

# Hamilton House Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY235677
<b>Inspection date</b>	23 November 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Geneen Yvonne Hulse-Brown
<b>Setting Address</b>	41-43 Montgomery Road, Sheffield, South Yorkshire, S7 1LN
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<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](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?

Hamilton House Nursery is a private nursery, which opened in 2002 and is situated in a large detached Victorian property, in the Nether Edge area of Sheffield. The company owns a second nursery in the south of the city. The nursery offers childcare to the local community and surrounding areas. There are four playrooms for children's use plus toilets, kitchen, laundry, office and reception area, staff room and storage space. There is secure outdoor play space available to the children.

A maximum of 71 children aged six weeks to eight years may attend the nursery at any one time; of these, no more than 27 may be under two years old. The nursery is open Monday to Friday, all year round, from 7.30 to 18.00 and children attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery offers holiday play-care to nursery children and the community. There are currently 126 children on roll, of these, 44 receive funding for nursery education. The nursery supports children with learning difficulties and over 45% of children have English as an additional language.

There are 24 staff employed to work with the children on a full and part time basis. Of these, 16 hold recognised early years qualifications, seven are working towards qualifications and one is unqualified. The nursery also employs two ancillary and support staff. The setting receives support from the local authority community teacher.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children take part in and enthusiastically enjoy a broad range of activities, that contributes to keeping them healthy. They effectively undertake indoor and outdoor activities on a daily basis to develop their physical skills. Children thrive in a stimulating and fun outdoor play area. They use their imagination, as they make up games in the outdoor play house. Children enjoy riding bikes; climbing, balancing and playing ball games, as they competently play catch, use bats and shuttlecocks and exercise using cheerleader pompoms. Inventive use of outdoor areas allows children to explore in all weathers. They benefit from shaded areas to relax and have fun extending their imagination in the well equipped play houses. Babies benefit from regular outdoor time, in a well resourced and comfortable outdoor play house, where they can crawl about and explore in the fresh air. Holiday club children enjoy many outings to develop their understanding of the local environment and the community they live in. Children purposefully manipulate small tools, such as, scissors, pencils, glue spreaders and paint brushes well to successfully develop their fine motor skills.

Staff provide numerous opportunities for children to talk about being healthy through the use of projects, displays and planned topics. Children demonstrate a good awareness of a healthy diet, as staff talk to them about healthy eating as part of the daily routines. They enjoy tasting different foods, such as a wide range of fruits and snacks, particularly when undertaking topics on other cultures and celebrating festivals. Children have a strong understanding of their likes and dislikes, for example, at lunchtime talking about their favourite foods. Children demonstrate a very good understanding of their personal needs, for example, when they want a drink, competently pouring water from readily available jugs. Children sit together in small groups to enjoy nutritious meals. Older children competently serve their own lunch and snacks, with staff encouraging and supporting the younger children to develop these skills. Staff are very aware of children's individual dietary needs and plan accordingly. The nursery operates a three week rolling menu, regularly consulting with parents and making changes, to meet the needs of the children attending. Accurate records show what the children have eaten during the day. Babies and young children follow home routines as agreed with parents.

Children are cared for in a warm, clean and fun environment, where effective methods ensure they develop good personal hygiene practices, such as, hand washing before snack and after messy play. Picture prompts in the bathrooms remind them to wash their hands. They understand the importance of good practice and demonstrate it in their play and activities, for example, talking about germs when blowing their noses and not using cutlery that has been on the floor. Policies and procedures regarding illnesses and infections in the nursery, ensures that parents are well informed. All staff attend mandatory first aid training and effective systems are in place for the administering of medication.

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

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe and secure environment where all potential risks are minimised. They understand not to run indoors and to take care when using scissors, as they may hurt or cut themselves. Staff use discussions and topics to sensitively remind children of good practice and help them learn how to keep themselves safe. They talk about road safety when playing outdoors and visitors to the nursery, such as fire fighters, helps them develop their understanding about fire safety and builds on their awareness. Children negotiate confidently around the setting both indoors and out, extending their independence and learning to keep themselves safe. Experienced staff effectively ensure that the premises are safe and secure by monitoring access to the setting. Accurate records show all visitors and staff present and parents sign children in, as well as registers taken in individual group rooms.

Children make independent choices of activities from an excellent range of easily accessible quality resources. Well stocked workstations and activities provide children with many opportunities to plan their own time, explore, experiment and progress their ideas. Creative use of all available play space ensures that all areas are safe, secure and well planned, offering children a place to be quiet, use their creativity, extend their imagination and develop their play. Children have fun undertaking meaningful experiences that challenge and extend them. Babies are cared for in sensory, stimulating rooms where they have fun, exploring and developing new skills.

Effective procedures are in place to support good practice, as all staff undertake mandatory child protection training. Children are well protected as experienced and knowledgeable staff show a very good understanding of their role in keeping children safe and child protection procedures. This ensures that children's wellbeing is effectively promoted. Policies and procedures are in place that reflects the Local Safeguarding Children's Board recommendations. Well organised procedures are in place for recording concerns and to ensure parents are supported.

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

The provision is good.

Children enjoy their time at nursery. They make good progress in all areas of learning and development, due to knowledgeable staff planning stimulating activities and experiences that maintain children's interest and motivation. Staff effectively use of the 'Curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage' and the 'Birth to three matters' framework to provide good quality care and education.

Children are well settled, happy and secure, as they enthusiastically undertake a wide range of meaningful and challenging activities. They are extremely confident and interested in all around them, as they actively make choices about their play. Children enthusiastically select resources to undertake tasks from the extensive and stimulating range available. They demonstrate very good independent skills, to successfully plan their own time and make decisions about what to do and who to play with. Children confidently put on aprons to paint, shoes and coats to play outdoors and to help themselves from the wide range of easily accessible quality resources. Older children move between areas both indoors and outside, actively deciding where they will play within the flexibly planned routines. Occasionally, these routines may limit some children's access to choices and challenges that will extend them further to focus on independent learning.

Children enthusiastically sing and dance to diverse types of music, including classical tunes. They enjoy making play dough and making patterns as the flour spills onto the floor, introducing them to early mark making skills. Children are starting to understand early number skills as staff count, use colour and shapes as part of everyday routines.

Staff consistently respond to the children's individual needs and adapt activities to follow their ideas and suggestions. Children are encouraged and supported to extend and try out new skills. For example, as children play with the animals, staff offer support by talking to children about what they can see, where animals live and what they eat. Children receive high levels of encouragement from staff, who effectively use observations and their knowledge of the children to build on what they can do, to extend activities at the child's own pace. Young babies are cared for in a warm, secure and sensory environment, where their individual needs are responded to effectively. They explore their surroundings both indoors and out, with increasing interest and curiosity. Young children enjoy tactile experiences, such as painting and squeezing play dough as they giggle and laugh together. They enjoy sticking feathers and glittery pieces onto paper to make collages. Babies and young children have fun exploring natural materials, such as wood and leaves and have fun playing 'hidey' with scarves and soft, see through materials. Sensitive staff offer cuddles and reassurance, to help children settle into a new environment and systems are in place for parents, to spend as much time settling their children into the setting as they need.

Children attending holiday club enjoy a wide range of fun outings to the local park and further afield. These outings are recorded in memory books to share with all children at the nursery. The books show children have fun baking pizza, planting bulbs and making masks.

#### Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff's very good knowledge of the Foundation Stage, ensures that children progress well in all areas of development. Children are curious, interested and motivated to learn through well planned and spontaneous activities and experiences, which challenge and extend them. They use their imagination very well during role play activities, acting out being fire fighters to put out a fire and working cooperatively when building models. They demonstrate high levels of concentration using tools and materials, such as wooden bricks and cubes, to construct simple and complex models. They build and design, extending their imagination and their natural creativity, using a wide variety of craft materials and resources. Children enjoy chiselling pieces off wood and hammering in nails, as they competently play with woodwork tools.

Children are confident speakers and listen intently to each other when playing, in groups and reflecting on what they have done at nursery. They share experiences, talking about home and which school they are going to with enthusiasm. Staff listen with interest to what the children say, offering support and suggestions to enhance their experiences. Children listen intently to stories and predict the endings and outcomes. They take turns to take 'travel bear' on holidays and outings, completing his diary and sharing his exploits with each other. Parents add photographs and write about what he has done for the children to excitedly share with their friends. Children confidently use new vocabulary as they engage in conversations with each other and adults alike. They confidently talk about Dalmatians being dogs with spots and prickly fish under the sea. Staff consistently respond by helping children think through what they are doing.

Children are very confident and engage well with each other. They welcome visitors, asking why they are here and what they are doing and eagerly share their achievements. They enthusiastically have fun singing Christmas songs, as well as rhymes and ring games. Children negotiate roles in games, deciding who goes next, when playing butterfly matching and whose turn it is to give out the plates and cups at lunchtime. They take turns, share, play cooperatively together and alone, to enthusiastically progress their ideas.

Behaviour is excellent and reflects the staff's high expectations. Children manage their own behaviour very well and show respect for others. They enjoy learning about the lives of others through topics, planned activities and visitors to the nursery. Children enjoy the natural world as they plant and tend bulbs in the nursery garden. They talk about growing herbs and vegetables when the summer comes. The children experience the weather as they play outdoors, talking about the wind, sun and rain at group time. They discuss different animals, what they eat and where they live, as they play animatedly with them in the small world area, hiding them under rocks, pieces of wood and leaves. Visits to the nursery by a group who bring small animals, like rodents and insects, for the children to handle and see. This introduces children to be caring and how to be gentle with small creatures. Children are competent users of modern technology, as they use computers and calculators as an integral part of play.

Number and problem solving activities form part of all daily activities. Children enjoy counting and sorting as part of daily routines, singing and ring games. They confidently count children at register time and how many plates are needed for lunch. When drawing pictures, they count the number of spots and legs on the dog. Older children are starting to work out simple calculations when playing with tape measures and dice games. When sharing out pebbles, they see how many each person has and see who needs more or who has less. Children show good problem skills, as they use sticky tape to fasten paper on to shoe boxes they are making into gifts for children in other countries. They work together to assemble tubes to roll balls through outdoors.

Accurate observation systems are in place, that effectively monitors children's progress and this forms an effective aid to planning and progressing the children's learning. The nursery is in the process of further reviewing children's assessment systems by using short observations to assess children's progress. These observations are more established in some areas of the nursery than others, as they are clearly displayed in pockets labelled with the children's names for parents to see. Children are successfully guided to undertake a good balance of focused and freely chosen activities, with staff responding and making changes to incorporate the children's ideas and suggestions. Staff demonstrate a good knowledge of the early learning goals and use this to plan a well organised curriculum to include all areas of learning. They effectively use open ended questions to extend children's language, develop their thinking and value what they say, using positive responses. They use group times to reflect and encourage children to think about what they have done. Attractive and well presented displays of the children's work successfully contributes to promoting their self esteem.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Children' individuality is highly valued as they establish strong, respectful relationships with staff and each other. They are extremely confident to ask questions and are proactive when making choices, demonstrating high levels of self esteem. Children actively enjoy using an excellent range of meaningful resources and they undertake numerous activities, that develops their awareness of the world around them. A diverse staff team successfully plan imaginative

activities, to introduce children to the wider world and to extend their awareness of cultural and gender differences. Children enthusiastically recall events and activities, as they look at memory books and share personal experiences. Children excitedly enjoy exploring the outdoors, to broaden their knowledge their environment and visitors to the setting, introduce them to the local community. Photographs, memory books and displays, effectively reinforce and remind the children of what they have done at nursery. The nursery sponsors children in other countries, enthusiastically sharing stories and photographs about their different lives and cultures.

Children's behaviour is excellent as they follow daily routines, in agreement with parents to meet their individual needs. Clear and consistent boundaries support the nursery staff's high expectations of behaviour. Children are self motivated as they share, negotiate and take turns when playing games and using equipment, for example, when taking turns to use cutters and pencils and swapping pieces in matching games. Children sit and listen intently to what each other has to say and voice their opinions confidently. Staff demonstrate excellent role models of behaviour, showing high levels of care and consideration for others, which in turn helps children learn exceptional practice.

Children are actively encouraged to respect each other and embrace differences. They celebrate festivals together, sharing cultural differences at group time and as they play. Staff demonstrate an extensive understanding of the individual needs of the children in their care and plan accordingly. They accurately recognise the abilities of all the children, supporting and encouraging them to try new skills and undertake different experiences. Children demonstrate a high level of respect for each other, due to the staff's sensitive and calm approach. All children are equally valued and successfully encouraged to be responsible and recognise the needs of others. Consistent praise and encouragement for trying out new activities, ensures children successfully achieve new skills, for example, when helping to tidy up and responding to questions at group time. Young children are sensitively encouraged and guided to take their first steps and take on new challenges.

Staff and children excitedly share their home experiences with each other, as an integral part of planned and spontaneous activities. Children with learning difficulties and disabilities are welcomed into the provision and successful systems are in place with other agencies, to ensure the children are cared for according to their needs. All staff competently use basic sign language with the children at register time and in songs. Children with English as an additional language, are successfully supported, as several staff speak a wide range of languages. Print is displayed in other languages and photographic images helps to consolidate understanding. Parents are fully involved in helping children learn about other cultures, as they actively bring in resources from home, share different dietary preferences and talk about their own festivals.

Partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. Staff consistently ensure parents are kept extremely well informed about what the children are doing at nursery, due to the excellent communication systems in place. Parents receive comprehensive daily information either written or verbal, for every child highlighting meals, activities and progress throughout the day. Excellent recording and assessment systems, chart the children's progress through the nursery and information for parents, allows them to follow themes and topics through at home. All plans are displayed clearly on notice boards, for individual playrooms for parents to see what is happening on a day to day basis. Parents and staff work successfully together to meet the children's needs, as they receive very high quality information about the setting and in turn share their knowledge of their children. In discussions, parents say they receive excellent information about their children and are reassured that they are happy at nursery. Parents confidently approach staff and demonstrate a high level of satisfaction with the setting, stating

that all staff are well informed and professional in their approach. The children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The leadership and management of the nursery are good. Effective organisation of the educational provision, ensures successful promotion of children's care and learning. Very knowledgeable staff demonstrate a accurate understanding of their roles, to ensure that children's individual needs are met, as they all have defined responsibilities within the nursery structure. Each member of staff is allocated an area for monitoring, planning and maintaining up to date information, to develop the service offered. For example, health and safety officer, child protection officer, room leaders and curriculum planning. A well established and experienced staff team, work well together following effective procedures, that monitor and evaluate the provision. The management team have devised self-evaluation systems with an outcome based approach for staff, to work together to evidence how they meet the National Standards in each age group in the nursery. Staff are starting to collate information to support their existing good practice and make action plans, as to how they will achieve changes to enhance the provision. Plans are in place to review and evaluate practice on a regular basis. A strong management team effectively supports a very committed staff team, to review practice and adopt new procedures. The senior team complete regular observations on staff to monitor and assess practice and highlight training needs.

There is a high commitment to staff training and development, to consolidate practices and further enhance the provision. All staff attend regular mandatory training, to update their understanding of child protection, first aid, food hygiene, health and safety, as well as courses for working with specific age groups and children with learning difficulties and disabilities. A comprehensive range of policies and procedures are in place, to support good practice and offer an effective service. All policies undergo regular reviews, to meet the changing needs and development of the setting. The staff team use numerous opportunities to meet together, share information and to further develop well established working practices. Regular appraisals effectively identify the training and development needs of the individual staff and nursery. Effective use of observations and assessments, monitor children's progress based on the 'Birth to three matters' framework and the Foundation Stage. The nursery has started to look at developing staff's understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and implementing into planning systems. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

The recommendation raised at the last inspection, regarding parents signatures on accident forms has been effectively addressed.

The recommendations raised at the nursery education inspection, regarding more flexible use of the outdoor environment and developing links between planning and assessment have been successfully addressed. Nursery routines allow children to choose between indoor and outdoor play, as part of flexible sessions. Planning and assessment systems have been reviewed and updated, to meet the needs of all children and reflect the next steps for children'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 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):

- review how routines are planned to ensure that all children continue to be challenged and extended to focus on independent learning. (also applies to nursery education)

### **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):

- further develop established recording systems to monitor children's progress and development.

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)