

Hilltop Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	130691
Inspection date	25 May 2007
Inspector	Fler Wright
Setting Address	Brighton General Hospital, Elm Grove, Brighton, East Sussex, BN2 3EW
Telephone number	01273 696 011X3302
E-mail	cara.mitchell@southdowns.nhs.uk
Registered person	South Downs Health NHS Trust
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	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.

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 satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Hilltop Nursery was first registered in 1989. The nursery is one of two nurseries that are owned and managed by South Downs NHS Trust. It is situated in a self contained building on the site of Brighton General Hospital in Brighton, East Sussex and serves as the workplace nursery for any parents that are NHS Trust employees. Children have access to a secure outdoor play area. The nursery is open Monday to Friday, from 08:00 until 18:00 all year round.

The nursery is registered to care for 22 children at any one time and there are currently 34 children aged from birth to under five years on roll. Of these, six receive funding for nursery education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery are able to offer support to children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and to those children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs a total of seven staff, six of whom work with the children on a daily basis. The overall manager and senior nursery nurse are both appropriately qualified. All other paid staff have relevant childcare qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

There are established procedures in place that promote good hygiene practices. The nursery does not allow outdoor shoes inside, and those that visit are required to remove their shoes or wear shoe covers, helping to reduce the risk of cross infection. Older children independently wash their hands before they eat, using soap and water, and are very used to the routine. Photos of them washing their hands are placed above the sinks helping them to further increase their understanding of the process. Staff wear gloves and aprons during nappy changes and wipe tables before children eat, all of which helps to reduce the risk of cross infection. Babies usually have their hands cleaned with wipes before and after they eat, helping to ensure they are able to learn the importance of these routines from an early age. Older children can access tissues independently, and know where to find them if they need to wipe their noses. They show good levels of responsibility for their own personal care needs. Visits from the dental nurse and infection control nurse are an exciting and interesting way to help children to learn to understand how to look after themselves. All staff have done first aid training within the last two years so are able to protect children in the event of a medical emergency.

Meal times are generally well organised and children learn important social skills, especially at lunch times. Older children have the opportunity to have their snacks in the form of a picnic, and they help each other to pour their own drinks showing consideration and independence. Drinks are freely available to all children at all times. Each child has a named water bottle they are able to access at any time. Older children know where to find their water bottle if they feel thirsty and confidently help themselves.

All children have access to a very stimulating outdoor play space with a wealth of equipment that helps them to develop their physical skills. There is also equipment indoors, and babies are able to climb on soft play equipment or use push along toys to help them develop physically.

Children enjoy using the outside play equipment, and are confident when using sit and ride toys or climbing the steps of the slide. Some interesting resources, such as the 'trip trap', help to encourage their co-ordination skills. They use equipment such as pens and pencils with confidence, and use items such as paint brushes in the messy area on a frequent basis.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children have access to a warm and welcoming environment with low level displays and photographs of themselves, showing that staff value their contributions. Each age group has a dedicated room with a very good variety of age appropriate equipment and resources that meet the needs of the children attending. Two of the rooms are set up well, with lots of stimulating experiences on offer, although the blue room for the pre school children is currently in the process of being re-planned. This means the areas and furniture are not currently used to their full potential although staff are aware of this and plan to re-arrange it in the very near future. There is a separate art area that the babies and older children share, although the pre-school children do not currently have free flow access to it. The equipment in each room is rotated a number of times each day, helping to ensure children have access to a very good variety of experiences, increasing their enjoyment and potential. The outside play environment is also very child orientated and gives children access to a good range of equipment that helps

them to develop their physical skills. There is a dedicated quiet area in each room, which is an inviting space for children as books are well displayed, and cushions and toys ensure children are able to play or relax quietly should they wish to do so. They visit the areas often.

Staff have a good understanding of safety issues as all have been successfully minimised around the nursery. Children know about sun safety and why they need to apply sun cream before they go and play in the garden. Staff apply the cream onto the children using a separate pair of gloves for each child, promoting good hygiene practice. All staff attend fire safety training helping to ensure they all know what to do in an emergency situation.

