

Bramble Infant School and Nursery

Bramble Road, Southsea, Hampshire PO4 0DT

Inspection dates

12–13 March 2019

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher's strong leadership has led to improved outcomes for pupils. He knows the strengths of the school and has taken effective action to address the decline in pupils' achievement since the last inspection.
- Leaders put the social and emotional well-being of pupils at the forefront of their decisions. They provide strong support for vulnerable pupils and their families. Pupils are protected and they thrive socially and academically.
- Governors are strong. They know the school well and track improvements rigorously. They hold leaders to account for pupils' outcomes and the use of additional funding.
- Leaders target additional funding well to ensure disadvantaged pupils' outcomes improve. There is very little difference in the progress of this group and that of other pupils in school.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are developing well. They know the school's 'STAR' values. Pupils know what to do to succeed. Relationships between pupils are positive across the school.
- The youngest children get off to a good start in Nursery. Teaching in the Reception classes builds on these foundations. Children make very good progress and leave early years well prepared for key stage 1.
- Pupils who are vulnerable make strong progress from their starting points. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL) are supported well.
- Teaching is good. Teachers value the support they have received to improve their skills in English, mathematics and the wider curriculum.
- Pupils' progress in writing is improving across the school. Pupils' spelling and presentation are generally of a high standard. However, outcomes in mathematics need to improve. Not all tasks challenge or support pupils' learning.
- Teachers plan interesting topics for pupils. However, pupils do not develop their knowledge and skills across a range of subjects over time. Leaders have plans to develop the wider curriculum.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching in mathematics so that a higher proportion of pupils reach the age-related standard in mathematics.
- Ensure that activities planned match the needs of all pupils, by using assessment information routinely to offer pupils the appropriate level of challenge, or support appropriate to their age and starting point.
- Continue to develop the wider curriculum to provide more opportunities for pupils to deepen their knowledge and skills across all subject areas.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher has a strong vision for the school. He wants pupils to be aspirational and his staff follow suit. The stability and drive he has brought to the school have resulted in clear and significant improvements after a period of decline. Nevertheless, the design of the wider curriculum still requires further development.
- Leaders know the school well and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the provision accurately. Their drive to improve the quality of teaching has been particularly successful. After a period of significant change, they have ensured that standards of teaching are now high.
- Leaders are determined that disadvantaged pupils will achieve. They have a clear strategy for the use of pupil premium funding. As a result, disadvantaged pupils are making strong progress from their starting points.
- Leaders have used the support from the local authority and nearby teaching school appropriately. This support has contributed to the improvement in teaching and learning, particularly writing. Lessons are generally well planned, although in some mathematics lessons, work is not pitched at the right level for all pupils.
- Subject leaders work with colleagues to improve teaching, such as increasing levels of challenge for all pupils. Leaders check pupils' progress carefully, ensuring that any help that is needed is put in place without delay.
- Parents and carers are very supportive of the school and its leaders. Those who responded to the Ofsted questionnaire, Parent View, would recommend the school to others. Parents who responded in writing or spoke to inspectors were overwhelmingly positive. No negative comments were received. One parent said, 'We are in the middle of a city, but the school has made it feel like a village school. Everyone knows each other.'
- The additional funding for pupils with SEND is used effectively. Pupils' social and emotional needs are addressed and as a result, pupils are ready to learn. Barriers to success are removed and pupils enjoy their learning.
- The primary physical education (PE) and sport funding is used well. Leaders have concentrated on the development of staff. Teachers are more confident now about their teaching. Pupils now have access to a wider range of sporting activities.
- Leaders have designed an assessment system that enables teachers to track the progress of all pupils. Teachers' assessments have been externally checked and judgements have been validated.
- This now means that teachers and leaders have a clearer view of pupils' progress, which has led to improvements in outcomes. Nevertheless, teachers do not routinely use assessment information to plan work that closely matches pupils' needs.
- The wider curriculum is being taught and displayed proudly through displays across the school. However, teaching across the wider curriculum, for example in subjects such as science and history, is not as carefully thought through as English and mathematics. Leaders have plans to design a project-based curriculum with clear start and end

points. They are clear about the progression of skills pupils need to learn.

