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Mrs Lynn Cottle
Executive headteacher
Alice Model Nursery School
14 Beaumont Grove
Stepney
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Dear Mrs Cottle

Short inspection of Alice Model Nursery School

Following my visit to the school on 10 January 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 September 2012.

This school continues to be outstanding.

Alice Model was judged by Ofsted in 2009 and in 2012 to be providing an outstanding quality of education. I can confirm that you and your team have maintained the outstanding quality of education for a third time. Your leadership is exemplary and inspiring. Your commitment to provide excellence for all children is shared by staff and governors. You continually raise parents' aspirations for their children to succeed and achieve their very best. Your mantra is that there are no limits to what children can achieve. As a result all children, irrespective of their starting points, ethnicity, gender or ability, achieve exceptionally well in all seven early learning goals. The chair of governors encapsulated the collective drive for success, explaining 'we do not rest on our laurels' because there is always room for improvement.

This ambitious culture which is focused on the needs, interests and abilities of children pervades all aspects of the school's work. The area for improvement identified at the time of the last inspection, relating to the implementation of a new curriculum, has been resoundingly met. Staff skilfully plan children's learning through a cycle of real-life situations based on children's interests and fascinations. Learning activities both inside and outside are carefully planned to maximise learning in as many areas of the curriculum as possible. Activities secure deep and memorable learning experiences for the children. Your exceptional commitment to equality of opportunity and celebration of cultural and religious differences provides a strong foundation for promoting fundamental British values and children's spiritual, moral,

social and cultural development. I observed highly cooperative and polite children going about their work with a real zest for learning, confidently investigating the wide range of excellent resources.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality. You make sure that safeguarding the welfare of children is given the highest priority. All staff are kept fully up to date with all potential dangers, including preventing extremism and radicalisation. Staff training also secures their understanding of the wider issues faced by some children such as female genital mutilation (FGM). Partnership work with other external agencies is effective. You ensure that the right type of help and support is available for families and children who may need it when problems arise. Any potential child protection cases are referred swiftly to the appropriate organisations. Parents expressed confidence in the school's ability to follow up any concerns they have. They feel exceptionally confident of the school's ability to keep their children safe. You work closely with parents to make sure that their awareness of potential dangers is heightened, including e-safety and the impact of domestic abuse on children's well-being. Governors are rigorous in ensuring that all the safeguarding policies and procedures are robust, through a clear programme of checks, including the vetting of new staff.

Inspection findings

- The first key line of enquiry focused on leaders' capacity to secure further improvement, as a result of your appointment as executive headteacher in September 2015 for another local outstanding nursery.
- You explained that since the previous inspection you are now a national leader of education. The school continues to be a centre of excellence and is a national support school. You have a proven track record of success and a willingness to share outstanding practice with colleagues at a local, national and international level. You encourage joint professional development and training across both schools, sharing expertise in teaching and learning. On a daily basis, staff reflect with colleagues about the quality of children's learning and development and their next steps. This secures rapid progress for all children.
- Senior leadership has been bolstered. The deputy headteacher has taken on additional leadership responsibilities, not least in acting as headteacher when you visit the other nursery. She works closely with the deputy headteacher of the other school, as both have responsibility for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. As a result, the special educational needs policy and procedures have been reviewed to tighten up provision still further.
- This inspection found that those children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are quickly identified. Children who need additional support are often identified even before they begin school, through home visits, or attendance at the toddler and parent group sessions. Parents are then signposted to specific agencies to secure the extra support their child needs. Your in-depth knowledge of

every child's abilities means that you can place children with a key worker who has expertise in meeting the needs of these children. You work closely with other specialists, including the speech and language therapist and occupational therapists, to target regular interventions. Your achievement information verifies that these children make outstanding progress.

- You, the deputy headteacher and governors have an incisive knowledge of the school's performance. You monitor the quality of teaching and learning regularly, using all available evidence to make sure your evaluations are accurate. You use this monitoring information to plan for the right priorities. Although some documentation identifies measurable targets based on children's outcomes these are not included in improvement planning. This makes it difficult to measure accurately the progress you are making towards these priorities.
- The second line of enquiry centred on the accuracy and use of assessments to make sure that all groups of children, including the most able, make rapid progress.
- You described how assessing children's abilities begins before they even start nursery. Strong relationships are forged between staff, parents and their children as a result of a thorough induction process. It is evident that parents are full partners in their children's education. Parents told me that they are kept fully informed about the nursery's daily activities, as well as their children's learning. There is a warm and welcoming start to the day where parents take the opportunity to talk to their children's key worker. Parents told me they enjoy being included in the numerous activities, including visiting the forest school, visits within the local community and the many educational trips in and around London.
- You explained that children's starting points are formally assessed once they have settled into the school's routines and expectations. Their progress is checked regularly through detailed termly checks. Assessments are regularly moderated within school and across other nursery and primary settings. This inspection established that assessments are accurate and compare precisely to the children's current levels of skills, knowledge and understanding.
- It was clear during our joint observations that staff have an in-depth knowledge of where children are in their learning and plan effectively for their next steps. Staff intervene at the right moment to develop and extend children's thinking and language. Children are resilient and highly motivated learners. Staff provide excellent opportunities for children to reflect on their learning, often using the children's special books to talk about previous achievements. This secures an excellent understanding of each child's interests and abilities, providing clear evidence for ongoing and long-term assessments.
- Children who display specific talents or abilities are swiftly identified. They are given timely support and encouragement to develop and deepen their skills, in a wide variety of subjects. Those children ready to learn phonics are encouraged to develop these skills to read and write independently and with guided support from adults. Your assessment information verifies rapid progress for all children, including the most able children.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- measurable targets based on children's achievement are transferred to the school development plan so that all leaders, including governors, can measure progress accurately.

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

Yours sincerely

Mary Hinds
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

The inspector agreed to prioritise the following areas with the school at the start of the inspection:

- the impact of recent changes to the leadership team, following the appointment of the headteacher as executive headteacher for the two nursery schools
- the accuracy of assessments, and whether they are used effectively to ensure that all groups of children make outstanding progress.

The inspector carried out the following activities to explore these areas during the inspection:

- joint observations of the quality of teaching and learning with leaders
- a scrutiny of children's special books and informal discussions with children
- meetings with leaders, the chair and other members of the governing body
- a telephone discussion with an education consultant
- an analysis of the school's parental surveys, as there were no responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, and informal discussions with several parents
- a scrutiny of documentation including school development plans, evaluations, safeguarding information, documents relating to pupils' achievement and minutes of meetings.