

# Holmhirst Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	300715
<b>Inspection date</b>	17 May 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Sarah Gilpin

<b>Setting Address</b>	Woodseats Methodist Church Hall, Holmhirst Road, Sheffield, South Yorkshire, S8 0GU
<b>Telephone number</b>	0114 2747725
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	Holmhirst Pre-School
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Sessional 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](http://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 good.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Holmhirst Pre-School opened in 1992 and operates from two rooms within Woodseats Methodist Church in Woodseats, Sheffield. The pre-school is managed by the committee of Holmhirst Pre-School. A maximum of 20 children may attend the setting at any one time. Sessions run from 09.10 until 11.40 and 12.20 until 14.50 each weekday during school terms times only. The children have access to a secure, enclosed, outdoor play area.

There are currently 56 children aged from two and a half to under five years on roll. Of these, 45 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local and wider communities and attend for a variety of sessions. The setting has provision for children with disabilities and learning difficulties and for those children who speak English as an additional language.

There are seven members of staff employed including the manager. All staff hold an appropriate early years qualification and some staff are on further training programmes. The setting receives support from a qualified teacher from the local authority. They have successfully completed a quality assurance programme and are members of the Pre-School Learning Alliance.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

The children are cared for in a clean and hygienic environment. There are clear policies for promoting good health and hygiene and these are routinely followed by the staff. Tables are cleaned before children sit down for their snack and staff closely monitor the children as they wash their hands. Children's awareness of good hygiene is promoted through activities, such as fruit chopping where good practice is effectively demonstrated. The health and well-being of children with allergies is managed well and relevant information is displayed. The accident and existing injury records are very clear and the manager monitors these effectively to highlight any potential trends or recurring causes of injury. As a result, potential hazards are minimised and children's well-being is maintained.

Children enjoy nutritious and balanced snacks that are provided each day. There is a weekly fruit day and children bring in their own favourites to share with their friends. They enjoy chopping and talking about the shapes and colours. There are regular opportunities for the older children to bring a packed lunch to pre-school, which helps prepare them for lunch times at school. The group snack times are sociable and children enjoy chatting to staff and their friends as they eat together. However, this formal snack time means their play is sometimes interrupted and there is little individual choice about when they have a drink or something to eat. Although, the introduction of a water fountain on day two of the inspection meant that children could access water throughout the session. Their eagerness to try something new resulted in them visiting the bathroom much more frequently.

The children enjoy regular access to the new outdoor area, which has enhanced the provision since the last inspection. Staff plan a variety of outdoor activities to extend their learning and provide them with fun and interesting experiences. Children enjoy riding around on bikes, showing off their pedalling skills. They navigate tunnels and use crates and pipes to make racing tracks for vehicles. The well planned indoor environment allows the children to move freely and with confidence when in the play room. Frequent opportunities to thread, build and write are helping to develop their fine motor skills. The session is organised well to provide quiet times, such as story time to enable the children to relax and rest after playing.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, safe and secure environment. Regular daily checks on the provision mean that potential hazards are identified and risks minimised. For example, staff check the outdoor area before the children go outside. There is careful monitoring of the arrival and departure of the children; staff supervise the door at either end of the session ensuring that children cannot leave without adult supervision. The staff are vigilant as they support the children and play with them at their level. For example, staff get involved in building vehicles using small equipment and planting seeds in the garden. A detailed record of visitors to the setting is maintained each day. All of the required fire safety equipment is in place and a clear emergency plan provides staff with information on how to escape. Children's awareness of how to deal with emergency situations is developing because they are involved in routine fire evacuation practises.

The children safely access the toys and resources that are arranged in low-level storage units, on tables and around the floor. Most of the resources are readily available and meet the required safety standards. Staff routinely check equipment and resources as they set up the room each day. Gentle reminders from staff help the children to develop their awareness of how to keep themselves safe as they move around the setting. For example, promoting walking when children rush around and highlighting the dangers of using the wooden rocker when inside.

Children are safeguarded because the staff attend child protection training and have a good understanding of the signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect. There is a designated person for dealing with any concerns raised about a child in the setting and there is a clear understanding of the procedures for monitoring and referring to the relevant organisations. The policy reflects the mandatory requirements and the guidelines from the Local Safeguarding Children Board. In addition, the clear and robust recruitment and vetting systems ensure that no unvetted adults are left unsupervised.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

The children are very happy, content and confident in the pre-school environment. They are happy to leave their parents and carers at the door and quickly become involved in the activities available. They are cared for by a stable staff team who provide excellent continuity of care. Staff work very well together as a team to meet the children's changing needs and recognise the importance of working in partnership with their families. Children confidently seek support and guidance from the well known adults as they play together. The staff have fostered links with the local primary school to assist the children's smooth transition to the next stage in their education.

The environment is split into designated areas and the newly introduced continual provision provides some choice for the children. The play room is shared with other users and staff work extremely hard to ensure that it is set up prior to the children arriving each day. The building is in need of some refurbishment, but staff use their skills to ensure the environment is attractive and welcoming for the children. The children are admitted into pre-school from the age of two and a half years and the current planning system does not include aspects of the 'Birth to three matters' framework. However, the staff demonstrate a good knowledge and understanding of child development, which helps all children to enjoy positive outcomes. The sessions are organised to provide the older children who attend in the afternoon more challenge, which means that the staff's interactions with the children are differentiated effectively to meet the differing needs of the age and stage of the children attending.