Governance of the school

- Governors' view of the school's effectiveness is accurate. They are committed to the school and strive to support its continuing improvement. Governors have a very clear monitoring timetable and check improvements carefully to hold leaders to account properly.
- Governors are very supportive of the school's leaders and staff. They work closely with leaders to address any areas for improvement. They have a clear understanding of the current improvement plans and check that the plans are having the desired effect. The approach enables them to talk to teachers to judge the success of leaders' strategies in the classrooms.
- Governors ensure that additional funding is used effectively to support pupils' needs emotionally and academically. Governors use their skills to support the school.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders ensure that all staff are trained and knowledgeable in keeping children safe. They have created a culture where safeguarding is everybody's responsibility and staff know how to protect pupils. Relationships between adults and pupils are impressive. Pupils know whom to go to if they have a problem and express confidence that adults will help them sort things out.
- The safeguarding team meets fortnightly and ensures that all children get the support they need. Records for children causing concern are in depth, with clear chronological evidence of concerns, action taken and result of actions. Pupils are well protected in this school.
- Leaders know their pupils and families well. The pastoral team has strong, positive relationships with families that enable them to provide effective early support. Parents and carers told inspectors that they feel their children are kept safe in school. 'Staff care about our children,' remarked one parent.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers possess strong subject knowledge and use this to explain concepts to pupils. Teachers model writing well, carefully demonstrating the content and quality of presentation that they expect from pupils. Pupils were then able to write their own sentences about how the characters felt effectively. Inspection evidence showed that pupils write well across the school and make strong progress.
- Pupils with SEND are supported well by staff through a range of interventions. The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) knows these pupils well. Interventions are focused on the individual needs of the pupils. Pupils observed at the inspection were supported to improve their speech and language. As a result of pupils saying their sentences aloud, with support from trained staff, there is clear improvement in their

sentence writing. Strong progress was seen in books from their starting points.

- Teachers support pupils who speak EAL well. Stories in the pupil's first language are shared and tasks are planned thoughtfully. Consequently, pupils' understanding of English improves and strong progress over time is made from their starting points.
- While the quality of teaching has improved in recent months, there are still some inconsistencies between classes and year groups, particularly in mathematics. Leaders are aware of these and are taking steps to ensure that standards are consistently high.
- Pupils read a wide range of texts and told inspectors that they enjoy choosing books from the library to read. The most able Year 2 pupils read with increasing fluency and expression. They use their knowledge of sounds to blend and segment words to read unknown words. They read with increasing accuracy.
- However, lower-attaining pupils self-select books that are not always matched to their needs. This slows their progress. Currently, some disadvantaged pupils are not on track to achieve their expected outcomes. Leaders are carefully monitoring bespoke interventions for identified pupils to ensure that they catch up.
- Teachers welcome the opportunity to improve their practice through the school's high-quality, inclusive approach to teaching. This aims to ensure that learning activities match the needs of all pupils. However, some activities lack enough challenge or support. Teachers do not always use assessment information to determine what pupils already know and can do.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- The welfare and personal development of all pupils are at the heart of every decision made. Relationships are strong across the school. These positive relationships help pupils develop into confident learners.
- The 'STAR' values are known by pupils and contribute to developing pupils' attitudes to learning. Pupils want to succeed and know they must be resilient. 'That means you have to keep trying,' a Reception-age child told inspectors. 'I kept trying to do my shoes up. When I did, I got a certificate because I succeeded.' Parents also know and understand how the 'STAR' values support their children's development. This enables parents to continue to encourage their children and celebrate achievements at home.
- Pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, enjoy attending the breakfast and after-school clubs. Pupils told inspectors, 'It's fun because you get to play with your friends.' Pupils play well together and develop strong relationships. Adults support pupils in a wide range of play activities extremely well.
- Pupils know if they have a problem that they can go to any adult. One pupil noted that staff, 'will sort out anything'. Pupils feel safe in school because they are well cared for. 'If you are hurt on the playground, you just go and sit on the first-aid bench and a grown-up will help you.'

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Behaviour throughout the school is good. The atmosphere in classrooms is purposeful. Most of the time pupils are calm, remain focused on their work and concentrate well. Teachers have high expectations for pupils' behaviour, which pupils respond to.
- The pastoral team provides strong support for families. Its members work extremely well with the attendance officer to improve attendance. Strategies and procedures are followed, and attendance has improved, especially for disadvantaged pupils. However, leaders are aware that more work needs to be done to address persistent absence for disadvantaged pupils.
- The strong work of the pastoral team has eliminated to zero the number of fixed-term exclusions, which were previously very high. This is as a result of supporting pupils' social and emotional needs and families more effectively.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils' outcomes have declined since the previous inspection. Leaders have introduced a system that quickly identifies pupils who fall behind and uses this to deploy the right support to help them catch up. The approach has effectively reversed the decline in outcomes. Pupils' outcomes currently are significantly improving in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Assessment information, supported by the inspection team's observations and book scrutiny, show that all pupils across the school are making good progress in writing. Outcomes are improving. Leaders are providing extra support for pupils close to reaching the expected standard.
- Pupils, particularly the most able, read with clear understanding and are developing their skills of inference and deduction. Pupils can transfer these skills to their writing, as seen when writing about Grace Darling. Pupils used their writing to create interesting texts which deepened their understanding of inference.
- The number of pupils writing at greater depth has significantly improved. All pupils use their phonic knowledge well when reading and this helps them read with fluency.
- Pupils grasp the basics of writing well and develop their skills over time to become strong writers. Pupils present their work carefully. Spelling is a strength, and pupils are at pains to select the right language and punctuation for their texts. Pupils enjoy writing.
- Pupils with SEND, vulnerable pupils and those who speak EAL, make strong progress from their starting points. Leaders and teachers carefully track their progress and tasks are planned to match the level of their needs.
- Disadvantaged pupils receive effective support in writing and mathematics and make strong progress. However, in reading, disadvantaged pupils are not making progress in line with their peers in school. Leaders are addressing this through targeted interventions and closely tracking its impact on pupils' outcomes to ensure none falls further behind.

