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Mr Rohan Allen
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Allen

Short inspection of Rebecca Cheetham Nursery and Children's Centre

Following my visit to the school on 4 December 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 December 2014.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Based on the evidence gathered during this short inspection, I am of the opinion that the school has demonstrated strong practice and marked improvement in specific areas. This may indicate that the school has improved significantly overall. Therefore, I am recommending that the school's next inspection be a section 5 inspection.

Since the previous inspection teaching has improved considerably due to leaders' determination to offer both support and training to all members of staff. To this end, both the local authority and the Tapscott Learning Trust have provided effective partnership arrangements that have challenged and inspired staff. There is a strong team ethos among staff. Children make an excellent start to their education because staff are vigilant at looking after their needs. Parents are delighted with the school and have noticed this improvement, with one commenting, 'My child thoroughly enjoys attending his sessions and is always excited to go through the doors of his classroom to explore and share his learning experiences.' This comment was typical of many. Most children's attendance is good. However, there are a small number of parents who do not show their support for your ambition that all children attend regularly and on time so that they do not miss out.

The unique position of the school ensures that excellent links are made with the Children's Centre which occupies the same site. Your senior leadership team is also made up of members from this facility to ensure that high-quality transition work takes place.

Both the indoor and outdoor spaces provide irresistible opportunities for children to engage with activities set out for them. Resources are thoughtfully placed, and you and your team have worked highly effectively in developing the outside spaces so that all children can make the best use of them. A host of adults, including teaching assistants, sports coaches and apprentices, make sure that children's learning is well focused through friendly interactions and discussions with children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Planning for the curriculum is suitably detailed and available to all staff and parents. An approach which you have found to be useful is to place a series of good-quality core books as the springboard for the children's own interests. This ensures that children quickly develop a love of reading and are eager to read more. Your team of staff also introduce children to learning about phonics through these books and in discrete group sessions. A strength of the school is the teaching of reading. You provide excellent quality resources that support children's mathematical development and your current focus is to ensure that they have a solid conceptual understanding of the number system before they move on to Reception classes.

All staff are involved in the tracking of children's progress. This is done in a way that does not have an impact upon the valuable time that adults spend working alongside children. This assessment information is then carefully analysed to check that children from different groups are all making excellent progress. Governors appreciate this level of detail and use it to check on the school's performance from a strategic perspective. The governing body is made up of a small number of highly skilled people who have worked diligently to ensure that you are provided with challenge. They are clear advocates for the importance of nursery school education.

Safeguarding is effective.

There is a very strong safeguarding culture throughout the school. Leaders have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are carefully held. Leaders have also ensured that staff training is up to date, including that related to the 'Prevent' duty. Leaders understand the school's context extremely well and staff are highly vigilant. Should any child protection concerns arise, staff make use of the school's rapid reporting system so that all members of the school's safeguarding team are instantly notified. To ensure that children are kept safe both the school's and the adjoining Children Centre's staff work successfully with a wide number of external agencies including parents, social services, the police and local welfare organisations.

Inspection findings

- We agreed three lines of enquiry for this inspection. The first of these explored how well the school's curriculum helps children prepare for the next stage in their education. This was selected as the school's website holds little factual detail about this area despite it appearing a strength of the school. Children's learning needs are very well catered for across all areas of the school's extensive environment. The atmosphere is a real hive of happy activity.

- The school's planned curriculum usefully places literacy and numeracy skills development at its core. Children are introduced to quality fiction and non-fiction texts and real life mathematical puzzles which stimulate their curiosity. Children's interest is further fostered by the exciting learning opportunities on offer.
- As a result, all groups of children are achieving very well, and this is captured in the school's assessment information. Teachers and key workers know the children in their care extremely well. Using this information, they give children choices to extend their learning through activities that are spread across both indoor rooms and the extensive outdoors area.
- As a second line of enquiry, we looked at leaders' actions to work in partnership with parents and other stakeholders in an approach they call 'forging forces'.
- This is a family-friendly school with a very inclusive approach. Since the previous inspection you have expanded upon the work you do with parents that fully recognises their role as the children first educators. You now offer a programme of training and social events for parents which they very much appreciate.
- The school is no longer part of the federation that it was in at the time of the previous inspection. You have formed a partnership arrangement with a local academy trust. This has proved very beneficial in enabling significantly better access to resources than would otherwise be the case. It has also enabled training and school development opportunities to take place that have targeted the needs of the school very precisely. At the same time, you have continued to be an active member of a small cluster of local nursery schools with whom you share ideas and check the accuracy of assessments.
- We were curious to explore how well the school works with children with SEND to ensure that they make the best progress they can. This is because you have been focusing on this area as part of school development planning.
- This area of the school is extremely well led. School staff have a profound understanding of the individual children concerned and their learning needs. They can quickly identify the best provision possible which might help children to take full advantage of their time at Rebecca Cheetham Nursery, so they are well prepared for their move to the Reception Year.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they continue to work in partnership with parents to ensure that all of them realise the importance of regular school attendance so that their children don't miss out.

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

Yours sincerely

Tim McLoughlin
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this inspection I held several meetings with you and senior staff. I met with a governor in person and spoke to the chair of the governing body on the telephone. I also met with a representative from the local authority and the chief executive officer of the partnership academy trust. You and your deputy accompanied me on visits to classrooms where I observed children as they played inside and outside. I met with parents informally at the start of the day and looked at the 34 results of Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, which included 17 who had made use of the free text facility. I also took on the views of the 24 staff members who responded to the staff questionnaire. I also evaluated a range of school documentation, including school development plans, safeguarding records and information about current children's achievement.