

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



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Mrs Claire White
Headteacher
Hornsea Nursery School
Newbegin
Hornsea
HU18 1PB

Dear Mrs White

Short inspection of Hornsea Nursery School

Following my visit to the school on 4 October 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 good in March 2014.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Based on the evidence gathered during this short inspection, I am of the opinion that the school has demonstrated strong practice and marked improvement in specific areas. This may indicate that the school has improved significantly overall. Therefore, I am recommending that the school's next inspection be a section 5 inspection.

Your school website's opening page states that this school is a place 'where children come first and everything we do must reflect this single goal', and this mantra is committed to wholeheartedly by all staff and governors. The exceptionally high standards set by you and your team are apparent as soon as you enter the school settings. You provide a haven of positive learning experiences, with highly organised opportunities for children to explore, be creative and manage their behaviour well. Children are excited by, and successful in, the joy of learning. They are safe and happy. Parents and carers are delighted with the experiences their children have, and the positive relationships that you build with their families.

From the moment children come into the school, the staff team's warm, friendly welcome at the door and in each of the settling areas ensures that children feel safe, secure, and ready to learn. Highly organised and welcoming starter activities engross the children. They join in quickly and calmly, and their parents are able to leave swiftly, confident that their children are happy and settled. Strong relationships between children, staff and parents are a strength of the school.

You are adamant that no successful school is led by one person, and you have ensured that every member of the staff team is valued and contributes fully to the excellent learning on offer. Your leaders are confident and demonstrate an excellent understanding of how young children learn. You give them the opportunity to be creative and innovative, but also the time to research and underpin their ideas with strong evidence. This means that, as your team and governors say, 'Nothing in the school happens by chance.' Every task, activity and resource is planned meticulously to meet your children's needs.

You have addressed the areas identified for improvement at the last inspection well. Mathematics is expertly promoted in all aspects of provision, with resources and adults' questioning very well adapted to the different needs and abilities of the children. The carefully resourced and planned provision, and the organisation of adult- and child-led opportunities throughout the day, meets the needs of children of all ages and abilities. You and your team have ensured that the provision supports and challenges the very different needs of the youngest two-year-olds as well as those of the most able three- and four-year-olds.

The dedication to immersing children in stories, songs and nursery rhymes can be seen and heard throughout the school day. Books, stories, songs and rhymes are very much part of daily activities. One of the parents told me how their child delighted in teaching their family some of these songs at home. Children eagerly access the fiction and non-fiction books that are available in all areas of the provision.

Throughout my visit, you and your team's vision for giving children the very best start to education possible shone through. Children demonstrated excellent behaviour and went about their learning calmly and confidently. The engaging provision enables them to sustain concentration and take appropriate risks that are well managed. The warmth and friendship apparent in the setting and the frequent smiles and laughter throughout the day make your school a very special place to be. Your leadership in creating this positive environment and atmosphere is exemplary.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders work closely with staff to make sure that everyone knows how to keep children safe. Well-documented records of training and dates for renewal or refresher training, as well as careful checks on changes in legislation, mean that everyone has up-to-date information. This means that everyone knows how to spot a potential concern and how to report it. Records of concerns arising, and actions taken as a result, are comprehensively recorded. Staff say that the introduction of an electronic system has improved the way that information is shared, particularly in light of the shared school sites. These records are fit for purpose.

Children can talk about the special instructions they are given about how to keep themselves safe. Children are encouraged to take risks that they may come across in everyday life outside school. These risks are very well-managed by adults. For example, children are taught about how to use utensils, such as knives, and tools

safely. They are constantly encouraged to become independent learners, pouring their own drinks, chopping fruit snacks and accessing the equipment they need. The children rise to the high expectations school staff have of what they can do.

