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Mr Philip Gregory
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Dear Mr Gregory

Short inspection of Baylis Court Nursery School

Following my visit to the school on 1 November 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 January 2015.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You have nurtured the school's development skilfully, ensuring that the provision continues to evolve well, acting in response to both local need and national initiatives. Since the previous inspection, you have resolutely sought and secured additional funding to replace the temporary building with a purpose-built modern facility. Also, the school now admits two-year-olds, thus offering even greater flexibility for families. Consequently, children, including the very youngest, benefit greatly from the spacious facilities now on offer, including the carefully designed outdoor area, which is first class. Both of these forward steps make certain that the school continues to meet the needs of the local community very well.

You are rightly held in high regard by parents and carers, staff and children alike. The Baylis Court staff team recognises you as, 'very hardworking' and someone 'who takes everyone's views into account'. Parents speak positively about their experience of the school, some having attended as children themselves. With having served as the school's headteacher since 2006, and as deputy headteacher prior to that, the school community is in experienced hands.

Routines are well established. Without fail, children and parents are greeted warmly by you on arrival. There is minimal fuss or upset as children join their classes eagerly. Many understand the daily routine, competently choosing their name cards for self-registration, hanging up their coats and selecting an activity as the session gets underway. Children are keen to make self-directed choices, and this

contributes well to an orderly and calm start. Parents appreciate the support they receive from staff and value the regular, daily communication opportunities. One parent commented:

'Staff have been exceptional in helping settle my children into nursery, keeping me fully updated with their [my children's] development and supporting me with any concerns I have. We have regular catch-ups and staff are always willing to provide additional support and guidance wherever possible.'

Most children start school with skills and understanding below those typical for their age. Approximately 85% of children speak English as an additional language and many start school with lower communication, language and literacy skills than are typical for their age. Children who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities and those at the early stages of learning English make progress that is in step with their peers. However, children's progress in developing early writing and mathematical skills is a little slower than in other aspects of their learning.

You have made notable strides in addressing the areas for improvement identified at your previous inspection. First, at the time of the last inspection, leaders were asked to develop the skills and expertise of the governing body. Governors have worked diligently by attending training, including modules that relate to safeguarding procedures, and deepening their immersion in school improvement planning. The chair of the governing body now meets regularly with you to discuss school priorities. Governors are developing a greater awareness of their roles and responsibilities and are highly committed to you and the school. Nevertheless, some aspects, including their understanding of performance information are still at an up-and-coming stage. Second, the school was asked to develop its provision for the most able children. You have constructed and shared a well-considered policy. Staff are now much more alert to connecting with children's potential and promoting learning at greater depth. The most able children make good progress and achieve well in all areas of learning.

Safeguarding is effective.

You are dedicated to serving the local community and families well. Having served at the school for many years you are particularly knowledgeable about the challenges that some families may face from time to time. Parents appreciate the depth of support they receive, with one noting that, 'staff care equally about us [the parents] as they do my children'.

The school's full suite of safeguarding policies is adapted impressively to fit the school's needs and meet the latest requirements. In this regard your expertise comes to the fore. For example, you have carefully borne in mind the new requirement to protect children from sexual harassment, taking care to consider this aspect at an age-appropriate level. Putting the statutory guidance into practice, you have made sure that staff have the tools and training to be vigilant in this regard.

Staff are regularly updated on safeguarding matters through ongoing training and

regular briefing sessions. The daily staff get-together, led by you, offers an additional opportunity to keep children's safety at the forefront of everyone's minds. For example, during the inspection, staff discussed and shared pertinent matters, including collection arrangements for individual children and safe use of outdoor equipment (on what was a wet and windy autumnal day). This heightened level of vigilance ensures that staff benefit from your perceptiveness and are therefore well prepared to play their part in keeping children safe in the day ahead.

Safeguarding procedures are robust. Clear-cut lines of communication and well-maintained records underpin the school's systems. Your expertise shines through and you have a comprehensive understanding of which agencies are available to you and how to trigger appropriate support when necessary. Although children are below statutory school age, this does not depress your efforts to pursue the expertise of outside agencies when you think it necessary.

Inspection findings

- Your self-evaluation of the school's strengths and areas to develop is comprehensive. You use your thorough insight reflectively to formulate a detailed and well-considered action plan. Working in partnership, including with other borough-maintained nurseries, you ensure that the school continues to move forward. Local authority officers further encourage the school's development, providing helpful advice and expertise.
- A strong team ethic is highly evident. One member of staff noted: 'All staff are treated with respect and are encouraged to work as part of a team.' You harness this to good effect, ensuring that staff focus on developing the skills required for effective teaching and learning. Children enjoy positive interactions with one another and their key persons. In most instances, children retain concentration well and quickly become absorbed by the task in hand.
- You rightly view Baylis Court as a provision that promotes inclusion and integration, describing the school as simply a 'family of children'. Children who attend the resource provision for pupils with autism spectrum disorder make excellent progress and are fully involved in the life of the school. They benefit tremendously from the skill and expertise of staff. Staff understand children's needs brilliantly and are focused on meeting these well.
- Many children join the school speaking English as an additional language. A range of 13 different languages are spoken throughout the school. Staff, including some who are bilingual, prioritise developing children's communication skills, modelling language very effectively, including through song and rhyme. Children, including the most able and those who have SEN and/or disabilities, achieve well. Some make rapid progress from their starting points, particularly in the aspects of personal, social and emotional development, expressive arts and design, and physical development.
- Adults guide pupils capably and are competent at resettling children should the need arise. As a result, many children develop a good awareness of others and their feelings, including within the two-year-olds' class. A cheery atmosphere is highly evident, and minor squabbles or moments of upset are uncommon.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the skills and expertise of governors continue to advance so that leaders are held to account even more strongly
- the progress of children in writing and mathematics accelerates so that more catch up from below typical starting points.

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

Elizabeth Farr
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you, the chair of the governing body and a representative of the local authority. Together with you, I observed the morning and afternoon sessions and visited the resource base. I also observed a small-group football session. I took account of five responses from parents to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including four free-text comments, and spoke to parents as they arrived at the morning session. I considered 12 responses to the online survey for staff. I analysed a range of the school's documentation, including information about children's achievement, the school improvement plan, and safeguarding checks, policies and procedures. We discussed your own evaluation of the school's effectiveness.