

# The Brambles Community Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY222661
<b>Inspection date</b>	12 November 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Anne Mitchell
<b>Setting Address</b>	Byron Road, Southampton, Hampshire, SO19 6FH
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<b>Registered person</b>	The Trustees of Brambles Community Pre-School
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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 Community Pre-School has been re-registered since 2007 under a new name but has been operating since the late 1970's. It is a community pre-school owned and managed by a parents committee and is situated in Thornhill Primary School. The pre-school serves the community in Thornhill and surrounding areas of east Southampton.

The setting is registered to provide care for a total of 26 children from two to under five years of age. There are currently 65 children on roll. Of these, 39 are in receipt of funding for nursery education. The pre-school supports children with disabilities and/or learning difficulties.

A total of eight staff, some of whom are part time, work directly with the children. Of these, six hold relevant qualifications and two are working towards a qualification.

The pre-school opens during term time only; sessions are from Monday to Friday between 09.00 and 11.30, and between 12.30 and 14.50, with a lunch club provided for children staying all day. The pre-school receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is well promoted. Children wash their hands well with pump dispenser soap and dry them with paper towels. This limits the spread of infection. A step stool in the toilet enables children to be independent. When asked, children are aware of the importance of good hand hygiene telling an adult 'Got to get all the dirt off before I eat my fruit'. Visual prompts in the form of posters remind children of good routines.

Children's health and wellbeing is effectively supported through the documentation such as the accident and medical records. Parents sign the records to ensure they have been made aware of any incidents. Clear health policies are in place and shared with parents. Children can be treated effectively in the event of an accident because the majority of staff hold first aid certificates and there is a well stocked first aid kit in the setting.

Children's dietary health is well promoted. They enjoy a café style snack time, visiting the snack table when they choose. They are encouraged to wash their hands before eating and the snacks provided are healthy. They enjoy a choice of fresh fruit, cheese, carrot sticks, toast and cereals. Children have a choice of milk or water with their snack. There is a water dispenser in the room so children can help themselves to a drink throughout the session. This ensures they are well hydrated. Children's knowledge and understanding of healthy lifestyles is further promoted through discussion with staff, who talk to them about healthy foods.

Children have very good opportunities to enjoy fresh air and exercise as the setting operates a free flow system for indoor and outdoor play. They are able to go outside in all weathers wearing appropriate clothing and enjoy a range of physical activities, role play and construction.

### Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are safe because the premises are secure and effectively monitored throughout the day and particularly as children arrive and depart. A visitors book is completed to ensure there is a clear record of who is present. Children can access toys freely and safely as they are stored in low level drawers. The staff complete a daily risk assessment checklist before children arrive to ensure all areas of the setting, both inside and out are safe.

Children learn about keeping themselves safe through discussion with staff and everyday play; for example, a chalk line is drawn in the playground and children know that bikes are not taken over the line to stop accidents. In the home corner, a member of staff participates in children's role play. A child 'makes the tea' and the adult says 'Better turn it round and hold the handle. You don't want to burn your fingers'.

Toys and equipment are checked and in good order. Staff are effectively deployed to ensure supervision is good and children are safe inside and in the playground.

Children are well protected from harm and neglect. Many staff have completed child protection training, or are booked on courses to update their knowledge and understanding. They are clear about recognising signs and symptoms of possible abuse and are confident in the procedures to follow in the event of any concerns. There is a clear safeguarding children policy in place.

## **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children come into the setting with confidence and are eager to choose their first activity. Many children seek out a special member of staff or a friend. There is a broad range of activities available for children to choose throughout the session, and children have good choices in their play to promote their all round development. They settle quickly to a favourite activity, three children become absorbed in role play in the well resourced 'home corner', one sets out cups and plates while the others busy themselves 'cooking' and pouring drinks.

Children's language development and vocabulary is promoted as staff engage them in discussion and participate enthusiastically in their play. In the outdoor play area children extend their imaginative play, pushing prams round the playground. A child tells an adult 'This baby needs another coat. She's getting really cold'.

Children remain well occupied through the session, choosing from a range of puzzles, creative play and construction. They enjoy making Christmas paper chains and using the small world equipment to promote their imaginative skills further.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff demonstrate a secure understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and there are simple but effective plans in place covering all areas of learning. However, planning for mathematical development is not so effective and although staff have acknowledged this in their verbal evaluation of the plans, improvements have not yet been put into place. The evaluation of activities is inconsistent in some areas.

The setting is moving towards a more child focussed curriculum providing children with more choices. Regular written observations on children help staff provide a clear picture of children's development and written records of achievement track their progress effectively. However, the record of achievements do not clearly show next steps for children's development.

Children who have additional needs are well supported. The setting liaises effectively with parents and professionals to ensure all children are fully included in the curriculum. Staff are positive and encouraging in their approach. They ask open ended questions to help children think, such as 'What does the dough feel like now? Do we need to add more water? What will happen if we add too much?'

Children are confident and settled. They play well together and have made strong relationships with the staff and with special friends. A child approaches a member of staff for a cuddle, while three children negotiate well together in the role play area, taking turns and helping each other, one child is busy 'pouring' tea. She gives one to a child who has just joined the play saying 'There you are. have a nice cup of tea'. Children's independence is well promoted and snack time, and as they choose their own resources. Children are confident to talk about their lives and families. A boy tells a member of staff 'I'm going to be a midwife and fly a helicopter'. When an adult asks him what a midwife does, he explains 'They help babies and mummies, of course!'

