

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



1 March 2018

Ms Lynne Cooper
Executive Headteacher
Ann Bernadt Nursery School
29 Chandler Way
Peckham
London
SE15 6DT

Dear Ms Cooper

Short inspection of Ann Bernadt Nursery School

Following my visit to the school on 6 February 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 November 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. However, there have been many changes since that time, including the school expanding to include two-year-olds and the resignation of the previous headteacher. Your determined and skilled leadership has brought a sense of momentum to the school's work. When you arrived at the school two years ago you faced several challenges, including a fall in the number of children on roll. You addressed these challenges swiftly to ensure that children continued to benefit from a safe, secure environment and good teaching. Crucially, you raised expectations of what children can do, and this has underpinned your efforts to secure the necessary improvements.

Governors and the local authority acknowledge your success in addressing these challenges, including the relative weaknesses in the school. Consequently, your good practice is shared more widely with local schools. The appointment of your assistant headteacher last year has strengthened leadership further. You work together closely and share an unwavering focus on securing improvements in the best interests of the children. You have tackled the improvement areas from the last inspection fully. Your evaluation of the school's performance is accurate and correctly recognises strengths in leadership, children's behaviour and provision for children who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities. You recognise that there is more work to be done to further improve the quality of teaching and sustain the improvement in outcomes for children over time, particularly in the provision for two-year-old children.

Governors have also been working hard with you. They appreciate the quality of

information you provide on how well children learn and achieve, and how this helps them to hold leaders to account on the quality of education. They report that this has developed their expertise so that they are even more involved in the whole-school improvement journey, which 'has become part of us now'. Being part of a federation with another local nursery school has enabled you to share expertise across the two schools to support you in securing your school's priorities.

Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the school. They value and appreciate the opportunities that you provide to help them understand their children's learning and development. They all say that their children are safe and happy. One parent commented, 'They learn so much, especially manners.'

You have worked hard to strengthen teaching skills and knowledge of early years practice so that staff understand how best to promote children's learning. As a result, they feel supported and motivated to secure improvements. Your focus on their professional development has led to improvements in the overall quality of teaching in the school. This, in turn, has led to improved outcomes for all children. Nonetheless, you agree that improvements in the quality of teaching and outcomes are relatively recent and need to be embedded. This is particularly evident in how well teaching supports children's language development and communication skills.

Safeguarding is effective.

You and your governors are fully committed to ensuring the safety and welfare of the children. Staff are well trained and knowledgeable about what they need to do to keep children safe and secure. School records show that staff know how to refer concerns and that leaders act swiftly to address these. You are unafraid to challenge decisions relating to children's safety and welfare to ensure that the right level of support is provided in a timely manner. You work closely with governors to ensure children's safety and well-being. For example, governors regularly monitor the suitability of staff to work with children. This united vigilance has created a strong culture of safeguarding across the school.

You have effective systems in place to assess potential risks to children. For example, you walk the school every morning to check for possible dangers and make constant refinements to ensure that children are safe. You ensure that visits to the forest school are carefully planned and all risks assessed. You provide parents with helpful information to support them in keeping their children safe.

Inspection findings

- For the first line of enquiry, we agreed to focus on how effectively the learning environment promotes children's language and maximises their progress in reading, writing and mathematics. We chose this because it was a focus in the last inspection.
- You and your team have worked hard to create a stimulating and well-resourced learning environment which offers children exciting opportunities to support their learning and development. There is a focus on developing children's independence

and children clearly enjoy selecting their own learning activities. This was evident, for example, in the way we saw children negotiating turns to select blocks to build a tower. Children learn happily with each other and remain focused on their selected activities.

