

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234  
[www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)



5 December 2018

Sharon Kindred  
Headteacher  
Stockingford Nursery  
Stockingford Early Years Centre and Library  
St Paul's Road  
Stockingford  
Nuneaton  
Warwickshire  
CV10 8HW

Dear Mrs Kindred

### **Short inspection of Stockingford Nursery**

Following my visit to the school on 20 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 December 2013.

### **This school continues to be good.**

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

Since becoming headteacher, you have been determined to develop a highly effective nursery school as part of the early years provision in the local community. Staff and governors share your drive and ambition. Together, you have substantially improved the provision and developed a strong team. Staff are committed to ensuring the best possible learning experience for each individual child. Both you and the lead teacher support the staff very effectively in improving the quality of education at Stockingford Nursery. Staff are highly skilled in the various roles that they have. They deliver training internally and externally in local schools and share their expertise, while also gaining from reflecting on their own practice.

All staff have an excellent understanding of the principles of early years education. The stimulating learning environment and highly engaging curriculum ensure that every child thrives. Staff have high expectations, and teaching meets the needs of individual children, building on prior knowledge and understanding. You operate a highly effective key person system, and this ensures that staff have an excellent

understanding of children's capabilities and family circumstances. Practitioners provide an exceptional range of stimulating resources and activities, which reflect and value the diversity of the children's experiences. Assessment is accurate and, from the moment children join the school, leaders and staff collaborate closely to ensure that children are challenged. Because the curriculum and teaching are very strong, the children are happy, settled and engaged. Learning is rapid for all groups of children.

You recognised that the learning environment needed improvement to ensure that children sustain a high level of interest and engagement. As a result, activities are based on the children's interests, while providing challenges to develop the next steps in learning. At the same time, children have opportunities to think for themselves and solve problems. For example, a child transferring water using a small spoon soon decided for herself that using a larger spoon made things much quicker. Children in the 'mud kitchen' were having fun squashing and sieving tomatoes. They enjoyed discovering that ripe tomatoes were easier to squash than green tomatoes.

You have developed clear strategic plans for what is needed to shape the future of the school and bring about improvements. The school has recently offered provision for children from the age of two. You recognise that this has brought greater opportunities for the children, so they are better prepared for their primary schools when they leave the nursery. You are aware that recent improvements, such as the change in approach to planning, now need time to become embedded. This is particularly the case for the two-year-olds. Your accurate self-evaluation generates the right policies and actions. The school development plan accurately reflects the next stages of improvement and includes high aspirations for the children. It identifies the required staff training and resources. However, it does not contain the precise dates for when the targets are expected to be achieved.

Governors are very well informed about all aspects of the school's performance and fully understand the school's strengths and areas for development. They use the assessment information that you give them to check that children are making good progress. When they identify an area that needs further development, they challenge you but also provide you with support to ensure that the school improvement journey continues. This mix of support and challenge is highly effective and helps to take the school from strength to strength.

You have dealt very effectively with the areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection. You have undertaken research and established additional staff training that is focused on how children learn to talk and develop their thought processes. Staff take every opportunity to interact with pupils to develop their language. They pose questions and problems for the children to think through and solve. The environment is rich and promotes opportunities to develop children's language. Adults are extremely vigilant in ensuring that the learning environment is well kept and tidy. The health, safety and welfare of the children are paramount.

Parents and carers overwhelmingly endorsed the school's strengths in their comments. Typical comments include, 'Brilliant school, my child loves it, she's come

on so well,' and, 'Since my child has joined this nursery, he knows colours, numbers and many actions to nursery rhymes.'

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

Leaders have ensured that everyone at the school has a rigorous approach towards safeguarding. Children's safety and well-being are at the heart of everything staff do. Staff and governors receive appropriate training for safeguarding and know their responsibilities. Leaders are relentless in following up any concerns and involve different agencies when necessary. Records are detailed and are held securely.

Both inside and outside, adults provide children with clear and consistent expectations on how to use resources and play sensibly. With the aid of 'Super Ted', children are taught how to keep everywhere tidy and avoid obstacles. For example, children worked together using a dustpan and brush to clean the floor and put items away.