### **Nursery education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The staff have a good knowledge and understanding of the stepping stones in the Foundation Stage curriculum, which enables them to interact with the children as they play, extending learning. The continual provision is developing well, although some areas, such as the creative workshop have not been fully implemented. The planning is focused on the delivery of stepping stones through use of the continual provision. Themes, such as 'life cycles' are used to introduce children to the concepts of growth and their environment. A particular theme will continue until the children show an interest in moving on. For example, they have recently moved on after they planned and built a small house following their look at local environments and where they live. Staff complete

regular observations of the children's progress and play. Information is transferred to provide a detailed record and interesting pictorial account of the children's time in the pre-school.

The children are inquisitive and motivated to learn and are excited to be involved in the activities provided. As a result, they are making rapid progress in all areas of learning. The children build warm and harmonious relationships with the adults who work consistently with them. They are beginning to recognise the needs of others and some of the older children are developing firm friendships with their peers. Children are confident and have a growing independence, which they demonstrate as they choose from the resources that are stored at their level.

Children access a variety of role play activities, which provide them with opportunities to use their own experiences to act out roles. They work well together, shopping and serving in the 'grocer's shop'. Children enjoy the planned outdoor activities, which are available for much of the session. Their awareness of other people and the world around them is successfully raised through planned activities. They enjoy observing the festivals and celebrations of other races and cultures. For example, they have looked at aspects of the Chinese New Year celebrations. Children use the computer with enthusiasm, using the mouse to click and drag when completing programs and educational games. Children use mathematical language spontaneously in their play; they enjoy counting their friends at register time and the older and more able children count up to 10 plus consistently.

Children speak very confidently using a comprehensive vocabulary, which is extended by the interactions of the staff as they talk to and question the children during their play. Children cooperate well with their friends and use their wide vocabulary to negotiate for a turn at favourite activities. They become engrossed at group story time, offering interesting suggestions about the events in the book. Group times are used to encourage the children's awareness of the days of the week and they offer suggestions about the day's weather. Children use tools, such as scissors to effect change when they cut paper into chosen shapes. Children's creative play is developing, although time and space mean that while they have regular access to paint and collage it is not available for them to freely choose from each session.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

There is a good partnership with parents and carers. A substantial amount of relevant information is displayed for the parents to ensure they can take an active role in their children's learning. The parents receive regular updates on the progress their children are making, through termly discussions and daily easy-going exchanges as they drop off and collect their children. Parents and children are made very welcome by the staff who greet them at the door each session. Their views are routinely sought through an annual questionnaire and information provided demonstrates the effective partnership and the parents' satisfaction with the service provided for their children. The manager has a clear understanding of the changes in legislation with regard to keeping a record of complaints.

The children are cared for by a stable staff team who know them well and work hard to meet their individual needs. For example, parents are asked to provide a wealth of information to ensure the staff have considerable knowledge of the children's likes and dislikes, which assists the children as they settle into the provision. There is successful provision for children with learning difficulties and disabilities because the staff understand the importance of inclusion, seek professional advice and provide one-to-one support as needed to make sure that children can participate fully in all of the activities provided.

Children's behaviour is excellent; they receive consistent and sensitive reminders from staff about acceptable behaviour. Praise and encouragement from staff are a frequent feature and as a result, the children play harmoniously together. They clearly enjoy one another's company and play cooperatively. For example, children combine ideas from their own experiences of going shopping to act out narratives during role play. Staff are 'tuned in' to any anxieties the children have and work hard to ensure the children overcome any issues successfully. The older children are developing an awareness of how to look after toys and resources because they help with the 'tidy time'. However, the younger children are not routinely involved in putting away toys at the end of the session.

A good variety of resources and activities are provided to ensure children's experiences are stimulating and interesting. Well planned activities, such as celebrations from around the world, ensure that children's knowledge of the wider world and other people is successfully developed. As a result, the children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The children are cared for in a well managed and successfully organised setting. There are clear and robust systems in place to recruit and check staff, although these have not been implemented for some time due to the stability within the staff team. All staff are qualified, holding either a level 2 or level 3 qualification. The adult to child ratios are generally higher than the requirements and the efficient deployment of staff means that children are cared for by consistent staff who carefully monitor them throughout the session. A clear and comprehensive range of policies and procedures are successfully implemented by the pre-school staff. As a result, the outcomes for children are effectively promoted.

The leadership and management of the pre-school is good and contributes to the rapid progress the children make in their learning. The manager works hard to ensure that the staff have a good understanding of the National Standards and the Foundation Stage curriculum and to promote high quality care for the children. The staff are beginning to develop their knowledge of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and this is an area of development. Staff's professional development is managed through informal supervision discussions, individual need and particular interest in an area. As a result, the staff are kept up to date with current childcare practices. The manager understands what the setting does well and is keen to develop areas to improve the quality of the nursery education and care for all of the children who attend the pre-school.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection two recommendations were made relating to care. First, the staff were asked to improve their knowledge of child protection issues and this has been resolved through staff attending training on child protection and safeguarding. The setting was also asked to develop an outdoor provision. This has been successfully completed and children now have regular access to a secure outdoor play space. The inspection of the nursery education took place at the same time and resulted in one point for consideration regarding the presentation of information for parents relating to the areas of learning. There is now a clear display of information about the types of learning that happen in the setting.

## 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 complaint record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

## 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 good.

### 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):

- plan and provide activities to help children's development in line with the aspects and approach described in the DfES publication 'Birth to Three Matters: a framework to support children in their earliest years'
- provide more opportunities for the young children to take responsibility for their actions, such as setting up and tidying resources away.

#### 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):

- provide more frequent opportunities for the children to explore and express their individual creativity
- continue to develop the provision to provide more choice for the children.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education* (HMI ref no 2599) which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)