- The indoor and outdoor provision is used effectively to develop children's early literacy and mathematical skills. For example, you have created comfortable spaces in the outdoor area for children to enjoy reading books. Key words are displayed alongside pictures to promote children's vocabulary and early reading skills. Similarly, children have a range of opportunities to develop their fine and gross motor skills, which are necessary for writing. These include being able to use tools in the woodwork area to create and decorate wooden objects. Staff plan well-chosen initiatives to promote children's understanding of mathematical concepts, such as the use of resources to number the toilet doors for the younger children. You agree that, at times, resources in the outdoor area do not promote children's communication and language skills consistently well.
- You have provided effective support to staff to develop the quality of their observations and assessments of individual children's learning. Staff check children's progress accurately, drawing increasingly on the views of parents and children. Records of children's learning show that children are making good progress over time in all areas of learning, although you continue to focus on communication and language. You agree that, occasionally, teachers' assessments of children's next steps in learning are not sufficiently precise to ensure that they make even better progress.
- You and your assistant headteacher have made children's language development a whole-school priority to secure the best possible outcomes. Staff are well trained and know what they need to do to develop children's language skills. They model correct sentence construction, ask questions which encourage children to talk, and introduce alternative words to expand children's vocabulary. For example, replacing 'big' with 'huge' and describing a round shape as an 'oval not a circle'. Occasionally, staff miss opportunities to model full sentences or extend children's thinking by asking them questions.
- We also agreed to look at how well leaders support children who are vulnerable to underachievement because of their additional needs. The support for children who have SEN and/or disabilities is a strength of the school. You and your team work closely to provide individual children with ongoing support, for example through the use of 'communication passports'. As a result, these children are making good progress in their learning and development. Strong partnerships with parents and external agencies ensure that children's needs are understood and met.
- Adults are skilled at supporting children who have SEN and/or disabilities. They use a range of techniques to encourage communication and learning, including the use of sign language. If children become distressed or may be unsafe in their behaviour, adults intervene calmly and skilfully to refocus them on their learning.
- School assessment information and children's learning journals show that children who have SEN and/or disabilities make good progress from their starting points because of the carefully targeted attention they receive.

- We also looked at the progress of children who are eligible for the early years pupil premium funding and those who are being supported by other external agencies. You have introduced opportunities for these children to practise and apply their skills and knowledge in woodland areas. This approach makes a positive contribution to children's academic outcomes as well as their social and emotional development. Typically, disadvantaged children make good progress and achieve as well as their peers. Nevertheless, leaders recognise there is more work to do to check that strategies to support disadvantaged children promote substantial gains in their skills and knowledge.
- Finally, we agreed to look at whether the good quality of education has been maintained since the last inspection, given that the school now includes two-year-olds. Despite the many changes since the last inspection, the introduction of two-year-olds has certainly not detracted from the quality of education provided by the school, which continues to improve. You have worked hard to include the staff and children in the whole-school community.
- You have decided to develop the quality of provision in this age group so that it is consistent with the older classes. Your evaluation of the school's performance rightly identifies that teaching in the two-year-old provision needs to give greater emphasis to children's early communication skills. You and your team provide children with well-chosen and stimulating resources that encourage them to talk to staff and each other. For example, you have created an interactive magnetic wall to encourage children to talk about life events and experiences that are meaningful and relevant to them.
- Training for staff has been effective. Typically, staff have a clear understanding of how to promote communication skills with the two-year-old children, and this has led to an improvement in the quality of teaching. While this is playing an important role in ensuring that teaching is targeted to children's specific needs, it remains a focus because improvements are relatively recent. Consequently, it is too soon to evaluate whether they will have a sustained impact on children's outcomes over time.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- recent improvements in the quality of teaching are embedded, particularly in the two-year-old provision, to maximise children's progress over time
- teaching consistently promotes excellent gains in children's communication and language 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 Southwark. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Helen Ridding
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

At the start of the inspection, I discussed the school's work and safeguarding with you and your assistant headteacher. We were joined by your leader for SEN and/or disabilities. I went on learning walks with you and your assistant headteacher to all classrooms and the outdoor learning environment. We looked at children's learning journals together. I also looked at children's care plans and information relating to children who have SEN and/or disabilities. On visits to classrooms, I spoke to some children and staff. I met with the school business manager, and you and your assistant headteacher, to discuss safeguarding. I considered the responses from staff and children, and from parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. I met with a representative from the local authority and three governors. I spoke with the chair of the governing body on the telephone. I scrutinised a range of documentation and information published on the school's website.