

# Hillcrest Early Years Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	303238
<b>Inspection date</b>	04 December 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Hilary Mary Mckenning
<b>Setting Address</b>	Anston, Community Centre, Hillcrest, Sheffield, S25 5GR
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<b>Registered person</b>	Hillcrest Early Years 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 satisfactory. 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?

Hillcrest Early Years Pre-School opened in 1979. It has charitable status and is owned and run by a voluntary management committee. The pre-school is located in the grounds of the local primary school in South Anston and serves the local area. The premises consist of a mobile classroom, with toilet and kitchen facilities, and a fully enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 22 children, from two to under five years, on roll. Early education funding is received for one child. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The group opens Monday to Friday, during term time only. Sessions are from 09.00 to 11.30.

There are three members of staff who work with the children. All staff hold a recognised level three qualification in early years care and education. The setting receives support from the local authority and a development worker from the Pre-School Learning Alliance.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are active and enjoy outdoor activities, which contributes to their general good health. They move with coordination and control as they skip and gallop. They successfully manoeuvre wheeled toys around the playground. Children move confidently and safely indoors, negotiating space and obstacles. Staff are aware of the 'Birth to three matters' framework having attended a recent training session. Young children explore their immediate environment, encouraged and supported by staff.

Children are cared for in a warm and clean environment. They receive support and guidance from staff, in understanding the importance of following hygiene procedures as they discuss the importance of washing their hands. Children's health is not sufficiently well-promoted due to some of the procedures in place. For example, all children share the same water to wash their hands and the same towel to dry them, and staff do not consistently follow their own procedures when changing children's nappies. All staff have current first aid certificates and accident records are appropriately maintained.

Children enjoy well-balanced snacks. They choose from a variety of fruit at snack time, which encourages children to have an awareness of a healthy lifestyle. Children are developing some independence as they access snacks for themselves, with support from staff. Staff take account of parent's wishes so that children's individual health and dietary requirements are met effectively, for example, these are recorded and displayed in the kitchen to ensure children's needs are met.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a safe and secure environment. There are policies and procedures in place where potential hazards have been identified. For example, daily health and safety checklists are completed. Children are learning to keep themselves safe as staff involve them in discussions and teach them safe practice, such as topics and themes about fire safety and regular practise of the evacuation procedure.

Children access a good variety of safe, suitable toys and play materials. Resources are available on low-level, child sized furniture, making it easy for them to reach. Furniture is of a suitable design and conforms to safety standards.

Children's welfare is protected as staff fully understand their responsibilities for protecting children. Policies and procedures are in place and follow the Safeguarding Children Board's guidelines.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy and secure as staff take time to get to know them and their families, fostering warm, trusting relationships. Children enjoy their time in the setting and arrive happy and eager to participate. They show enthusiasm and anticipation for the day's events. Children are becoming independent as they choose between a range of toys and activities made available

to them. They enjoy exploring a range of activities that contribute to their creativity, such as painting and model making. Younger children enjoy a variety of experiences. For example, they play with the train track alongside older children. However, there are few opportunities provided to meet children's individual needs or develop their independence. Children easily engage in conversation with their peers and adults as their language skills are developing well.

#### Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children enjoy coming to the pre-school and are supported by the staff. This ensures children make satisfactory progress in all areas of learning. Staff have knowledge of the early learning goals and they use this to plan activities to meet the needs of most children. The management team works alongside staff in order to offer support.

Children are very good communicators and use language confidently for a variety of purposes. They readily initiate conversations, make their needs known and describe what they are doing. For example, in the sewing activity, one girl asks, 'would you like to see the sparkly beads I have been sewing, I have made a dress'. Children access books and are aware print carries meaning. Although, there are missed opportunities for all children to use writing for a purpose, such as when writing and recognising their names on pictures and their work.

Children gain confidence in using numbers and they are developing good counting skills. However, opportunities are missed for them to attempt simple number problems in everyday situations. There are good opportunities for children to count and children enjoy participating in number rhymes and songs.

Knowledge and understanding of the world is developing as children visit local places of interest and are introduced to different celebrations and festivals. Children are sensitive to the needs of others and their behaviour is generally good.

Staff are aware of children's interests and needs, as priority is given to getting to know children and their families. Staff obtain information by talking to parents and observing children as they play. They regularly assess children's progress through the stepping stones, providing information for parents. This information is used to plan activities, although this does not consistently provide appropriate challenge for more able children. Overall, children make satisfactory progress in all areas of learning.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children develop a sense of belonging to the pre-school as they become familiar with routines and expectations. They have close affectionate relationships with the staff and each other. Behaviour is generally good and children are aware of their boundaries, for example, they know they must inform staff if they need to visit the toilet. They help to tidy away activities and are beginning to take responsibility for their own behaviour as they are encouraged to share and take turns. Praise is given freely to children, ensuring that they develop confidence and self-esteem.

Staff treat all children equally and are committed to inclusion. They are calm, polite and respectful, and children follow their example. Children encounter experiences to learn about themselves, each other and the world about them. For example, they have opportunities to

sample food from other cultures at snack time and visit places of interest within the local community. There is a written equal opportunities policy in place which is consistent with current legislation and guidance. Children access a variety of resources that reflect diversity. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents is satisfactory. The pre-school values and respects parents and a partnership is developed with them so that children's individual needs are understood. Parents have their own notice board where they can access information, for example, the fire drill and staff details. Throughout the year the pre-school ensures parents are aware of current activities by providing them with information about the current topic. Parents have a prospectus and a welcome pack of the setting.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a homely environment that is bright and colourful. The space is organised in a way that allows children to explore freely and access all areas of play. Familiar staff are always on hand to offer support and reassurance. This contributes to children feeling secure and content in the pre-school. A comprehensive range of policies and procedures are in place to promote good practice, care and learning which contributes to their well-being.

Children benefit from the cohesive staff team who are committed to self-evaluation and improvement of their practice. All staff are appropriately vetted and have suitable skills and experience to work with children. Most documentation is kept in a well-organised manner and confidentiality is maintained at all times. Although they are aware of the complaints procedure, there is no system for the recording of complaints in place. There is an appraisal system in place to identify staff training needs and ensure the policies and procedures are consistently applied.

Leadership and management is satisfactory. The organisation and quality of the educational provision supports children's care and learning. The staff team share a sound knowledge and understanding of child development and an appreciation of good early years practice. The planning is a team effort and a key worker system is in place for the recording of observations. 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 provider was required to address a number of issues relating to record keeping. The pre-school has reviewed the paperwork and now makes sure that all required parental consents are in place for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment. This helps to safeguard children in the event of an accident or illness. There is also an induction system now in place and staff appraisals are held. This helps to identify areas for staff training and develop their practice. This also ensures that staff are aware of policies and procedures and that they are consistently applied.

The pre-school was also asked to develop their planning to include all areas of learning and to use observation and assessments to plan for the next steps in their learning. The staff are now developing the planning of the educational programme, and a system of observations and assessments is being developed. However, these are not consistently used to provide sufficient challenge to extend children's learning.

They were also asked to use learning opportunities in daily routines, in particular to introduce purposeful number activities and to develop listening skills. While there are some opportunities available, this remains an area that needs further development.

### **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 satisfactory. 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 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):

- ensure hygiene procedures are consistently maintained to protect children from infection
- further develop opportunities to meet the individual needs of younger children and develop independence
- ensure aspects of record keeping are in place, such as a complaints record.

#### **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):

- use the information gained in observations and assessments to plan the next steps in children's learning and provide challenge for more able children
- provide more opportunities to develop children's early mathematical understanding using every day spontaneous activities.

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)