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Mrs Rebecca Cook
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Cook

Short inspection of Harewood Centre Nursery School

Following my visit to the school on 22 February 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 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 last inspection. Since your appointment as headteacher in April 2016, you have worked quickly to gain a secure understanding of what the school was doing well and where there were aspects requiring improvement. Your determination and commitment to ensuring that the children in your care receive the best possible start in their education means that you have not backed away from addressing the challenges and making difficult decisions.

You have correctly prioritised areas for development, focusing initially on those elements directly affecting the children and their safety. You ensured that all staff were aware of the most up-to-date procedures and policies through staff training. The reconfiguration of the front of the building secured the children's safety and developed a calm, welcoming entrance area to your school. The refurbishments within the nursery rooms mean that the whole building is better used. Resources are more accessible and the smaller areas promote children's meaningful play and good behaviour. Parents comment on how these changes have also impacted positively on access at the beginning and end of sessions.

The move of the two-year-old provision into the direct management of the school has improved efficiency and the quality of the provision. In turn this has meant that the key worker relationships have become more effective, as the groups have stabilised into morning and afternoon sessions. Progression into the nursery is now clearly evidenced in the curriculum and resources.

You analyse and use assessment information for individual children to identify their needs and progress. This has ensured that the vast majority of children make good progress from their starting points and a significant proportion make more than typical progress. This means that they are all well prepared for their next stage of education. You have identified assessment as an area for improvement and are already acting to address this by implementing policies and procedures across the school to ensure consistency, improve analysis and constantly focus on improving outcomes for children.

Staff attend a variety of professional development courses, meaning that the quality of teaching improves. They are very skilful at modelling behaviour and language to develop children's speaking and listening skills, for example when a member of staff is playing with children in the modelling dough area and verbalising what the child is doing, and then modelling other actions. However, this remains a priority for further development, to ensure even more rapid progress in this area for all children.

The new chair of governors has greatly improved the level of challenge and support given to the school by the governing body. Governors fully support the changes and improvements you are introducing, and are determined that the rapid pace of change will be kept up. A recent check of the skills of individual members has ensured that they are now better matched to their responsibilities within the governing body. For example, the chair of governors has taken on the remit for monitoring provision and outcomes for children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, as she is very experienced in this field.

Safeguarding is effective.

You and the governors have significantly improved the safety of the premises since your appointment. All staff have received training at the appropriate level and have a good understanding of how to keep children safe. The governors' responsibility for ensuring that requirements are met is a high priority for the chair of governors, who has a professional background in this area of work. Records kept are detailed and focused on outcomes for children. They show that there is good communication with external agencies and that parents are fully involved.

Children feel safe in the nursery. They have warm and caring relationships with staff. They are taught well how to keep themselves and others safe, for example when they climb and balance on the log trail or when they open a bag of flour using scissors. The nursery meets the safeguarding and welfare requirements ensuring that changing areas are screened off to protect the privacy of younger children, and that there is always someone present with a paediatric first aid qualification.

Inspection findings

- Your vision and ethos of ensuring that the children in your care get the best possible start and that you meet the needs of their families, along with a passion for ensuring that any gaps in attainment close, can be seen across the school. The highest aspirations you demonstrate for the children are reflected in the high

standards shown by the staff in their teaching and in the curriculum provision. The good progress of the majority of children and the rapid progress shown by a substantial proportion show that the transition to new staffing and management has not impacted negatively on outcomes for children. Indeed, there has been a significant improvement and this continues apace.

- The governing body are aware of their roles, but have only recently again become as effective as they once were. They are effectively monitoring areas of the school, but this could be further improved with a greater involvement in the development and monitoring of the school development plan.
- The website now meets requirements, but could still be improved in terms of the quality of the information given.
- The quality of the new two-year-old provision is excellent. The learning environment has been enhanced to meet the needs more effectively of this age group. Children really enjoy the pre-school and all it has to offer. During the inspection, they were all engaged in their learning because staff know how to meet their needs and make learning interesting and fun. For example, while some children observed a live duck and were posed challenging questions about its life cycle, others were enthralled playing with and observing the changes to cornflour as it is mixed with water and then food colouring is added. The curriculum has been devised to ensure development within the provision and the rest of the school, meaning that children continue to progress between the two- and three-year-old rooms. Indeed, those who have accessed this provision demonstrate better progress than their peers.
- You are exceptionally accurate and honest in your observation of teaching and learning and your feedback to members of staff. You quickly identify strengths to praise staff and equally areas for improvement to act upon, meaning that teaching continues to improve. Children learn independently and skilful staff follow their lead to develop language and mathematical understanding. Excellent use is made of open questioning, such as when ordering bears in size or counting numbers. Older children can identify letters and their sounds, as well as recognise and order numbers to ten and above.
- The early years pupil premium is effectively spent on additional staffing for interventions for these children. This has really improved the outcomes for these children. They make rapid progress and catch up with their peers before they leave to go to primary school.
- Support for children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is exemplary. All children are included. Parents of children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities were extremely positive about the quality of provision and the progress their children make. The support given means that these children at least meet their individual targets and make similar progress to their peers. Highly skilled staff meet the needs of these children extremely well, knowing precisely what is required for each individual to help them access the curriculum and support their good progress.

- You and your staff have excellent relationships with parents. They are very confident about sending their children to this nursery. They have noticed the improvements in the environment since you were appointed, and commented particularly around the safeguarding measures now in place. They spoke of the excellent support given to them to be involved in their child's learning through homework, and by the regular weekly notes outlining the learning and progress of their child.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the governing body increases its ownership and contributions to the school development plan from the basis of a thorough knowledge of the school, clear data analysis and regular monitoring of individual elements
- even more rapid progress is secured in speaking and listening for children, through the implementation of targeted support for individuals and small groups
- the quality of information available on the website is improved.

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

Yours sincerely

Geoffrey Dorrity
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

The focus of the inspection was to check whether the good standards identified at the previous inspection had been maintained through a period of change and to find out how well particular groups of children were progressing. During the inspection, I observed learning, jointly with you, in both indoor and outdoor activities led by children. We also observed a phonics session led by a member of staff.

I considered a range of evidence, including the school's latest assessment information about children's learning and development, the school improvement plan, leaders' self-evaluation, children's work, governing body minutes and planning documents.

I met with four members of the governing body, a representative of the local authority and the independently commissioned school improvement partner. I considered the 14 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and spoke with 10 parents. I also considered the responses to Ofsted's online staff survey and met with all the staff, including you and your senior members of staff.