

# Brockwell Nursery and Infant School

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	112673
<b>Local Authority</b>	DERBYSHIRE LA
<b>Inspection number</b>	310977
<b>Inspection date</b>	19 September 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Ian Nelson

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3-7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	197
School	
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Bob Pont
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Andrea Robinson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	13 June 2005
<b>School address</b>	Purbeck Avenue Loundsley Green Chesterfield Derbyshire S40 4NP
<b>Telephone number</b>	01246 232 034
<b>Fax number</b>	01246 232 034

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: the impact of the school's strategies for improving writing, particularly of the more able, what the school has done to help boys to attain standards as high as those of girls and whether the quality of provision in the Foundation Stage is good or outstanding. He gathered evidence from the school's self-evaluation form, lesson observations, discussions with staff, governors and children, by looking at children's work and information the school keeps on how well children are doing with their learning, analysing parents' questionnaire responses, and the school improvement plan. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail but the inspector found no evidence to suggest the school's own assessments as given in its self-evaluation form were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

Brockwell is an average sized infant and nursery school that serves a residential area local to it with some children coming from further afield. The numbers of children eligible for a free school meal are below average. Most children are from White British backgrounds with a very small number from other White or mixed heritage backgrounds. Almost all children have English as their home language and none is at an early stage of learning English. The number of children identified by the school as needing extra help with their learning is below average. When children join the nursery they have a wide range of skills and knowledge close to those expected of their age although this fluctuates from year to year. Not all the children who enter the Reception class have been through the school's nursery and there is a wide spread of ability at this stage especially in their social and emotional development. The school has recently achieved Health Promoting School status.

## Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

The parents of the children who attend this school hold it in very high esteem. All but one of the 106 inspection questionnaires returned were wholly positive about the school and 58 included extensive written comments singing the school's praises. Typical of many of the comments was one from a parent who said, 'We have always found Brockwell Nursery and Infant School an excellent school with very dedicated staff who always have the children's best interests at heart'. This sums up this exceptional school.

'The school provides a safe and stimulating environment in which children thrive', wrote another parent echoing the accurate views of several others. Many commented on the willingness of staff to listen to any concerns and to keep them informed on how well their child is doing at school. The staff's dedication to knowing each child and to helping them to do the best they can is at the heart of the school's success. From the time children enter the excellent nursery to the day they transfer to the junior school the head and staff work tirelessly to ensure that all grow in confidence, and develop the social and academic skills they need to be successful in later life. As a result of excellent teaching, children make outstanding gains in their learning so that when they leave at Year 2 standards are consistently well above average and sometimes exceptionally high.

Despite these very good results, the staff have not been complacent. The excellent systems they have to check how well children are doing have shown that girls do better than boys and that, although standards in writing are above average, fewer children gain the higher Level 3 in the national tests at Year 2 than in reading and mathematics. The school's response has been to seek advice, have teachers attend in-service training courses and try alternative ways to motivate children to want to learn. Having put strategies in place to tackle these issues the school has evidence that they appear to be having a positive impact on accelerating progress in writing and among the boys, although it is early days yet.

Underpinning these good results in reading, writing and mathematics is the school's dedication to helping children grow emotionally and socially. This starts very early in the nursery and was amply demonstrated in a Reception class when a child informed the inspector that, 'I am the teacher of this group' as he held up cards with coloured shapes for the others to match on their own cards. He was confident enough to inform the inspector that, 'if you sit there you have to play the game' and to correct him when he went wrong. This early emphasis on personal responsibility lays the foundations for the children to take on roles as 'playground buddies' and members of the Badger Club (the school council) when they get older, roles that they take very seriously. They are also encouraged to think about others beyond the school through their links with the residents of a care home for the elderly to whom they write letters.

Children share their parents' enthusiasm for the school. They say that they greatly enjoy lessons and the many extra activities the school provides, such as Tai Chi and gardening. They like growing their own vegetables which they ask the school cook to include in their cooked lunches, demonstrating their growing understanding of, and commitment to, healthy lifestyles.

The school's success is the product of a dedicated headteacher who has set very high standards based on a clear vision for her school that is shared by staff, governors and parents. As one parent wrote, 'The school is very well led by Mrs Robinson; her guidance and experience are invaluable'. Teachers in charge of subjects provide excellent leadership, knowing how well children are doing, analysing test results and checking the quality of lessons on a regular basis

to maintain the high quality of teaching and learning. The governors are highly supportive and knowledgeable but also confident enough to ask the staff about test results, why they are the way they are and what they are doing to tweak those which do not match the best. This highly effective leadership has enabled the school to maintain excellent achievement and well above average standards over several years, and gives it excellent capacity to improve even further.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 1**

Children get off to an outstanding start in the nursery. Parents speak very highly of the excellent arrangements for introducing their children to nursery and say how well they settle. This was evidenced during the inspection in the very early days of the term when the nursery was a calm but very purposeful hive of activity with children sensibly choosing tasks, including when to take their snack, or working alongside the adults on activities to develop their skills. This high quality provision continues into Reception classes where the emphasis on personal, social and emotional development ensures that children work and play together in great harmony. As a result of this excellent provision nearly all children reach the expected goals by the start of Year 1 with around a third exceeding them.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Check regularly that the initiatives to accelerate boys' progress and children's achievement in writing are raising standards in these areas further.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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### Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1

### Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

### The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No



## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

20 September 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Brockwell Nursery and Infant School, Chesterfield, S40 4NP

Thank you for making me feel so welcome when I came to visit your school recently. I enjoyed talking with you and watching you learn and play. This letter is to tell you what I think of your school.

You have an excellent school. Mrs Robinson and all the staff go out of their way to look after you and help you to learn. You told me that you enjoy school. You like your lessons and I saw many of you working hard in class. You also enjoy activities like the gardening club and are very proud of the vegetables you grow. The teachers give you interesting things to do. This helps you to make excellent progress in your learning. Although you do very well in the tests you take at Year 2 the girls do a bit better than boys. Some of you do better in reading and mathematics than you do in writing. The teachers are trying out new ideas to help you to do better in your writing. They are also helping boys to catch up with the girls. I have asked them to check how well these ideas are working so that you can all do even better in the future.

I enjoyed coming to see you and if you carry on working as hard as you are doing, I am sure you will do well throughout school.

Yours truly

Ian Nelson

Lead inspector