The culture of safeguarding is closely monitored by the governing body. Procedures to recruit and check job applicants' suitability are thorough. Suitable checks are conducted on visitors before they are given access to the school.

Parents state how safe they feel their children are in the building, and how close the supervision is at the start and end of a session. They are confident that their children are taught to keep themselves safe while taking part in appropriately risk-assessed activities.

### **Inspection findings**

- I saw clear evidence that staff support children's language and communication skills very effectively. To help children speak, staff demonstrate patience, genuinely listen and use just the right amount of new and familiar language. Staff seize any opportunity they can to carefully extend children's knowledge of vocabulary. In one observation, children were using a variety of ingredients to mix potions. The teacher talked about what she was mixing in her potion. A child then said, 'I'm mixing in sage and cornflour.' In another observation, a child was very absorbed rolling balls along tubing using language about faster and slower as well as counting. Staff encourage and extend children's learning through their use of good questioning. For example, questions such as 'I wonder what would happen if...?' and 'What do you think we need to do next?' are regularly asked. Sign language is also used to aid communication and to help children convey their feelings and needs.
- Children's progress is tracked in detail and scrutinised carefully. Many children enter Nursery with knowledge and skills below those expected for their age. Some children speak little or no English and a few have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Almost all children make strong progress from their starting points and leave the school well prepared for their next stage in education. Children's skills, and their confidence to communicate effectively, flourish in this environment. This is also the case for children who speak English as an additional

language. All staff are highly skilled in identifying indications of how well children are learning in any given task. Every few weeks, you analyse records of children's progress to ensure suitable development across the breadth of learning areas. You identify any child who falls behind and quickly work with staff to provide additional support wherever it is needed.

- Additional funding is used carefully to commission additional professional support, such as speech and language specialists, health visitors, the physical disabilities team, mental health practitioners and physiotherapists. You have developed the intervention room as a place to support children's social and emotional needs. As a result of your effective support, children learn how to manage their emotions and to cooperate with one another.
- During the inspection, I looked at how the learning environment is organised to promote children's language. The high-quality provision promotes both the spoken and the written word. Written words are supported by pictures and cues to aid the children's understanding. Adults carry lanyards holding words with visual clues to aid communication with children. Visual prompts are displayed around the rooms and on activities for the children to refer to. During the inspection, children looked through story books with the teacher and pointed to print. They discussed emotions depicted in pictures and shared their own feelings. The learning environment is closely monitored and changed to meet the children's learning needs. Items are labelled to help the children locate resources, while developing their independence to select equipment for themselves.
- Staff are very focused on meeting the needs of all children. Every activity provides opportunities for children to develop as independent young thinkers and respond confidently to set challenges. The curriculum starts with the children's interests, and builds in events, celebrations and festivals. Children have opportunities to perform at the local church and sing for their parents. Under strict safeguarding arrangements, and with their teachers, they visit the library, which is located in the same building as the school. Parents join them to take part in the reading session. Parents come into school regularly and assist with activities such as cooking on the camp fire in 'Forest School'.

### **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- recent initiatives, particularly those relating to planning and provision for two-year-olds, are further developed so that best practice is embedded
- targets set in the development plan contain precise dates for completion so that the impact of the nursery's work can be monitored even more closely.

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

Yours sincerely

Lynda Townsend  
**Ofsted Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

I met with you and the lead teacher, the children's centre manager and three governors, including the chair of governors. I spoke with a representative of the local authority. Together, you and I observed learning across the nursery, talking to children and staff as we did so. We looked at children's 'learning journeys' and cross-referenced this information with progress data. I took account of the 11 responses from parents to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and the nine free-text comments. I spoke to 10 parents and considered the responses from the 16 members of staff who responded to Ofsted's online survey. I analysed information about children's achievement, and reviewed a range of the school's documentations, including the school improvement and development plan and self-evaluation. I checked the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements, including those relating to recruitment and background checks on all adults working in school.