

Brunswick Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	110596
Local Authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	337530
Inspection dates	8–9 July 2010
Reporting inspector	Nick Butt

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

Type of school	Nursery
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3–4
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	80
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Joye Rosenstiel
Headteacher	Amanda Bannister
Date of previous school inspection	1 February 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 22 lessons and observed seven members of the teaching staff. They held meetings with governors, staff and groups of children. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a selection of documentation, including planning, evidence of monitoring such as lesson observations, and analysis of children's work and other assessment information. The inspection team scrutinised inspection questionnaires returned by 53 parents and carers, and by staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the effectiveness of the school's assessment procedures following the introduction of a new tracking system
- how well the school is ensuring consistency of high quality provision
- the impact of the monitoring of middle leaders on progress and attainment.

Information about the school

This is a smaller than average nursery school drawing children from all over Cambridge. Children attend five sessions per week, either mornings only, afternoons only, or half the week full time. There is also integrated care available before and after school managed by the governing body. The majority of children are of White British heritage. A small proportion come from a variety of minority ethnic backgrounds and speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational needs, is low. The school has Health Promotion in Schools status. The headteacher has been in post for two years.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

Brunswick Nursery is an outstanding school. The headteacher has developed her highly skilled and experienced team extremely effectively, providing memorable experiences for the children and ensuring that they all thrive. The Nursery buzzes with excitement and enjoyment, having a stimulating learning environment both inside and outside.

Consequently children make outstanding progress in all areas of learning. Parents and carers greatly appreciate all the school does for their children. A typical comment ran, 'It is a hugely stimulating place - where I love leaving the children as I know they will be safe, amused, stimulated and cherished. Their individual development has been outstanding and their happiness says it all.'

Children's independence is promoted very well, as they are given the freedom to choose their activities and select resources. Each of the resource bases inside is extremely well equipped and totally accessible to the children, promoting all six areas of learning most effectively. Similarly, the walled garden provides a wealth of activity and is in constant use. Outstanding teaching ensures that every opportunity is taken to extend children's learning through skilful questioning and discussion. There is an excellent emphasis on teaching basic numeracy and literacy skills. Because all adults know the children extremely well, planning is tailored to their interests and needs. However, there is no formal system for monitoring the range of activities children take part in on a daily basis to ensure they experience a good balance across all areas of learning.

Children have an outstanding understanding of how to stay safe, and help staff carry out risk assessments. They make decisions about their own safety and play with consideration for others. Children get on very well together and meet the high expectations staff have of their behaviour. There are many opportunities for physical play, including dancing and parachute games, so that they take plenty of exercise.

Children have a good understanding of healthy choices, and grow their own flowers and vegetables. They have access to healthy snacks during the day, but no record is kept of who has had milk and a snack or not, leaving the possibility that some children may not take advantage of this provision.

An outstanding curriculum gives children a wide range of memorable experiences that contribute considerably towards their outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Special events, such as the Grandparents' Cafe, when they entertained grandparents for the day, or 'living eggs', when they watched chicks hatching, widen the scope of their experience. Excellent care, guidance and support ensure that children's needs are met very well, and that children with special educational needs and/or disabilities make outstanding progress. Rigorous monitoring gives precise self-evaluation, so that leaders and managers know exactly how to help the school move

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forward. A new tracking system gives very useful general information about how pupils are doing, but does not break this down into sufficient detail for the different elements of the areas of learning. The school has built upon the very strong position from the last inspection and has an outstanding capacity to improve further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Refine the school's assessment procedures by:
 - producing a more detailed summary of children's progress in each area of learning
 - tracking how individual children choose their daily activities
 - recording which children have had snacks.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of children**1**

Children join the Nursery with skills and abilities that are generally in line with expectations, although often below in communication, language and literacy. They make outstanding progress because of the consistently excellent provision and leave after three terms extremely well prepared for primary school. Their attainment is well above national expectations in all six areas of learning. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those who speak English as an additional language, also achieve outstandingly well, because of the high quality support they receive.

Children love coming to school, and settle quickly to their tasks. They take responsibility very willingly, always showing a great interest in what the adults are doing. For example, children wanted to take their own registers, and some could read the other children's names as they marked if they were present or not. Children take great delight in role play, and there are many places where this is encouraged, including a pirate ship made out of cardboard boxes with a roaring waves soundtrack, to add to the maritime atmosphere. Outside, children ran a builder's merchants, and arranged delivery of bricks and breeze blocks to their adult clients, carefully counting and costing them as they used their numeracy skills in real life situations. Children show a particular interest in exploring the world around them, investigating large blocks of ice with gusto, and building sloppy mountains out of clay and vegetation. They celebrate their own and others' cultures, through, for example, observing Chinese New Year with the local Chinese community, and dancing to a wide choice of world music in the garden.

Children contribute to the home-school board that shows what they do outside school. They also help with jobs around the Nursery such as preparing fruit and tidying up.

Children make suggestions and ask questions, helping to choose and buy resources for the Nursery. They are involved with the local community, singing to the elderly at a nearby community centre. Children also help to select work for their year books, which give a very clear record of their time at the Nursery. They enjoy thumbing through the pages and remembering what they have learnt. One boy, on discovering a forgotten painting, exclaimed, 'I loved that one actually: a knight and a princess in a tall, tall

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castle!'