Inspection findings

- I was keen to find out how well you plan and deliver purposeful activities that help children develop their mathematical problem-solving skills. The school environment, indoors and outdoors, contains a plethora of engaging opportunities for children to take part in adult-led and independent tasks.
- During the inspection, a group of children were discovering the concepts of measure and height. They were exploring ways to find out who was the tallest and the shortest and just how tall individuals were. They confidently and politely asked if they could measure me. One of the children asked me to lay down so that they could measure me. Another then said he thought it would be better if I was standing up. Realising he could not reach to measure accurately, the child thought for a moment before asking another adult if he could use the small step ladder. He did so, after a reminder about how to carry the steps safely. This was an excellent example of how children are encouraged to test their ideas out, think of how to solve problems and use resources safely.
- As the needs of children change year on year, your provision is constantly evolving. Since the previous inspection, you have created an extension of nursery provision that is completely outdoors-based as well as a nursery annex in a local primary school. As with all your decisions, these provisions have been set up to meet the needs of your children and their families. The context of the main school and the annex differ, but the good communication within your team ensures that high-quality learning is a common factor. Stepping into the outdoor school extends the possibilities in purposeful learning even further. Children go about their learning here calmly, demonstrating excellent attitudes to learning and using well-taught strategies and direction to keep themselves safe. We discussed how you are evaluating and embedding assessment strategies as one of your improvement priorities this year. You know that it will be important to check the effectiveness of these assessment procedures in each setting, to ensure that children continue to make great gains in their learning across the curriculum.
- Governors are extremely proud of their roles and are fully immersed in the life of the school. They use a wide range of information to check the school's effectiveness. This includes detailed and precise information from you, discussions with other leaders, meetings and records of visits from the local authority improvement partner and their own regular visits to the school. They have a good understanding of the impact that new strategies and resources are having on children's learning. Their aspirational 'the sky's the limit' approach has proven to bear fruit, for example in the securing of funding for a community room and the development of the outdoor nursery.
- You and your team know that good partnerships with parents make a positive difference to the children's learning and experiences. You constantly look for ways that you can engage parents in their children's learning and social activities.

One of the parents I met spoke about the positive difference your care, time and advice has made to her family's home life. During my visit, a group of parents were attending the weekly 'make, bake, take' afternoon, sampling a new recipe and preparing their own family's evening meal. One hundred per cent of parents who completed Ofsted's questionnaire, Parent View, said that they would recommend this school to another family. They are unanimous in their praise for how the school team keeps their children safe, happy and 'learning and experiencing lots'.

- You and your staff make sure that these partnerships spread far beyond your immediate school family. Leaders talk positively about the partnerships with the local authority and the teaching alliance, and how the opportunities you have to lead training and provide support for other practitioners bring benefits to you in developing your own practice further. Staff make sure that children learn about the local community, with regular visits to the beach, the mere and local businesses to extend their learning further. Staff say one of the recent highlights has been your children's visits to, and work with, the residents of the local care home.
- Strong, professional relationships exist between the school and the two local primary schools. Staff from the settings work together undertaking joint observations of children learning and agreeing on assessment judgements. This means that children's journeys of learning progress smoothly between settings.
- Although children leave your setting with writing skills that are typical for their age, from lower than typical starting points, this aspect of their learning is not as strong as other areas of the curriculum. Your leader of English demonstrates how the introduction of a scheme to boost literacy, confidence and communication has been successful, so much so that it has also been adopted since by the receiving primary school. We discussed how you are making sure that the introduction children have to phonics continues to be made high profile throughout the provision, so that the children build on their enjoyment and skills nurtured through stories, songs and rhymes and become confident early readers and writers.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the school's assessment systems are embedded across all provision and settings, indoors and outdoors, to check that all children are making rapid progress from their starting points in each area of the curriculum.

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

Yours sincerely

Kate Rowley
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I looked at specific aspects of the school's work, including leadership, the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school, and safeguarding arrangements. I visited all areas of provision: the school, the outdoor nursery and the annex.

We started the day with a tour of your setting, with you and your team explaining your rationale for each area and how this is supporting children's strong progress. You and I worked closely together throughout the inspection, observing teaching and learning, speaking to children and discussing the school's strengths and priorities for improvement. You and I discussed improvements you have directed since the last inspection. I reviewed school documentation, including that relating to safeguarding. I met with the office manager; leaders; staff; representatives from the governing body, including the chair; and the local authority school improvement partner. I considered the views of parents, speaking to them before school and during the 'make, bake and take' session, and noting the 21 responses to Ofsted's questionnaire, Parent View.