There are comprehensive ranges of policies and procedures in place relating to child protection. Management have experience of dealing with child protection concerns and are very aware of the procedures to follow should they have any cause for concern. This helps to ensure children are kept safe and free from harm.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are very happy, relaxed and enjoy their play. They relate very well to staff and see them as their friends, indicating good, trusting relationships are built. Children are very familiar with the routines at the nursery. They line up when asked and know the shaker signifies tidy up time, and they eagerly help to pack toys away at the end of each session. They have access to a very wide range of equipment and staff rotate this well to ensure children are able to enjoy and experience a good range of opportunities each day.

Babies are well cared for and are involved in a wide range of activities and experiences. Some interesting wall displays that include socks filled with different textures, such as flour and pasta, help to ensure babies learn important sensory skills from an early age. Children use their imaginations well, and enjoy dressing up as doctors or pretending to be travel agents and help each other to book holidays. They enjoy listening to music and using ribbons as they dance. Children are very inquisitive and are keen to learn. They are involved in an interesting range of activities, such as looking at bugs and flowers through magnifying glasses, playing with rice in the sand tray or meeting dogs and puppies.

The vast majority of paid staff are very enthusiastic in their interaction with children. All staff are qualified and have a good range of experience that helps to benefit the children in their care. They know children well, helping to ensure their needs are met. The Birth to three planning helps to ensure younger children are appropriately supported and their developmental needs are highlighted and progressed accordingly.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children make sound progress towards the early learning goals as the activities and experiences on offer cover the areas of learning on a daily basis. Their play environment is currently in the process of being re-arranged to help ensure children have a more stimulating and play centred space where they are able to develop and learn. There is a limited amount of print in the play space and some opportunities are missed to help further encourage children's communication, language and literacy skills in the environment.

The member of staff responsible for the Foundation Stage is currently doing a foundation degree. She is in the process of updating the way children's achievements are recorded. Consequently, there are a number of gaps, making it unclear at a glance to see how children are progressing. However, this has a minimal impact on the children as the same member of staff works with the children each day, so she knows them well. She is very calm and relaxed, and this has a positive impact on the way children learn. They are able to make suggestions about what they do, and they are encouraged to take their time over things to ensure they gain the most from them. Interaction is effective as staff use regular opportunities to question children appropriately, and make lots of helpful comments to children in order to further their learning potential. Staff observe children fairly regularly, and use these notes to progress children's learning.

Children are developing effective relationships and get on well with peers and staff, who listen with interest to children's thoughts and stories and ask open-ended questions to help extend learning. Children help clear up after activities and are encouraged to work together. They enjoy stories and join in with repeated phrases. They also enjoy listening to stories played on tapes, and are able to follow the story from the hard copy book in front of them. Circle time is used effectively to develop children's skills in many areas.

Many children are confident as they count, and some are able to count up to 20 unaided. They enjoy singing mathematical songs and use calculation with ease. The equipment available helps to ensure their mathematical development is encouraged daily, although some opportunities are missed at snack time to further encourage this. Children enjoy using magnets to pick up keys and other metal objects, and understand why they stick. They show a keen interest in information technology. They have access to a computer in their play space and can access it whenever they please, although it is currently out of order.

Children enjoy music and movement activities and enjoy using ribbons to dance with. They have some opportunities to express themselves creatively as various mediums such as paint, pens, and rice are available in the 'messy room', although currently access is restricted. Children make effective use of the role-play area that is set up as a variety of different places over time such as a travel agents and space ship. They use their imaginations when playing with the realistic equipment available. Overall, children are motivated, keen to learn and are enthusiastic in their play.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children are treated with respect and are made to feel good about themselves. They are each given equal opportunities to participate in activities and enjoy and achieve whilst at the nursery. Photographs and displays of their work help them to develop an important sense of belonging. There are a variety of activities and resources available to promote diversity and different cultures, helping children to learn about the wider world. The nursery have access to a wealth of translators and are able to translate their paperwork into 12 different languages should the need arise.

The special educational needs co-ordinator has a good knowledge and understanding of her role and works closely with outside agencies as required to ensure children's individual needs are met. Makaton is used throughout the nursery and staff and children adopt it during songs or as they say sorry. Visual aids and timetables help children to understand what things are, or what is coming next, helping them to organise their thoughts effectively. Children behave well.

