experiences for children. For example, children benefit from specialist sessions that run throughout the year in subjects such as pottery, French, music and dance. You ensure that all aspects of the curriculum are embedded and are meaningful for the children.

Safeguarding is effective.

You make sure that all staff have an up-to-date understanding of the latest safeguarding legislation. Record-keeping is well organised. There is a strong culture of reporting any concerns. Staff regularly discuss children's well-being and any issues are raised and addressed swiftly. Your work with other professionals, including family support and early help agencies, is strong. You ensure that all the required checks are carried out when new staff are recruited. The curriculum includes a range of opportunities for children to take risks and learn about personal safety. For example, children take regular 'forest treks', trips out and about, use camp fires in the outdoor area and explore equipment, such as woodwork tools, as part of their everyday learning.

Inspection findings

- My first key line of enquiry focused on how well leaders enable all staff to develop their teaching skills. This was an area for development identified at the previous inspection. In our initial discussions, you explained that you feel a strength of the school is the way in which professional development has been used to promote children's language and communication skills. We therefore agreed to focus on this aspect of the school's work.

- You have ensured that all staff are highly skilled in supporting children's language and communication development. Although the school's learning environment is highly stimulating, the key strength of your school is the staff, their skills and their interactions with children. Your staff know exactly when to step in and extend children's learning. They use questioning highly effectively, according to children's abilities, to support children's communication. I saw many examples of staff modelling new words, repeating children's comments and engaging children's speaking and listening. Staff are consistent in their use of resources to support children's communication skills. This ensures that children hear and see the same effective role models in all parts of the school.
- One approach focuses on storytelling and supports children's pre-reading and writing skills. Children use a range of toys and other props to tell stories in groups, skilfully facilitated by an adult. Even the newest children are encouraged to tell stories, discussing a character, setting, problem and solution. Staff are highly effective in using these sessions to promote children's language skills. Your assessment information shows that last year children's progress in this area of learning was exceptionally strong.
- The next key line of enquiry focused on the provision for two-year-old children because at the previous inspection the school did not cater for this age group. This provision is highly effective and meets the needs of these children very well. Partnerships with parents are a key strength. Staff provide much-needed reassurance to parents, and settling-in procedures are very well thought out. Children settle well because staff get to know their needs and interests quickly. A programme of home visits and an excellent key-person system not only enables children to feel safe and settled, but builds parents' trust in the school.
- A key strength is the way in which the two-year-olds happily explore all parts of the school, playing with and alongside the older children. I saw children making excellent use of the highly stimulating outdoor area, using the mud kitchen, exploring water and sharing games with their friends. Staff prepare activities that extend children's skills but also allow children to explore and lead their own learning. As children explore their surroundings, staff engage at the right times, promoting children's personal and social skills very effectively.
- In the provision for two-year-olds and in the other parts of the school, staff focus very effectively on children's social skills. Children are encouraged to invite their friends to play, look at and comment on what others are doing, share and take turns. Strong teamwork among your staff means that staff know children's next steps and use opportunities well to address these. Children's 'profile books' and your assessment information show that children who attend your provision for two-year-olds make excellent progress in their learning.
- Finally, we looked at the provision for children who have SEN and/or disabilities. This is a key group for your school and since the previous inspection the proportion of children with additional and significant needs has increased. Leadership of this aspect of the school's work is very strong. Effective teamwork and shared responsibility for all children's learning and development are key features of the school's inclusion practices. The school has rightly earned its positive reputation among parents and other childcare professionals. You,

together with governors and all staff, ensure that children are fully included and have what they need to make strong and sustained progress.

- The highly effective inclusion team, which comprises your family support worker, special educational needs coordinator and specialist staff, complements the work of other staff very effectively. Over time, this team has developed the expertise to provide excellent support to families and children. I saw examples of how staff at your setting go above and beyond to ensure that children have the early help they need. Work with other professionals, including your own speech and language therapist, is clearly having a positive effect on children's outcomes.
- Given some children's very low starting points, they make excellent progress in their learning and development. You are fully supportive of parents and use workshops and other special events to help them to understand their children's needs. Parents develop trust and confidence in your team because they know that staff are well trained, sensitive and highly effective at meeting children's individual needs.
- I saw plenty of examples of your highly inclusive practices. The sensory room is well resourced but, more importantly, well used by staff who know how to adapt and use resources to meet children's needs. Your staff are highly reflective practitioners who take advice from specialists and use it well. They share what they learn with their colleagues so that children receive consistent care and support. You monitor children's progress carefully. Their profile books and case studies demonstrate their excellent achievements in many areas. Nevertheless, the current assessment procedures are not fully suitable for some children. You agree that sometimes these procedures miss out some aspects of children's all-round progress. You are looking for ways to refine your assessment systems so that these capture and celebrate the full breadth of children's achievements.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- leaders refine assessment procedures so that these capture the all-round progress made by children, particularly those who have SEN and/or disabilities.

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

Yours sincerely

Gary Rawlings
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I held meetings with you, the special educational needs coordinator and the leader of the provision for two-year-old children and spoke with other staff informally throughout the day. I observed learning in all parts of the school and your staff accompanied me on these visits to sessions. I looked at children's profile books, their work on display and photographs of their achievements. I looked at the school's single central record of staff suitability checks and scrutinised documentation related to safeguarding, governance and children's outcomes. I met with three governors, including the vice-chair of the governing body. I reviewed the 26 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey, and evaluated the school's recent staff and parent surveys.