- In mathematics, pupils' books show that they make clear progress from their starting points. Nevertheless, planned tasks do not always consider what pupils already know and can do. Some tasks lack challenge or support to enable pupils to improve their outcomes.
- Pupils' knowledge and skills in subjects such as humanities and science are not of the same quality as those found in reading, writing and mathematics.

Early years provision

Good

- The early years provision is well led and managed. The Nursery manager and Reception leader understand how young children develop and what their needs are. As a result, they ensure that children make strong progress from their starting points.
- Staff in the provision for two-year-olds and pre-school children are well trained. The environments are well resourced and stimulating. These resources give children opportunities to investigate and follow their interests. One parent commented, 'Our children have grown in confidence as they have been nurtured through their time at the nursery. Their curiosity has been ignited and their social skills have developed.' Children leave Nursery well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- In Reception, phonics is taught well. Children learn to recognise letters and say sounds correctly and then to use these to support their early writing. Progress for most children in writing is strong.
- Children's behaviour is good. They know and respond to adults' expectations of behaviour. Children's behaviour shows that they feel safe and confident to explore. Teachers plan activities that enable children to 'have a go', which they respond to with excitement. Inspectors observed a group of boys with three different lengths of guttering, trying to position them so their cars would travel down them all. The boys cooperated well with each other in trying to solve the various problems they encountered.
- Good attention is paid to safeguarding to make sure that children are kept safe both indoors and outside. Children feel safe, telling inspectors, 'We love coming to school.'
- Parents are appreciative of the online system that allows them to see what their children have been doing and learning. They also appreciate being able to contribute to their child's learning journal and being able to stay at the beginning of the day, if they wish. This strong link helps parents to support their child's learning at home and fosters a sense of cooperation between school staff and parents.
- Teaching is good. Children are taught well and as a result make very strong progress. The proportion of children leaving Reception with a good level of development is in line with national figures and improving.
- Staff in early years have excellent relationships with children. Independence is promoted well. Children are confident in their 'discover and do' sessions. They are keen to use the skills they know. However, some activities are not always sufficiently challenging.

School details

Unique reference number	116182
Local authority	Portsmouth
Inspection number	10088081

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Nursery and infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	1 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	163
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Share D'All
Headteacher	Oliver Bradley
Telephone number	02392 828604
Website	www.bramble.portsmouth.sch.uk
Email address	gisadmin@goldsmith.portsmouth.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	4 October 2013

Information about this school

- Bramble Infant and Nursery School is smaller than the average-sized nursery and infant school.
- Goldsmith Infant School amalgamated with Bramble Nursery in 2016 and became Bramble Infant and Nursery School.
- The school has 11 out of a possible 17 ethnic groups. The average number is nine for this phase of education.
- The school's breakfast and after-school club provision is run on behalf of the governing body. Breakfast club opens at 7.45am and after-school club closes at 6pm.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in each class jointly with leaders.
- Provision for two-year-olds and pre-school children was observed and inspectors met with the Nursery manager.
- Meetings were held with pupils, governors and school leaders. The lead inspector spoke on the phone with one governor.
- Representatives from the local authority and the teaching school alliance, who provide support for the school, also met with the lead inspector.
- The lead inspector spoke informally with parents at the start of the school day. Inspectors took account of 52 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, as well as their written responses. They also considered 23 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documents, including the school's improvement plans. They looked at information on current pupils' progress, minutes of governing body meetings, safeguarding procedures and the plans for additional funding.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and analysed samples of their work.

Inspection team

Becky Greenhalgh, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Rachel Goplen	Ofsted Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2019