They are considerate towards their peers and happily share resources or take turns. Staff talk to them about their feelings and how their actions affect their friends which helps them to develop an important sense between what is right or wrong. Children are encouraged to say sorry to ensure conflicts are resolved. Staff go down to the children's level when giving out important instructions, to ensure children listen and understand what they need to do. Staff use lots of positive interaction to help encourage children's confidence and self-esteem.

Partnership with parents is satisfactory. Staff used to provide parents of children receiving nursery education with a summary of the topics and the activities planned for the term although this has not been done since the end of last year. It means that unless parents look at the notice board which contains some basic information that includes the weekly planning, they have no way of knowing what the current topics are, slightly limiting the ways they feel involved with their child's learning. Staff are currently updating the ways in which children's achievements are recorded. Presently there are a number of gaps, making it hard to see how children are progressing at a glance. However despite this, parents are very happy with the care provided and are kept well informed of the care given to their child as they each receive a daily sheet identifying how their children have been, and what they have been doing during the day. Quarterly parents' evenings help to ensure a regular exchange of information. The prospectus is informative for parents, and includes information on the policies, the Birth to three matters and the Foundation Stage curriculum.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

There are comprehensive ranges of policies and procedures that help to ensure the safe and effective management of the setting in order to promote children's welfare. There are rigorous procedures in place for recruiting new staff, as strict checks are carried out on all potential staff, helping to safeguard the children in attendance.

Children benefit from a well-organised environment where they receive good adult support to help ensure they gain the most from the experiences on offer, whilst encouraging their security and confidence. Staff are well deployed which helps to ensure children are well-supervised and safe and sessions are well planned.

Staff are enthusiastic and want to improve the quality of care and education on offer. They are well qualified and have experience in child care. They continually attend training in order to help benefit the children attending the nursery. The member of staff in charge of the Foundation Stage is currently doing a degree in the subject which is over and above the expectation, and will greatly help to benefit the children receiving funding for nursery education.

Leadership and Management is satisfactory. The person in charge does not always effectively evaluate the Foundation Stage curriculum on offer, and this has resulted in a number of gaps in the developmental records of children going unnoticed. This makes it harder for one to identify how children are progressing, limiting the overall effectiveness of the curriculum. This does not affect the way children enjoy their time at the nursery as there are a very good range of activities, experiences and equipment on offer. Staff work well as a team and have a good knowledge and understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom they provide.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the nursery were asked to; ensure the confidentiality of the accident book, and to ensure that parents sign all entries. They were also asked to review all of the policies and procedures and implement the current action plan in place.

Since the last inspection the policies and procedures have been reviewed and updated, and this is an ongoing process to ensure best practice. Accidents are now recorded on individual sheets to ensure confidentiality is maintained. All of them are signed by parents, helping to further safeguard the children at the nursery.

At the last nursery education inspection, the nursery were asked to; evaluate the organisation of 'circle time' and consider the most appropriate seating arrangements for the children, improve staff's understanding of the Foundation Stage, and to provide more detailed information for parents on the educational programme within the nursery.

Since the last inspection, circle time has been re-organised and the children are split into age groups to ensure they all gain the most from the experience. They come together as a group twice in the morning to discuss the weather and the topics, meaning they are involved and interested as they do not sit for long periods. The member of staff responsible for executing the Foundation Stage curriculum is currently doing a Foundation degree and has many new ideas that she wants to implement to further improve the experiences available to children. There is now a board available for parents that shows each area of learning and the planning, although it does not include much detail. There continues to be a need for staff to improve the communication to ensure parents are aware of where their children are developmentally, and of the topics going on. This will help to ensure they feel more involved in their child's learning.

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.

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The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

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):

- continue to develop the play space in the blue room, in order to maximise the opportunities for children to learn through their play

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):

- increase the amount of print and opportunities around the play space to help further encourage children's communication, language and literacy skills, and ensure staff make the most of routines such as meal times in order to further children's learning potential
- continue to develop the way children's progress and achievements are documented
- increase the information given to parents about the Foundation Stage, to include ways to help them identify how their children are progressing

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