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13 March 2019

Mrs Sarah Brown  
Headteacher  
Flagg Nursery School  
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Flagg  
Near Buxton  
Derbyshire  
SK17 9QT

Dear Mrs Brown

### **Short inspection of Flagg Nursery School**

Following my visit to the school on 5 March 2019, 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 June 2015.

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

The leadership team has maintained the outstanding quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You have successfully shared with staff your vision that all children who attend Flagg Nursery School should achieve as well as they can. You and your staff show determination to do this in all aspects of children's development and learning so that they are well placed to start primary school. You and your staff have created a warm, nurturing environment that welcomes children and their families. Relationships between children and adults, and between school and home, are strong. Staff told me how proud they are to work at the school.

Governors know the school well. They are fully aware of their strategic role and keep a clear oversight of the school's provision. They make frequent visits to school, including attending workshops designed for parents, and talking to staff about the work they do. They are mindful that this is a small school where the many leadership duties fall onto the shoulders of a very few people. Governors have successfully introduced systems to mitigate against this by ensuring that leaders and staff are fully supported and systems help staff to make efficient use of their time.

At the time of the previous inspection, leaders were asked to refine the tracking system to ensure that you have an exact overview of the strengths and development areas for different groups of children. You have been supported by governors in introducing a system that specifically meets your requirements. You and your leaders check in detail the progress that individuals and groups of children make. You make effective use of the system, discussing the information it provides when you carefully plan next steps in

learning and provision for children.

You and your team are very reflective in your approach to school improvement. You welcome feedback from as many sources as possible to help you improve the provision at the school. For example, your surveys of parents have led to the introduction of hot meals at lunchtime and the purchase of new story sacks for children to take home. Children who have left the school and started at primary school are invited back, with their families, for an annual tea party. You take this opportunity to survey parents about their children's experience of transition into primary school.

Staff have established clear routines so that children know what is expected of them. During the inspection, I noted that children behave very well. They speak to adults and their friends politely. They take turns sensibly and show genuine concern for each other. One child helped her friend to make a kite so they could fly their kites together. Another made sure an adult knew that his friend's shoe laces were undone, so he could be safe when he was playing outdoors.

Without exception, parents are full of praise for the school. Several parents waited after they had taken their children into school in the morning to make sure they could share their views with me. Typically, they told me that their children settle very well into school life and that they make good progress. Parents whose children have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) were particularly keen to talk about the support their children receive. They said that parent's views and aspirations for their children are taken into account when staff plan children's next steps in learning. Vocabulary that parents commonly used when talking about the school included: 'excellent'; 'fantastic'; 'welcoming' and 'amazing'. One parent summed up the views of many by saying, 'Flagg Nursery School is a brilliant school, with a fantastic team of teachers, which provides our children with a perfect early years education in a fun, safe environment.' Every parent would recommend the school to another.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

Leaders make certain that the appropriate checks take place before adults start working, or volunteering, at the school. Staff receive up-to-date training and are aware of the signs of potential abuse to watch out for. They know how to raise concerns about a child's welfare, if they have any. Staff discuss potential safeguarding issues and children's welfare frequently, ensuring they remain vigilant. The arrangements for safeguarding are fit for purpose.

Leaders make effective use of external services where they may be helpful to children and their families. You offer workshops to parents to provide information that will help them with their children's welfare and safety at home. These include information from health visitors about potty training and from school staff about internet safety for young children.

Adults teach children how to stay safe. Children are taught to use simple tools, such as scissors, correctly. They are encouraged to be independent when they use large outdoor equipment.