Children recognise their names as they arrive in the morning as they find their name card and self register. They have good opportunities to write and make marks freely. A child approaches an adult who has joined them in the 'home corner' and asks 'What do you want to eat?' The adult asks for spaghetti bolognese as the child 'writes' it on a pad of paper. The child holds

up a box of lasagne and says 'Sorry. We don't have that but we got this'. Children's language is developing well. They enjoy books and visit the book corner regularly. A child sits quietly on the cushion, turning the pages and 'reading' to herself. She is joined by an adult and shows them the page she is looking at. The adult looks at the picture and says 'Look. That pig is fast asleep'. The child replies 'That one isn't. Look he's got one eye open!' There is good labelling around the room, helping children to learn that words carry meaning.

At circle time, after staff take the register, children are encouraged to count the number of children present. Most participate with enthusiasm. They then count the boys and then the girls, counting corresponding counters onto two rods. The children then have a visual prompt to calculate whether there are more boys than girls. Mathematical language is included by staff, such as more or less. However, there are few planned activities that promote children's mathematical development and children have few opportunities to experiment with problem solving and early calculation.

Children experiment with magnets. They laugh together as they hold the large magnet over small discs and watch the discs jump up and 'stick' to the magnet. They are fascinated as they feel the magnets repel, pushing apart. They then extend their learning by finding other objects that are magnetic and some that are not. Children are becoming skilled in information and communication technology. They use simple computer programmes on the large, interactive 'Smart board', matching objects and pictures. Children are developing a clear sense of time and place as they discuss their plans for Christmas and what they did at the weekend. A member of staff asks one child 'Did you go to a party? You have lots of sparkle in your hair.' The child replies 'I went to see Father Christmas and he's coming to see me again when it's really Christmas'. Children design and build roads and towers with large wooden bricks and laugh as they fall down, saying 'I built it too high!'

Children have good opportunities to create artwork from their own imaginations as they use paint and brushes. They help staff make play dough and mix in sparkles and food essences to make different textures and smells. Children talk about how the dough and sand feels and they use their hands to squeeze the dough and pour the sand. Children use their imaginations well, both inside and in the playground. They become absorbed in creating their own scenarios and involve their peers as they join them, two children make beds for their 'babies' and dress up to take them 'to the shops'. Children enjoy singing and playing percussion on a regular basis. They join the school to watch members of a visiting orchestra as the play and demonstrate their instruments.

Children enjoy using bikes and trikes in the playground. They pedal with increasing confidence and have a good sense of space, stopping and steering well. They move around the indoor play area with care and attention, sometimes stepping aside allowing others to pass. Children's small muscle control is supported effectively as they use tools to roll and cut the dough, or manoeuvre the small paper chains to stick together. This promotes children's hand/eye co-ordination. Children learn about how their bodies work through discussion with staff. They are encouraged to move about in the playground to keep warm and they laugh as they watch their breath in the cold air.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Children and their parents are welcomed warmly by staff at the start of the session. Children's art work and photos of their daily routines are displayed, providing a welcoming environment.

Staff know the children well and are able to meet their individual needs effectively. Children enjoy looking through photo albums kept in the book corner, showing themselves and their older siblings when they attended the setting. This provides children with a clear sense of belonging. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children learn about the wider world as they explore some cultural festivals. They have a good range of resources that provide positive images of cultural diversity, such as books, puzzles, dolls and dressing up. However, there are few resources that provide positive images of disability.

Children's behaviour is good and staff are quick to praise them for working so hard and playing nicely, helping to tidy up and being kind to each other. Many staff have attended behaviour management training and provide good role models for children's behaviour using praise and encouragement, and clear explanation. At times, children are rewarded with stickers which also promotes positive behaviour.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. They are provided with clear information about the setting through the parents pack. Regular newsletters provides parents with information about themes and projects. Children are encouraged to extend their learning at home by bringing in special toys for 'show and tell'. There is a successful book loan system to encourage children to enjoy stories at home and parents are able to look at their children's record of achievement at any time. Parents are invited to discuss their children's progress and view their records with the child's key worker at open days held twice each year. Parents state that they are happy with the care provided and that staff are friendly and approachable.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides care. Children are cared for by qualified and experienced staff. They are committed to attending ongoing training to develop their skills. There are secure systems in place to ensure staff are suitable. The staff work well as a team promoting positive outcomes for children.

The premises are well organised to provide children with sufficient space for a range of activities, both inside and out in the playground. There is a dedicated craft area, a well resourced role play area and a calm and comfortable book corner where children can sit quietly. Resources are easily accessible promoting good choices for children. However, resources that provide positive images of disability are limited.

Leadership and management is good. The nursery education is monitored through a range of systems. The setting is quick to respond to advice from the pre-school development worker who visits regularly. Staff and planning meetings also highlight areas for development and the manager attends local cluster meetings. The manager and staff have worked well to increase their contact with the school and links are good. Children benefit from close liaison with the reception class and teacher who visit to play at times, helping the transition as the younger children leave to go to school. The pre-school are invited to school concerts and events so children become familiar with the school environment.

The setting holds a comprehensive range of policies and procedures and these are reviewed and updated regularly. All required documentation is in place and stored confidentially to promote the confidentiality of families.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

Not applicable.

## **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards. 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.

## **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 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):

- increase resources that provide positive images of disability

### **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):

- ensure children's records clearly show their next steps for development
- improve the evaluation of activities to ensure all areas of learning are effectively covered

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education* (HMI ref no 2599) which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)