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Margaret Turley
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Dear Mrs Turley

Short inspection of Ogley Hay Nursery School

Following my visit to the school on 7 November 2017, 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 November 2012.

This school continues to be outstanding.

The leadership team has maintained the outstanding quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You are an enthusiastic leader who inspires staff to help all children excel academically and emotionally. The focus that you, the deputy manager, staff and governors place on improving the life chances of children and their families is instrumental to the nursery's continued success.

'My son was so shy, and he is now full of confidence', and, 'This is a fabulous place that has improved my child's vocabulary within weeks', were just typical comments made by parents when asked about Ogley Hay Nursery. Most children join the school with skills and knowledge that are below those typical for their age. From this starting point, children make excellent progress so that they are fully prepared for starting Reception. You, the staff and governors are fully aware of where further improvements are required in children's achievement. You recognise, for example, that while children's language development is exceptional, writing development for some children could be even stronger.

There have been some changes in the school's provision since the previous inspection in 2012. In addition to the full-time and part-time provision for three- and four-year-olds, the school now offers part-time provision for two-year-olds. Once a week, parents can also take children under the age of one to the 'baby' group and a 'toddler' group for children aged one and two. Staff work extremely well with parents to make sure that children of all ages settle very quickly. During the inspection, children came into school

enthusiastically. They were clearly keen to explore and learn.

Following the previous inspection, leaders and governors were asked to develop further the outside area so that children had even more opportunities to investigate. Parents have worked with staff to design and make equipment and furniture for two-, three- and four-year olds to use. Staff have also created a sensory garden that encourages children to explore their surroundings with their different senses. The result is an outdoor area where children are encouraged to investigate, to be creative and use their imagination. The children on the 'building site', for example, carefully examined the different blocks of wood before using 'hammers' and 'nails' to join them together. They experimented with different tools to change the shapes of the blocks and excitedly described what their house would look like when finished.

Safeguarding is effective.

Children learn to keep safe in different situations because of the paramount importance you and staff place on this in the day-to-day running of the school. As a consequence, children learn, for example, to be considerate of others when playing outside, to use cutlery and scissors correctly, and to move along play equipment carefully. In addition to the work with the children, staff arrange visits and activities which extend parents' understanding of safety. 'I will be planning fire procedures at home' and 'This experience made me realise how many dangers are in the home' were just some of the written comments from parents following a visit to a learning centre that focused on fire, home and road safety.

The leadership team ensures that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. You and the deputy manager respond promptly to any concerns about children's well-being. Once a referral is made, senior leaders keep in close contact with external agencies to make sure that the children receive the help and support they need. A representative from the governing body meets with you and staff regularly to discuss the school's approach to helping children feel safe. This helps you and governors to check what is working well and to identify any improvements.

Inspection findings

- The school's motto, 'Together we learn more', encapsulates perfectly the way in which senior leaders and staff work together to secure rapid rates of progress for children. You encourage staff to work as a team and to share their ideas for further improvement with each other, senior leaders and governors. Staff meet at the end of each day to review children's learning and to plan activities for the next day. They draw upon each other's expertise to devise work that will extend the children who are ready to move on in their learning, and to consider how they can further help the children who are struggling with specific concepts.
- Two- and three-year olds benefit from activities and experiences that are not only fun but also highly beneficial in helping children to secure a broad range of skills. During the day of the inspection, the children were mesmerised as they followed written instructions to make a 'magic potion'. With the support of an adult, the children sounded out some of the letters from the alphabet and counted the number of

ingredients with accuracy. The adult skilfully extended children's vocabulary by encouraging the children to find interesting words to describe the effect of adding bicarbonate of soda to the potion. 'It is bubbling over!' exclaimed one child. This activity successfully supported children's knowledge and understanding, and their development in reading, speaking and mathematics. You recognise that opportunities for children to practise and extend their writing skills are not as frequent, and this occasionally prevents some children from making even faster progress in this area of learning.

- Your thorough analysis of the achievement of different groups of children in all the areas of learning ensures that any children at risk of falling behind receive appropriate support and catch-up quickly. Children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make excellent progress because of the high-quality support they receive. Adults use a suitable range of visual and practical resources to help these children complete their work successfully. Careful use of additional funding ensures that disadvantaged children achieve as well as their classmates by the time they leave the school. Senior leaders and staff are acutely aware of the individual circumstances of disadvantaged children. You make sure, for example, that they receive additional support during the school day, they have access to a variety of books to read at home and they are able to participate in the full range of educational visits and experiences throughout the school year.
- Relationships between children and between the children and staff are positive. This results in a calm and purposeful learning environment. Children are compassionate and keen to help each other. They share equipment and take it in turns when working in a group. Children respond well to challenges set by staff. They remain focused and persevere until they arrive at the correct solution.
- The members of the governing body play a pivotal role in school improvement. They ask astute questions about the difference leaders and staff are making to children's learning. They also ensure that additional funding secures exceptional progress for the relevant children. Governors have managed the recent changes in the membership of the school's governing body remarkably well. Training and a redistribution of responsibilities has helped the less experienced governors to settle into their roles quickly.
- Partnership between parents and staff are strong. Some of the parents I spoke with were grateful for the sensitive way in which senior leaders and staff had supported them during particularly difficult times. The 'holiday challenge' is especially popular with children and parents. In one example, children were asked to fill the 'holiday challenge bag' provided by the school with different natural objects. This activity not only encouraged families to go on an autumn walk, it also helped the children to talk about plants, natural items and animals in the environment.
- The local authority often asks you, the deputy manager and other members of staff to provide support and training for other schools. Most recently, senior leaders and staff have worked with 23 other schools to share strategies for increasing the involvement of parents in their child's learning. The local authority adviser who spoke with me was very complimentary about difference you all make in other settings.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- adults provide children with more opportunities to develop and extend their writing skills.

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

Yours sincerely

Usha Devi
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this inspection, I met with you, the deputy manager, the chair of the governing body and four other governors. You joined me during observations of children learning at different times of the day. I spoke with parents at the start of the school day. I looked at a range of documentation including the school's own evaluation of its work, the school development plan, photographs about children's learning, and minutes of the governing body. I also reviewed information relating to keeping children safe.