These are the grades for children's outcomes

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Children's achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account:	
Children's attainment ¹	1
The quality of children's learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
Children's behaviour	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which children develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1
Taking into account:	
Children's attendance ¹	2
The extent of children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

Children have a high degree of freedom to pursue their own interests. The Nursery, also provides structured sessions to promote early literacy skills, such as linking sounds and letters and for children to enjoy stories. These high quality short intensive lessons involve small groups of children, who benefit greatly from sensitive teaching that builds on their current knowledge and understanding. The Nursery's own resident storyteller captivated a group with an account of 'Papa Sun and Mama Moon' and how they invited the sea to play (which turned out not to be such a bright idea). Children were involved in fashioning the story and using attractive visual aids to help bring it to life. The vibrant curriculum fires children's imaginations and builds on their natural curiosity and wonder at the world around them. A parent summed it up in this way: 'it provides the children with a supportive and inspiring environment where both intellectual and emotional needs are met.' As most children only attend the school for three terms, staff plan

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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plenty of special events and visits for them. These experiences add to the children's outstanding personal development and their enjoyment of school. Examples include the autumn sparkler party, Saturday play days when the school is open at the weekend for families to enjoy; and a superhero evening and a pyjama party, when numeracy and literacy themes were explored respectively. Visits to a local cemetery and to nearby museums enrich the curriculum, and good use is made of the expertise of parents and carers, who include musicians, doctors, marine biologists and special effects coordinators.

Extremely thorough assessment gives all staff a very clear picture of how children are doing. The key worker system, that assigns groups of ten children to particular members of staff, works very well and provides a good point of contact with parents and carers. Year books are assembled meticulously, full of useful information about children's progress and illustrated with examples of work and photographs. Staff rely on their recollections and impressions to consider how children divide up their time between activities and particular areas of learning. This is because there is no formal system for tracking individual's movements, or establishing whether any area is not being accessed so much. Staff are greatly experienced in catering for all manner of needs, and ensure that care is outstanding for all children, as well as providing support for families facing difficulties. Some individuals have made remarkable progress in a very short time, much to the delight of their parents and carers. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities do particularly well with the nurturing and encouragement they receive. The before and after school integrated care is highly effective in catering for children at the start and end of the day, with the same excellent provision seen elsewhere in the Nursery.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of teaching	1
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	1
The extent to which the curriculum meets children's needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher's vision is shared by all staff and underpins the excellent practice in the Nursery, based on a deep understanding of how young children learn. Middle managers join her in monitoring rigorously and systematically, ensuring the consistency of high quality provision throughout the Nursery. This is especially so in terms of the children's year books, which are compiled by a number of different key workers. Children's individual progress is tracked very carefully, but the new system does not allow staff to

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break down performance into the different strands that make up the six areas of learning. The governing body has an outstanding understanding of strengths and areas to develop and gives a strong strategic lead. Monitoring by governors is perceptive and influential in helping the school to progress. There are extremely effective partnerships with parents and other organisations. A thriving parent teacher association raises large sums each year. The school works in partnership with other nurseries to share best practice and undertakes research with the university. It promotes equal opportunities exceptionally well, ensuring all children are included and working hard to support any with particular needs. Exemplary procedures and record keeping mean that safeguarding arrangements are outstanding, and children's safety is paramount. The school has conducted a thorough audit of its local context and measured the impact of its actions, reaching out most effectively to all groups, including families who come from a range of cultures. As a result, children are familiar with their own and other cultures locally and nationally. The school has made links with former pupils abroad and enabled children to raise funds for children's villages in Africa.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	1
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Views of parents and carers

A high proportion of parents and carers returned questionnaires and were overwhelmingly positive about the Nursery, referring to 'a magical world of discovery'. In particular they said how happy their children were, how well informed they felt about

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their children's progress, the high quality of the teaching, how well prepared their children were for primary school, how well the school met their children's needs and how well it was led and managed. Inspection findings support parents' positive views. A few parents and carers felt that school dinners could be improved. The governing body has taken an interest in lunchtime arrangements and the school is taking steps to ensure that school dinners reflect the high quality of all the other provision.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the parents and carers of children registered at Brunswick Nursery School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 53 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 80 children registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	49	92	4	8	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	46	87	6	11	1	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	30	57	23	43	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	45	85	8	15	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	48	91	5	9	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	36	68	17	32	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	41	77	11	21	1	2	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	45	85	6	11	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	45	85	8	15	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	37	70	15	28	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	38	72	13	25	1	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	42	79	10	19	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	48	91	5	9	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its children's needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its children well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its children.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its children. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a child in their learning and development.
Attainment:	in other phases of school, for example primary schools, attainment is the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons. However, there is no national average for three- and four-year-olds. Therefore, in inspections of nursery schools, inspectors take account of expectations in the age-related bands of the Early Years Foundation Stage.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well children acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of children.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets children's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which children are learning in nursery sessions and over longer periods of time.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



12 July 2010

Dear Children

Inspection of Brunswick Nursery School, Cambridge, CB1 2LZ

We enjoyed visiting your school recently. Thank you for making us so welcome and showing us your year books. We think your school is outstanding. Here are some things that are particularly good.

The staff all look after you very well.

There are lots of exciting things for you to do.

You make excellent progress in your time at the Nursery.

Your behaviour is outstanding.

You stay safe and look after one another very well.

You help the adults to keep the Nursery tidy.

You learn a lot because the teaching is outstanding.

The school is extremely well run by the headteacher.

There is so much for you to do both inside and outside that it is hard for adults to remember everywhere you have been. We have asked them to keep a note of the activities you take part in. We have also asked them to make sure they know if you have had a healthy snack. We have asked them to make changes to how they record how well you are doing so they can see exactly how well you are getting on.

You all can help by telling the staff what you enjoy about the Nursery. Thank you again for your help.

Yours sincerely

Nick Butt

Lead inspector

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