## Inspection findings

- The leadership of the school is strong at all levels. You, your teacher with responsibility for children with SEND (the SENCo) and your governors work together very effectively to identify the school's strengths and where the provision can be improved further. You and your team use information about children's progress, alongside your own observations of day-to-day provision, to evaluate the strengths and relative weaknesses of the school. You discuss your findings, along with governors' observations from their visits, to plan for further improvements with precision. You noticed, for example, that children were not achieving as well in technology as you would like them to. You and your team purchased new equipment, provided training for staff and placed a renewed focus on this area of learning. This proved to be very successful as almost every child exceeded the progress you expected of them in this area of learning last year.
- The high-quality teaching identified at the previous inspection has been maintained. Adults make effective use of their assessments of what children know and can do to plan their next steps in learning. They share information at staff meetings so that they are all aware of what needs to be done to ensure that individual children's welfare requirements are met and what to do to further their learning.
- You and your staff team provide children with a wide range of activities to capture their interests and broaden their experiences. Visits from adults help children learn about different jobs such as doctor, binman, florist and dentist. Children are encouraged to think about what they would like to be when they grow up, drawing pictures and talking to an adult about their ambitions. The most able children accompanied their picture with some simple writing.
- Supported by adults, children grow vegetables in the school's garden. They make their own birthday cakes at school to share with their friends. The inspection took place on Shrove Tuesday. Children worked with an adult to mix the necessary ingredients to make pancakes and choose their favourite topping. Adults used this opportunity to promote children's vocabulary, using words such as 'batter', 'ingredients' and 'toppings'. The adult used the children's choices to make a simple chart of favourite toppings which was used later in the day for discussion. Children were clearly enjoying this fun time, eating pancakes with their friends, while developing their social skills and proudly using their language skills to explain to me what they had been doing.
- Adults promote a love of reading in children. Attractive book areas entice children to look at a variety of books. Adults teach children key vocabulary such as 'author' and 'illustrator'. As an adult read a story to children during the inspection, she made deliberate mistakes, by holding the book back to front and upside down so that children could have fun telling her which way round it should be to start reading. The children were enthralled by the book being read to them. They laughed at the funny story and commented on the characters.
- Early reading is taught well. Adults enunciate letter sounds correctly and encourage children to do the same. Children use the sounds they have learned to think of words or identify items starting with that sound correctly. Children make very strong attempts at writing the sounds they learn, with almost all doing so successfully. Children are effectively supported by adults in their early writing. During the inspection, the adult linked a writing activity to the sounds they had practised earlier in the day and

modelled the correct letter formation well for children.

- Adults typically interact effectively with children. They ask questions to prompt children's thinking and problem-solving skills. For example, as children were making kites, the adult asked how much ribbon they might need and what they might best use to stick their decorations to their kite. On other occasions adults encouraged children to have a go at writing or to count the felt 'pancakes' that were available for children to role play with. Children were able to count successfully, pointing to each pancake in turn.
- Very occasionally, adults do not make the best use of their time when they are working alongside children and their interactions are limited to commenting briefly on what children are doing. When this happens, they do not effectively challenge children's thinking or further their learning as well as they could.
- Children with SEND are very well supported. The SENCo works closely with external agencies, such as educational psychologists, speech and language therapists, physiotherapists and the autism outreach service, where this may be helpful. Staff receive important training in supporting children with SEND so that they have a consistent approach in the strategies they use. The SENCo meets regularly with colleagues and parents to discuss the progress children are making and to plan next steps together. Adults provide appropriate support for children with SEND. These children make good progress from their different starting points in a wide range of areas of learning.
- You and the SENCo make regular checks on the quality of teaching, including in the interventions that are provided to support children. You provide useful feedback to adults so that they know how to improve their practice. You check that these improvements have been made.
- Your own assessment information and children's work demonstrate that children make substantial progress from their different starting points. They are very well prepared to start primary school.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- all interactions between adults and children are as effective in promoting learning as the best.

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

Yours sincerely

Di Mullan  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Information about the inspection**

During this inspection, I held meetings with you, the SENCo and four other members of staff. I took account of the 10 responses to the staff online survey.

I met with four governors, including the chair, and held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority. Together, you and I toured the classrooms and the outdoor provision on several occasions during the day to see the learning that was taking place. I spoke with many children during the school day about their learning. I paid short visits to the school's breakfast club and the 'stay and play' session, known as 'Tiddlypeeps'.

I examined a range of documents provided by the school, including those relating to the safeguarding of children, the school's self-evaluation and the school's current improvement plan. I also scrutinised minutes of governors' meetings and reports from visits made by the local authority's adviser. Together, we scrutinised your school's assessment system and samples of work that had been completed by children.

I took account of the views of parents through the 29 responses to the online survey, Parent View. I also spoke with parents as they brought their children to school in the morning.