



The Brambles Nursery School and Children's Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY307547
Inspection date	20 March 2006
Inspector	Lisa Jane Cupples
Setting Address	Bramble Road, Southsea, Hampshire, PO4 0DT
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Registered person	The Brambles Nursery School and Children's Centre
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care

ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The Brambles Nursery School and Children's Centre opened in September 2005 and was formally renamed in January 2006. It operates from a redesigned nursery school and one room in Goldsmith Infant School, which is immediately adjacent to the main building. The centre is in Southsea, a residential area of Hampshire. A maximum of 50 children may attend at any one time. The centre is open each weekday from 07:45 to 18:00 for 51 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure

enclosed outdoor play area and younger children have the use of an additional area as necessary.

There are currently 94 children aged under 5 years on roll. Of these, 12 children receive funding for nursery education. Children attend from the surrounding areas and referrals from a wider catchment area. The centre supports children with special educational needs, and children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs nine staff who all hold appropriate early years qualifications, including the manager. The centre receives support from the Local Authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children benefit from a nutritious diet and are beginning to understand the importance of healthy eating. Staff help children to learn about healthy eating through daily discussions. They use meals as a social time, talking about which types of food are good for the children and encouraging the use of good manners. The nursery prepares a wide range of healthy snacks. Children's individual needs and parental preferences are clearly displayed for staff to ensure their individual needs are met and respected at all times.

Children understand the importance of good self-care skills as they wash their hands at appropriate times. They learn about keeping clean as they talk about getting 'rid of germs' before snack time. Children benefit from the good hygiene procedures in the nursery, which are implemented effectively providing a healthy environment for the children.

Staff are fully aware of the systems to record all accidents and the administration of medication, helping to keep the children healthy and ensure the parents are well informed, although parents do not always sign the accident forms. Parents give written consent prior to medication being administered. Children are protected because staff hold first aid certificates. This ensures the children will receive immediate treatment in the event of an accident.

Children have ample opportunities to develop their large muscle skills, climbing and balancing on the climbing frame in the outdoor play area, riding tricycles and matching large movements to music. Children move around the setting freely and with confidence from one play area to another. They move with imagination, pretending to be animals during free-play and outdoor play time. Children are developing good spatial awareness, for example, they move their chairs closer together to allow others to sit down and they ride tricycles round the outdoor area with precision. Younger children are given plenty of space to crawl and practise walking in the baby room. They are able to use tools independently and are becoming competent learners. All the children enjoy the use of the garden, a separate range of equipment is available for each age group, which is suitable for

their stages of development.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children benefit from an extremely safe and secure environment because practitioners are vigilant and remove any possible hazards. For example, they move tricycles to one side in the garden and clear up spillages quickly and efficiently with little fuss to prevent children slipping. Children are made aware of dangers through general conversation and consistent rules, for example, they know they must not run in the nursery. Children learn how to keep themselves safe by practising regular fire drills, they know exactly what they must do if they hear the fire alarm. Comprehensive risk assessments are in place covering all aspects of the nursery. All staff are aware of their individual roles and responsibilities towards the safety of the children and the premises. The entrances are kept locked and have security code key pads and visitors are required to sign in and out of the building, keeping the premises and children secure and ensuring that no unvetted visitors have access to the children.

The premises are bright and welcoming and children's work is displayed on the walls, making them feel valued. Children benefit from using a wide range of safe resources because procedures are implemented effectively to ensure all equipment is checked regularly, providing the children with a safe play environment.

Children are well protected because all staff have an extremely clear understanding of child protection and the procedures to follow if concerns are identified, keeping the children safe. Detailed policies and procedures are in place and shared with parents to ensure they are aware of the setting's responsibilities. All existing injuries and incidents are recorded and parents sign to acknowledge the entries, helping to keep children safe and protected.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children settle quickly on arrival as they are met at the door by staff. Children are encouraged to hang up their coats and bags, increasing their independence, while staff and parents ensure younger children are assisted as necessary, building their self-esteem. Children are extremely happy and they laugh and giggle throughout the activities, for example, singing and dancing to nursery rhymes. Staff interact with the children exceptionally well, talking to them all the time, making eye contact, playing at their level and showing affection. They hold the children when giving them bottles and talk to them when they are in their high-chairs, ensuring they are comfortable and relaxed. Younger children enjoy experimenting and exploring the materials during craft activities or using the well equipped treasure baskets. Staff praise and encourage the children helping them to learn different skills.

Staff use the Birth to three matters framework effectively to observe the children's progress and plan specific activities, ensuring the needs of the younger children are

being met fully. Babies playfully babble and copy sounds learning to communicate with one another. Staff give the children time to learn about themselves, for example, children investigate their own fingers and toes, on the floor, smiling and cooing.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making good progress towards the early learning goals in all areas. Most staff have an exceptionally clear understanding of the Foundation Stage and deliver the curriculum effectively, using challenging and stimulating activities. Less experienced members of staff sometimes pitch an activity at the wrong level, leading to some children losing interest, however, this has been recognised by the management and staff are being supported to further develop their skills. Staff fully understand the importance of regular observations and assessments of the children. The information gathered is discussed in detail at staff meetings and the whole curriculum planning is based on the needs of the children who attend. Staff are given time to observe their key worker children and also to write up the observations and analyse their findings, ensuring that most of the activities provided are pitched at the right level and provide sufficient challenges for all the children.

