

29 November 2018

Mrs Mandy Collier-King
Acting Headteacher
St Werburghs Park Nursery School
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Dear Mrs Mandy Collier-King

Short inspection of St Werburghs Park Nursery School

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 January 2015.

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 change of role from deputy headteacher to acting headteacher in September 2018, you have provided stability and direction to the school. You are ably supported by your assistant headteacher, business manager and governors. The school's commitment to 'building foundations for learning together' underpins all that you do. You welcome parents into school as partners in their children's learning. Consequently, staff know the needs of children and their families extremely well. Your partnerships with other schools have helped you to share good practice and to introduce new ways of working. Staff and governors all share your determination to improve the school continually and to provide children with the best possible start to their education.

Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the provision for their children. Those whom I spoke to and also those who responded to the online questionnaire, Parent View, agreed that their children feel safe and make good progress. Parents appreciate how your team work with them to understand and respond to their children's unique needs and interests. They speak of the excellent relationships between children and adults, which help their children to settle well and to develop vital social skills such as sharing with and caring for others.

Your emphasis on children's emotional and social development has a positive impact on their preparation for the Reception Year. Children benefit from structured routines and from modelling by adults of how to resolve conflicts and manage emotions. Children enjoy engaging outdoor activities, such as solving problems in the forest

area and developing their woodwork skills. As a result of the engaging environment, children sustain interest in adult-led activities and also when initiating their own play.

At the previous inspection, leaders were asked to make sure that adults use information about children's learning more effectively. You evaluate assessments carefully and work with staff to identify gaps in learning and to make sure that children progress well. Many children enter St Werburgh's with skills and abilities lower than is typically found, especially in speaking, language and literacy. Some pupils enter school at an early stage of speaking English. As a result of your improvements to planning and provision, most children leave Nursery with skills typical of their age across all areas of learning. However, information from assessments is not always used well enough to make sure that the most able make strong progress, particularly when developing their literacy skills.

In addition, since the last inspection you have made sure that staff share best practice. For example, leaders have made sure that children in all classes receive regular opportunities for children to listen to each other in 'circle time' sessions. You are now developing the skills of middle leaders who are new to their roles and are beginning to share good practice across the school.

Safeguarding is effective.

The well-being and safety of children is your highest priority. You make sure that staff have regular training and are vigilant in identifying children and families in need of support. You keep careful records of all your concerns and your contact with relevant agencies. This helps you to make sure that children receive timely help from the school and other professionals.

You take great care to make sure that children are safe when learning. You carefully assess the risks of indoor and outdoor activities, and review these assessments regularly. You make sure that first aid, personal care and medicines policies are up to date, and staff are trained to support children's medical needs. Leaders and governors review records carefully, such as by reviewing patterns in children's accidents and taking action to reduce risks.

Leaders make rigorous checks on adults' suitability to work with children. Governors check these records and work with leaders to review and improve procedures, for example by updating the school's process for recording concerns. Children learn how to reflect on their actions and behaviour so that they can keep themselves and others safe.

Inspection findings

- To check that the school remains good, I investigated how well leaders are making sure that children make good progress in speaking, listening, reading and writing. Children take part in story sessions where they listen attentively and adults scribe and recount the children's own ideas. Children are keen to share their ideas and the sessions have a positive impact on their speaking and listening skills. However at other times adults' questions and modelling of language do not

structure children's speaking well enough. As a result, children do not always practise new vocabulary or speak in sentences to communicate their learning across the areas of learning.

- Children learn to recognise the sounds that letters make, and they develop the physical strength needed to prepare children for early writing. Children practise mark-making using a range of tools and materials and are taught to hold pens and pencils correctly. However, there are not enough opportunities for children, especially the most able, to practise forming letters or record their learning using emergent writing. Children do not always receive enough challenge to imitate print or give meaning to their mark-making when they are learning independently.
- I checked the progress that disadvantaged children make. You have made good use of the additional funding for these children by making sure that they receive support that is carefully matched to their needs. For example, children receive additional help to engage positively with others, to develop their speech or to work with materials which help them to be imaginative.
- Some disadvantaged children have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and their records show that they receive effective support to help them to catch up with their peers. You are diminishing the difference between disadvantaged boys' and girls' progress in reading by supporting boys' speaking skills so that they can talk about shared reading more fluently.
- Finally, I looked at how well staff use their assessment of children's learning to identify next steps for them and to plan challenging activities. Learning diaries show that staff know children very well and make thorough records of their achievements. You work with staff to identify any children at risk of slipping behind and to set targets. Adults plan activities thoughtfully, making sure that they appeal to children's interests. As a result, there are a range of activities both indoors and outdoors which help children to develop their physical strength and coordination, their creative use of materials and their understanding of the world. I observed boys in one area describing carefully the equipment they would need for an expedition to the jungle. Two-year-old children get off to a strong start because adults use their knowledge of each child well to help them to learn while attending to their care needs.
- For the most able children, progress is not as rapid. This is because the next steps identified for them lack precision, and consequently teachers do not always plan to challenge them well enough. In the sessions I observed, the activities were sometimes too easy for the most able and adults' questions did not challenge them to develop new skills and knowledge.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- children, especially the most able, routinely practise and apply their mark-making and early writing skills across the curriculum
- adults' questioning and modelling of new language help children to improve their speaking and vocabulary further.

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

Yours sincerely

Claire Mirams
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I spoke to a representative of the local authority. I held meetings with you and your leadership team. We reviewed your plans for improvement, information on current children's progress and your own evaluation of the school's performance. We observed teaching together. I also met with members of the governing body and scrutinised records of external evaluations of the school.

I met with parents at the start of the school day. I scrutinised various safeguarding records including risk assessments and the checks on adults working in the school. I reviewed a number of records of children's learning.

I also considered six responses to the staff survey, a letter from parents, 28 parent questionnaire responses and seven parent responses to the online survey, Parent View.