

# The Brambles Nursery School and Children's Centre

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	115829
<b>Local Authority</b>	Portsmouth
<b>Inspection number</b>	312072
<b>Inspection date</b>	12 June 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Bernice Magson

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>	Nursery
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3-5
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	88
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs D Urquhart
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs A Gale
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	21 June 2004
<b>School address</b>	Bramble Road Southsea PO4 0DT
<b>Telephone number</b>	02392 828606
<b>Fax number</b>	02392 828606

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<b>Age group</b>	3-5
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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: how well the needs of all children are addressed by the school's provision and standards they achieve; and how leaders and managers at all levels determine the school's direction, measure its performance and evaluate its outcomes. Evidence was gathered from the school's records, planning and policies, from observing teaching and learning, and from discussions with children, staff, parents and governors. Other aspects of the children's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included in the report.

## Description of the school

This Nursery school admits children from a diverse social community. Most children join the Nursery at the start of the autumn term after their third birthday. They attend either a morning or afternoon session, with an option of extended childcare on site. Children are of White British backgrounds or Asian heritage, and a small number are refugees or asylum seekers. Above average numbers of children are learning to speak English as an additional language. A few children have learning difficulties, including speech and communication needs, and social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. The school has achieved Investors in People accreditation and enhanced Healthy Schools status.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

'I couldn't have wished for a better start to my child's school life. She can't wait to get to school each day, because of the warm welcome she receives', commented one parent, reflecting the views of many. Indeed, in this good school, children achieve well because there is a good focus on meeting their individual needs. In a highly positive child-centred environment, children are encouraged to listen, discuss, choose, take risks and seek solutions to problems. Over time, they become independent learners, accessing equipment confidently, and sharing their discoveries enthusiastically with others. From low starting points, many children reach expected goals in all areas of learning by the end of the Nursery year.

Children receive outstanding care and support and, as a result, they enjoy school very much and attend very regularly. An effective system of key persons for each child ensures that they feel safe and secure. Puzzles, role-play equipment and other resources reflect a wide variety of cultures and help children to settle quickly. A bilingual nursery nurse supports those who speak English as an additional language and, as a result, they learn as well as their peers. Individual education plans identify very effectively the support for children with social and emotional needs, or who have learning difficulties. The school keeps extensive records of individual achievements, and these are shared well with parents. However, children, and many of their parents, are unclear about next steps in learning which need to be included in assessment records.

The quality of teaching and learning is good, both in adult-led and child initiated play. Staff work together well to ensure a seamless and continuous learning environment, both indoors and out. Staff know each child well and provide good support so that they can achieve. Liberal praise ensures children behave extremely well and are encouraged to attempt new challenges. A good variety of teaching methods sustain children's interest and enthusiasm for learning. For example, in an excellent adult-led session, children listened intently to the pop of a pea pod, and watched in wonderment as the peas emerged. The teacher skilfully extended children's number skills as they counted the peas. Favourable staffing ratios enable adults to deliver an excellent curriculum successfully. Sessions are very well structured to make best use of the limited accommodation, and activities are planned effectively to capture the imagination and interest of individuals. A well-planned range of visits and visitors promote children's knowledge of the world around them and develop basic skills important for their future economic well-being. A recent visit of a farmer and his farm animals has led to some good discussions about the care of animals, for example. Parents and other visitors have enjoyed looking at a good display of children's written work, which recorded the event.

Leadership and management are good. The school has experienced significant change since its designation as a Children's Centre, both in staffing and in the use of the building. Under the direction of a dedicated headteacher, the future of the Nursery is firmly established, and cross centre roles understood. Targets for improving the provision are in place, although they lack sufficient detail to enable the school to measure its performance effectively and systems for monitoring are currently underdeveloped. The school recognises that this is an area for improvement and it has a good capacity to improve.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

As a Nursery school, the Foundation stage is completely covered by the Overall Effectiveness section.

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

- Improve assessment records to include next steps in learning and share the information with children and their parents.
- Refine improvement planning in order to sharpen monitoring and evaluation procedures by leaders and managers at all levels.

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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?	2
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?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

### Personal development and well-being

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

### The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
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?	2

<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>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
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

25 June 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of The Brambles Nursery School and Children's Centre, Southsea, PO4 0DT

Thank you for making me so welcome when I visited your Nursery. I had a lovely time with you, and I can see why you enjoy school so much. I think that you have a good school. What I liked most about your Nursery is:

- you all want to come to Nursery and are busy every day
- everybody takes extremely good care of you and this helps you to feel happy and safe
- you do well in your learning, especially in things that help you to grow up, like sharing, taking turns and tidying away the toys
- the teachers find many exciting things for you to do and learn, such as the singing and music time sessions, which you all enjoy so much
- excellent help is given to those of you who find learning more difficult and to those speaking English as a second language.

Your headteacher and the other grown ups keep making things better all the time, so your Nursery should continue to improve. Here are two things that will help to make a difference. I would like the teachers to explain to you and your parents about your next steps in learning. Also, I think that the grown-ups could improve the way they plan and check things to make sure that, in all areas, everything is always as good as it can be.

I hope that you carry on enjoying school and learning many interesting things.

Yours sincerely,

Bernice Magson

Lead Inspector