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Mrs Michelle Aldworth
Acting Headteacher
West Heath Nursery School
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Dear Mrs Aldworth

Short inspection of West Heath Nursery School

Following my visit to the school on 7 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 October 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the previous inspection.

As acting headteacher, with the support of the acting deputy headteacher, you are working hard to ensure that the momentum of school improvement is continuing in the absence of the headteacher. You both have high expectations of the children and are passionate about ensuring that they all enjoy their learning experience. However, as leaders, you are aware that your evaluations of teaching and learning are not sharp enough and that the school development plan needs revising so that it is more effective in helping the nursery improve at a greater rate.

Over the past three years there have been significant changes to staffing. However, leaders have managed these changes well and ensured that staff have received appropriate training and support. As a result, the quality of teaching and learning remains good.

Since the previous inspection, senior leaders and governors took the decision to increase the number of children at the school by lowering the age range of the nursery to include two-year-olds. Consequently, there are now an additional 24 children at the school. As leaders you have been uncompromising in your drive to make sure that these two-year-olds have an exciting start to their life in school. Staff in the nursery are nurturing, and gently encourage and persuade these children to do things for themselves, skilfully building their independence and self-confidence. As

a result, these children enjoy their learning, settle in well and make good progress.

You are determined to ensure that all the children in the nursery have an equal opportunity to be successful. You have created a positive culture in which children learn. Relationships with staff are a key strength in the setting. The staff know the children well and cater for their needs on an individual basis. As a result, children behave exceptionally well and are motivated, curious and keen to become good learners.

You are considering the checks you make on the quality of teaching. As leaders you regularly monitor the quality of teaching. However, you are aware that the evaluations you make do not yet focus enough on supporting teachers to improve the quality of their teaching and the children's learning.

During my visit I observed children, on more than one occasion, maintaining their concentration for long periods of time. This is due to the interesting learning activities on offer, both indoors and outdoors, and in the way adults sensitively intervene and support the children. This was seen in one activity where the children were mixing bicarbonate of soda with vinegar to make a volcano. The children enjoyed having the chance to explore and observe what happened when they mixed these two compounds together. The adult supported the children effectively with their language and communication. This enabled the children to develop their language and talk about the bubbles and colours they could see.

You and your staff work hard to engage with parents. They are kept well informed about their children's progress through the home-school assessment systems. Parents are encouraged to capture and upload their children's achievements at home. This reflects the trusting relationship that exists between parents and staff. All of the parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, were positive about the school. One parent wrote, 'My child is always excited when it's nursery day. What more could I ask for!' This was a view shared by a number of parents. Another wrote, 'My child thoroughly enjoys his time in the nursery. After the summer holidays this year he couldn't wait to get back!'

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Training ensures that all staff and governors receive regular updates about a wide range of safeguarding matters. Staff know what to do if they are worried about a child or concerned about the behaviour of an adult. The governor assigned to oversee safeguarding makes regular visits to examine the school's work in this area. Safer recruitment practices are in place and ensure that all appropriate checks are made. Staff work very well with a range of providers and agencies to promote the welfare of the children. All staff ensure that all children are safe and are shown how to keep themselves safe at school.

Inspection findings

- Since the previous inspection, you have refined your approach to checking on the quality of teaching and learning. You provide staff with advice on how to improve the quality of their teaching and give them opportunities to take part in training. You make regular checks on the quality of teaching. However, these checks could focus more sharply on the impact of teaching on children's learning so that your feedback to staff could be even more productive.
- You have established effective systems to assess and track the children's progress. These systems ensure that performance management processes are used effectively to support the improvement of teaching.
- Governors regularly check on the quality of the school's work. They use knowledge gained from regular visits and meetings with staff to check information about children's welfare and progress. This ensures that they are knowledgeable and well informed about how well the school is doing so that they are in a position to support or challenge school leaders as appropriate.
- As senior leaders, you have an accurate knowledge of the school's strengths and the areas needing further improvement. You have rightly recognised the need to revise the school's development plan, which sets out the school's aims and objectives. However, the targets are not sharply focused enough and are not measurable. This makes it more difficult for governors and senior leaders to monitor, with rigour, the progress the school is making towards achieving its goals.
- As leaders you ensure that children with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive effective support. Each individual's needs are carefully tracked to ensure that they have access to the resources they need and receive well-targeted support. Regular discussions between leaders, staff and external agencies ensure that these children are well cared for and make good progress.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- leaders' plans for improvement are sharp and measurable to allow leaders to monitor with more rigour the progress that the school is making
- leaders check the impact of the actions they are taking to support the improvement of teaching across the school.

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

Yours sincerely

Kerry Rochester
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you, the acting deputy headteacher and four members of the governing body. I conducted learning walks during the morning and afternoon sessions with you. I looked at learning journals and records of children's progress and attainment. I scrutinised several documents, including your self-evaluation, the school development plan and safeguarding records. Parents' views were considered through the 23 responses to Parent View, including the 15 free-text comments. I also considered the 12 responses from members of staff.