Staff use many different techniques and strategies to deliver the curriculum and planned activities, for example, story time was used to reinforce the children's learning about healthy eating. The staff team's clear understanding of each child's developmental stage helps to ensure all children are fully engaged. Staff work with children on a one to one basis when necessary to support their learning, and also in small and large groups to ensure children are interested. Most staff are extremely effective at differentiating activities on the spot as younger or older children join the activities, for example, when playing board games, matching games and during circle time.

Children's social skills are developing well, they are keen and eager to join in the activities, asking questions to learn more, showing curiosity. Children show high levels of concentration and become engrossed in the activities provided, confidently suggesting new ideas, co-operating well and sharing their feelings. Children's vocabulary is developing well and staff introduce new words at every opportunity during practical activities. Children are beginning to understand that text has meaning as they handle books independently and make good use of the book area. Children hold the books correctly and pretend to read stories to each other. Children count confidently up to 10, and sometimes above 15 throughout the day, using one to one correspondence with everyday items. Children use mathematical language with confidence, talking about shape, size, position and quantity during their play.

Children have many opportunities to use and handle an extensive range of natural and manmade materials. They enjoy choosing and using a wide range of materials to complete their own ideas throughout the day. Children are beginning to recognise similarities and differences and record their findings through pictures and art work to consolidate their learning. They use everyday technology and are developing sound computer skills, choosing programmes and using the mouse with increasing control. Children have a good sense of time and place as they recall past events and activities. They use their imaginations extremely well during role-play, musical movement and during art and craft activities.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Staff have an exceptionally clear understanding of equal opportunities and implement the settings comprehensive policies effectively. Each child is treated as an individual and staff work closely with all the parents to ensure the children's needs are being met in the best possible way. Children's requirements and parent's preferences are fully recorded on the children's registration forms. The whole setting works hard to ensure all children have equal access to the facilities and time to participate fully. The children who receive funding for nursery education fully integrate with the children attending the maintained nursery, benefiting greatly from staff experience and working alongside their peers. Staff take the time to get to know each child and their families exceptionally well, they are extremely friendly and approachable, working hard to build trusting relationships. Staff are able to talk to the children about events at home, siblings and other family members, helping to develop strong relationships with the children. Therefore, children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered appropriately.

Children with special needs and children who speak English as an additional language are supported exceptionally well within the centre. Children's needs are identified and appropriate agencies are contacted in agreement with the parents. Comprehensive individual educational plans are developed to effectively support children in the group. Staff continually praise and encourage the children throughout the day, recognising their efforts and focussing on their positive behaviour. Clear rules and boundaries are implemented consistently by all members of staff so the children behave extremely well and are polite because they know exactly what is expected of them.

Children benefit from well established relationships with parents and carers, which help to secure the relationships they build within the group. Staff complete daily diaries for the children in the baby unit, which include details about each child's diet, sleep patterns, activities and general well-being. Parents feel they are able to discuss issues with the staff at any time. Parents receive regular newsletters and the nursery have a website for parents who have access to the internet. The notice board is used effectively to keep parents informed and they have access to the settings full policies and procedures.

The partnership with parents of children who receive funding for nursery education is good. The information about the setting is comprehensive and includes additional information about the curriculum. Parents are extremely well informed about their children's progress through daily discussions with the children's key workers and access to their achievement records. Staff hold parents' evenings and open days to fully involve the parents in their children's learning. They are actively encouraged to share what they know about their child and have the opportunity to comment about their children's learning at home. Information about current topics and themes are displayed and included in the newsletters, helping to build strong links between the children's home and nursery.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Daily routines are organised well and run smoothly. The children move freely from one activity to another, never having to wait around. This ensures they are fully occupied and stimulated throughout the day, which has a positive effect on behaviour. The ratio's are maintained at all times and staff deployment is effective, enabling staff to provide good quality support and supervision for all the children. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. Clear procedures are in place to ensure all adults are checked and new staff complete an in depth induction programme, ensuring children are safe. Children are well protected because all policies and procedures are implemented effectively. All the required paperwork and documentation is in place and most records are maintained to a high standard and are readily available for inspection at any time.

The leadership and management of the setting is good. The head teacher and managers play an active role in the nursery, providing strong support for the whole staff team. Clear roles and responsibilities are defined, ensuring that procedures are followed to protect the children and the staff effectively. The staff team work closely together providing a stimulating and exciting environment for all the children. The manager and staff team continually review and evaluate routines and daily activities to ensure they work well and the aims and objectives of each activity are met. They adapt activities and change resources as necessary to improve the overall programme. Staff appraisals are completed annually and the staff draw up the following year's training programme, providing them with the skills to deliver the curriculum to all the children appropriately and less experienced staff are being supported. The entire staff team are strongly committed to the improvement of care and education for all children. Children benefit from the experience and qualifications of the staff team because most staff have a clear understanding of their individual needs.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since registration.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

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WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure parents sign to acknowledge all entries on the accident forms

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- continue to develop and consolidate the less experienced nursery staffs understanding of the Foundation Stage, to further improve the delivery of the curriculum, with particular regard to adult led group activities

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk