

# St Ann's Happy Hands Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	300932
<b>Inspection date</b>	26 November 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Jill Lee
<b>Setting Address</b>	Happy Hands Pre-School Nursery, McIntyre Road, Stocksbridge, Sheffield, South Yorkshire, S36 1DG
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<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	The Trustees of St Ann's Happy Hands Pre-School
<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?

St Ann's Happy Hands Pre-School has been operating since 1999. It is a non-profit making organisation and a registered charity, run by trustees and a management committee, which includes parent representatives. The provision serves local families and children usually go on to attend St Ann's School or Stocksbridge Nursery Infant School.

The pre-school operates from a detached, single storey building adjacent to St Ann's School. The building is leased from the Diocese of Hallam. There is one playroom with a conservatory extension. Children have access to a secure, enclosed outdoor play area, which has a part safety surface.

The pre-school is registered to care for 25 children aged from three to eight years. It operates every weekday throughout the year from 08.00 to 18.00. The breakfast club operates from 08.00 to 09.00 and the lunch club from 11.30 to 12.30. Nursery sessions are from 09.00 to 11.30 and 12.30 to 15.00. The out of school club operates from 15.00 to 18.00. There are currently 39 children on roll in the nursery, all of whom are in receipt of funding for nursery education

and 30 children are on roll in the out of school provision. The setting supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities.

There are eight staff employed to work directly with the children, all of whom have an appropriate early years or play work qualification. The pre-school receives support from the local authority and the Pre-School Learning Alliance. They have started the local quality assurance scheme, Pathways to Quality.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is outstanding.

The outdoor environment is used imaginatively to provide a rich and varied source of stimulus for children's play. Children are able to choose to spend much of their time outdoors, 'come rain or shine'. They enjoy pedalling the cars and pulling each other along on the trolley or the 'roll-around'. They climb confidently on the climbing frame, balance on the stepping stones and practise their ball skills. They join two tunnels together to 'make it longer' and tip it on end to make a 'jack-in-a-box'. They get big cloths to make the climbing frame into a den. Children make structures with the steps indoors, learning to climb and jump confidently. They enjoy ribbon dancing and music and movement sessions. Children have very well planned opportunities for healthy exercise and to develop confidence in using their bodies in different ways.

The nursery environment is cheerful and welcoming. Staff demonstrate high standards of health and hygiene, so that children are protected from infection. Clear systems support good hygiene practices, for example, colour coding of cleaning materials. Arrangements for first aid and administering medication clearly meet requirements and protect children effectively. Staff consistently promote children's awareness of the importance of good hygiene routines, so that they understand the links between germs and sickness. For example, they know to replace cups or cutlery which have fallen on the floor. They identify when toys are dusty and help to clean them. They develop high levels of independence in attending to their own personal care. They manage the toilet independently and fasten their own coats.

Parents are fully consulted about their children's health and dietary needs. Children enjoy a varied snack menu of healthy fruits and vegetables. They suggest ideas for snack time and explore different tastes and textures. Staff talk routinely with children about a healthy lifestyle and ask parents to provide healthy lunch boxes. Staff plan activities to assess children's understanding of healthy foods. They incorporate activities into everyday play to enhance their comprehension. Children have created a wall display about healthy eating, which also includes surveys showing how many children like certain foods. They grow vegetables and enjoy eating them. They are learning about re-cycling and composting and decide which waste goes where when they finish lunch. Children help in the preparation of snacks and confidently make their likes and dislikes known. Snack and lunch times are very relaxed and sociable.

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

The provision is good.

Children's understanding of safety is strongly promoted because staff consistently reinforce awareness within everyday activities. This helps children to develop good levels of independence in their play. Staff explain safe practice, for example, why only three children are allowed to

use the indoor stepping stone structure at a time. Children know it must always be supervised by a member of staff. Staff raise children's awareness of which berries are poisonous and children learn to remove them if they are blown into the outdoor area. Children play with natural materials, like large bricks, stones, conkers and pebbles. They know they must take care and not throw stones when near to others. Children learn to keep their environment safe and help to tidy away the toys when they finish with them.

Children use the play environment purposefully, accessing all areas with safety. A well considered range of good quality resources is stored at child height, so that children can select them freely. Appropriate risk assessments are conducted for both the indoor and outdoor environment. Practice is consistently evaluated, increasing all children's safe participation in activities. Accidents are routinely monitored and there are clearly defined security procedures. There is clear planning for safe evacuation in an emergency, practised with the children. Arrangements for taking children to and collecting them from local schools are carefully considered.

Staff protect children and keep them safe. Children are confident to make their needs known and staff sensitively establish supportive relationships with parents. They understand their responsibilities within child protection procedures, enabling them to ensure that children's welfare is safeguarded. Most staff have accessed recent training and are fully familiar with the procedures of the Local Safeguarding Children Board. Access to training is planned for a new staff member. Appropriate procedures for recording any concerns are in place, including the recording of existing injuries.

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

The provision is good.

Children love spending time at the pre-school and out of school provision. They are cared for by friendly staff, which helps them feel relaxed and at ease. Staff get to know their families well. They find out what children enjoy doing, listen closely to them as they talk and sensitively support them in their play. The planned environment is very child focused, so that children can select many resources freely. The continuous provision is well planned to promote experiences in all areas of their development. Staff are further developing planning for the outdoor environment, to include a sensory garden and more space for digging. There are few resources for larger scale construction activity, although large cardboard boxes are sometimes used very creatively. The range of resources for older children in the out of school provision is more limited.

Children use their imagination as they develop stories with the dinosaurs in the sand and plan picnics outdoors. They experiment with a wide variety of sensory and tactile resources, exploring their own creativity. Staff have a good understanding of child development and talk frequently with parents, so that they understand each child's needs. They are beginning to develop use of the framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage to inform curriculum planning.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and children's learning is good. Staff have a very secure knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum and comprehensive planning is helping children to make good progress towards all the early learning goals. Children are highly motivated and their interest is fully sustained, as they enjoy a broad range of well planned activities and experiences both indoors and out. The continuous provision is well planned to offer opportunities in all areas of learning. However, the organisation of some resources, for example, to promote mathematical

exploration, is less well ordered and does not maximise children's opportunity to extend their own ideas freely. Children learn to listen well, concentrate and persevere with activities they enjoy. They become curious and inquisitive, as staff skilfully prompt their learning through open questions and well planned stimuli.

Children communicate confidently and staff introduce new language in planning. Children love reading books and listen with pleasure to stories. They enjoy a wide range of factual and dual language books, which promote their awareness of the world around them. They become interested in letter sounds, as they play letter games and clap out syllables in words. Children learn to recognise and write their name. They enjoy lots of mark making and have opportunities to write for real purposes in their role play.

Children count and become familiar with number concepts in their everyday play. They investigate mathematical ideas and language, as they count out bricks to measure how tall they are and get the ruler to find the length of the stick insects. They enjoy lots of counting and number action rhymes. Staff interactions helpfully promote some opportunities for children to solve problems, like how to keep the den from collapsing. Children have opportunities for practical investigation and problem solving in everyday activities, for example, by using a range of construction tools and materials to design and make.

Children are interested in the natural world, growth and change. They grow plants and vegetables and learn how to care for the stick insects. They learn about animals that hibernate in winter and make cake to feed the birds. They collect and sort conkers, leaves and pine cones on their nature walks.

Staff model skills and consistently reinforce expected behaviour, so that children learn to work together cooperatively and use all activity areas productively. They interact skilfully with children to stimulate their curiosity and consolidate learning. They observe children in a range of ways, to monitor their interests and record their individual progress. Observations are clearly linked to the stepping stones. Assessments of progress are effectively shared between staff and observations are evaluated effectively to help staff plan the next steps in children's learning.

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

The provision is good.

Children are very secure in the pre-school and develop a strong sense of belonging. They participate actively in daily routines, like helping to set the table for snack and sweeping up after the collage activity, although this is less well established in the out of school provision. Staff find out about their interests and consult them about activity planning. Each child is well known and valued as an individual, promoting their confidence and self-esteem. They share their home experiences with confidence. Staff place strong emphasis on ensuring that practice is fully inclusive, enabling the full and active involvement of all children.

Children play together very cooperatively. They make good friendships with each other and enjoy warm and trusting relationships with staff. Older children in the out of school provision help to look after the younger ones. Staff talk with children about the 'rules', which are written out by the older children and displayed. Children learn to manage their own behaviour well. For example, they get out the timer to help them work out turns on the stepping stones. They learn to listen carefully to instructions and understand why it is important to keep the play environment tidy. They share toys and learn to take turns in games. Staff praise and reward good behaviour, clearly explaining when certain behaviour is unacceptable. Children's good

behaviour is recognised by additions to the 'happiness board', which results in rewards for everyone.

Children enjoy outings, like nature walks, which raise their awareness of the local environment. Appropriately planned activities and resources help to raise children's awareness of other cultures and abilities. They learn about the varied ways in which people celebrate festivals, try foods from other cultures and read books in different languages. They learn about people who help us and parents are invited to share any special knowledge or skills. Children's awareness of the needs of others is raised, as they participate in fund raising activities. Staff enable children to participate actively in daily routines. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Parents' relationships with staff are very warm and friendly. Home visits and a very well planned introduction process helps to ensure they are well informed about the pre-school and develop a close relationship with their child's key worker. Parents are well informed about their child's activities and regular questionnaires encourage them to share their views. Monthly newsletters keep parents up-to-date with pre-school issues. They are invited to help on rota and to be members of the management committee. Parents know how to raise any concerns and feel very comfortable to do so. The complaints policy reflects current requirements and a clear system for recording of complaints is in place.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Planning is displayed and parents are well informed about the Foundation Stage curriculum. For example, they have recently watched a foundation stage video with staff. Photographs are used well, both in displays and children's records, to give parents insight into the varied activities which support their child's progress. Information about progress is shared formally at twice yearly parents' meetings and child reviews with parents are used to help staff with planning. However, there are no systems in place to encourage parents to contribute their own observations to records, to help planning for progress. Staff are developing ways to enhance parents' active involvement in their child's learning.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The nursery environment is organised very effectively to promote children's welfare and learning. Use of space and accessibility of resources promote children's independent participation. Staff are deployed effectively to ensure appropriate levels of care and supervision at all times. Children's individual needs and varying interests are supported well, although staff do not sufficiently monitor the effectiveness of planning to meet the need of younger children in the out of school provision. Routines are monitored closely to assess their impact on children's free play. However, the planned use of space during the second part of each pre-school session, to allow staff to set up for lunch time or for the arrival of children after school, does significantly limit children's opportunity to access certain areas of the continuous provision.

Leadership and management is good. Staff work together very effectively as a strong and cohesive team. There are well developed links with both local schools to aid children's transition. Weekly meetings enable all staff to contribute actively to planning and review of policies and practice. They are developing ongoing processes for self-evaluation, to help them monitor progress and identify areas for improvement. Well structured observations of children help staff to plan for next steps in their learning. There are clear systems in place to monitor the quality of teaching and its impact on children's learning.

Comprehensive policies and procedures are effectively implemented, so that children's welfare is safeguarded. Recruitment and vetting procedures are robust. Clear induction procedures, together with systems for staff appraisal and identification of training needs help to ensure that staff are suitably skilled and experienced to meet children's individual needs. All required documentation, which contributes to children's health, safety and well-being, is in place. Parents' wishes regarding their child's care clearly influence day-to-day practice and clear written agreements are recorded.

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 the pre-school was asked to ensure that the full names of children are used in records, and to review Child Protection procedures to include dealing with allegations made against a member of staff. They were also asked to review the procedures for uncollected children to include action to be taken if a child is lost.

The pre-school has updated all record keeping procedures to ensure full and appropriate detail is recorded about each child and there are systems in place to monitor this. Child Protection procedures reflect the requirements of the Local Safeguarding Children Board. They include the procedure to be followed if an allegation is made against a staff member and the requirement to inform Ofsted. Procedures for uncollected children contain detail regarding action to be taken if a child is lost. These measures help to ensure children are protected and kept safe.

With regard to nursery education the pre-school was asked to develop the educational programme for children to ensure their progress towards the early learning goals. Staff have enhanced the range of procedures for observing and monitoring children's progress. This is ensuring that staff know children well and are using this information effectively to plan for next steps in their 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.

## **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):

- monitor the impact of the management of space to accommodate lunchtime sessions and the out of school provision on nursery children's opportunity to freely choose and return to activities, to extend their own play ideas
- monitor the effectiveness of planning to meet the needs of younger children in the out of school provision.

### **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):

- continue to review and extend the range and accessibility of resources (also applies to care)
- further enhance the ways in which parents can become actively involved in planning for next steps in their child's learning.

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)