

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

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



11 December 2017

Ms Caron Rudge  
Executive Headteacher  
Hampden Way Nursery School  
Hampden Way  
London  
N14 5DJ

Dear Ms Rudge

### **Short inspection of Hampden Way Nursery School**

Following my visit to the school on 21 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 March 2013.

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

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

You are a consistently effective headteacher who works in close partnership with your deputy headteacher to ensure that all children have the best possible start to their education. You have a passion and expertise for early years education and your collaborative and distributive leadership style nurtures future leaders. Your enthusiasm encourages all staff to become an integral part of your learning community, and you have been successful in sharing good practice to establish a federation of nursery schools.

Your governors are knowledgeable and supportive and ask the right questions to help move the school forward. Governors are involved in all school development planning and they have created a hard federation of three nursery schools overseen by one governing body.

Parents recognise the quality of the provision and are lavish with their praise. They report that their children feel safe and well cared for and benefit from a rich entitlement of indoor and outdoor learning opportunities, including visits to the forest school. One parent reported: 'My child is nurtured well and can express himself through a wide medium of creative and physical experiences. This is a very special place.'

The progress made by children is tracked in detail. Children are assessed on entry and then tracked against developmental milestones. Evidence of progress made over time is collected and shared with parents. An effective transition programme is in place before children transfer into Reception classes. The two-year-old provision is nurturing and highly effective with a strong focus on physical, social and communication skills.

At the time of the previous inspection, it was reported that new governors needed support in developing their skills to check on how well the school was doing. This has been addressed through governor training on roles and statutory responsibilities. A newly constituted governing body was formed in September 2015 to oversee governance of a federation of three nursery schools. A committee system is now in place to utilise the skill set of governors to oversee standards, premises and staffing. All governors now make regular visits to the school and have a specific focus for their visits.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

All safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of a high quality. The school is rigorous in its approach to safeguarding and the children's safety and well-being are of paramount importance to all staff.

The designated safeguarding lead is well known to all staff and she is supported by additional designated safeguarding leads across the federation. All staff understand the school's clear procedures of whom to report initial concerns to. The school works closely with the local authority and the designated officer for safeguarding.

Safeguarding training has been delivered to all staff on keeping children safe and they are aware of the signs of potential risks. Child awareness meetings are held to ensure that all children with additional needs are supported. Regular updates are given to all staff to ensure that policies and procedures are clearly understood.

### **Inspection findings**

- To test the hypothesis that the school remains outstanding, my first key line of enquiry was to find out how effective is free play in supporting children's development.
- On visiting the classrooms, it was seen that all play activities are planned to have a strong level of challenge to support learning outcomes. Tasks are skilfully prepared to develop oracy and to extend children's questioning about the world around them.
- The learning environment is fun and enjoyable, and children are immersed in a language-rich environment that is full of early reading and early writing opportunities. All children understand that mark making conveys meaning and the teaching of phonics sounds is outstanding. Children are keen to apply their knowledge of sounds when hearing stories being read aloud and when sharing good-quality reading books.

- All children are confident to experiment with number and shape. There are numerous opportunities to count numbers and to match shapes to reinforce children's understanding of the concepts of how heavy, how big and how many.
- Exceptional outdoor provision complements the rich, creative play activities to further extend confidence and social interaction. Physical development is well supported through the use of large apparatus to develop fine and gross motor skills.
- My second line of enquiry was to examine how well groups of children are supported to ensure their well-being.
- Classroom activities are planned to meet the learning needs of children of all abilities. Children who speak English as an additional language benefit from focused story sessions to extend and rehearse vocabulary to develop greater fluency in English. Most-able children are offered additional challenges to extend their thinking skills.
- Children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported well to access all activities and participate fully.
- All groups of children are making strong progress through being introduced to new ideas and experiences while being supported and guided to try new challenges.
- My final line of enquiry was to examine how well the school keeps children safe and monitors attendance.
- In addition to the school's robust safeguarding culture, the school takes great care to guarantee that all risk assessments are in place to ensure the safety and well-being of the children.
- The school monitors attendance closely and a policy of first-day calling is in place to further strengthen safeguarding procedures.
- Holidays are not authorised during term time and the school has worked well with families to stress the importance of good attendance.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the good practice and expertise of your school are used to support other settings.

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

Yours sincerely

Tom Canning  
**Ofsted Inspector**

## **Information about the inspection**

- During this inspection, I held meetings with you, the deputy headteacher, the two assistant headteachers and the school business manager. I met with parents informally as they arrived at school with their children. I met with the chair of the governing body and two school governors, and I also met with the local authority school improvement adviser.
- I visited all classrooms with senior leaders, spoke to children and looked at the activities in the classrooms and the outdoor areas.
- I viewed 27 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View.
- I scrutinised a range of documents including those relating to self-evaluation and planning, the school's assessment information, and safeguarding policies and procedures.