

# Hillside Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique Reference Number** 106982  
**Inspection date** 08 January 2008  
**Inspector** Barbara Walters

**Setting Address** Air Balloon Hill Infant School, Hillside Road, Bristol, Avon, BS5 7PB

**Telephone number** 0117 9478371

**E-mail**

**Registered person** Hillside Pre School

**Type of inspection** Integrated

**Type of care** 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?

Hillside Pre-School has been in operation for 26 years. It is situated within the grounds of Air Balloon Infant School in St George, Bristol. The purpose built accommodation is owned by the group and consists of a large playroom, toilets and a staffroom. Children have easy access to an enclosed outside play area adjacent to the building, with hard and grassed surfaces. They also have use of the large school playing field. The pre-school is privately owned and managed by a committee made up of parents and staff and has charity status.

The pre-school is registered for 24 children aged between three and five years of age. At present there are 75 children on roll, including 60 funded three-year-olds and 20 funded four-year-olds. The group has provision for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language. It is open on weekdays during term times, from 9.15 to 11.45 and from 12.50 to 15.20. There are three members of staff, including the groups leaders who have gained a level 3 qualification and the other member of staff is qualified to level 2. Parents also help in sessions on a rota system. Children attend from the local and surrounding areas. The group has strong links with the neighbouring Infants School, from which it receives advice and guidance on the delivery of the pre-school curriculum.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy regular physical play in the outdoor play area when the weather permits. They use a variety of equipment which helps them to develop their skills, such as throwing and catching. They develop control of their bodies and their co-ordination as they run backwards and forwards across the playground and around the tree. Children have fun when they take part in indoor physical activities when the rain limits play in the outdoor area. They skilfully balance on the balancing beam, crawl through the tunnel and climb up and down the slide. Stretching exercises help children gain an understanding of how their bodies work.

All staff members are first aid trained and the group has a clear system to record any accidents should they occur. However, children's welfare is not fully supported as the group has not obtained prior parental consent for emergency advice or treatment. The policy of not taking children if they are poorly protects all children from possible infection. Children are beginning to develop personal independence by washing their hands after messy activities, before snacks and after using the toilet. The risk of cross-infections is limited as staff have effective cleaning routines in place, including a thorough clean of all the toys and equipment each half term.

Staff work with parents to ensure that children's dietary needs are met. Children sit together for a sociable snack time, although they are not offered a consistently healthy snack option to help promote their understanding of healthy eating. Children benefit from a choice of drinks, such as milk, squash or water.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children and parents are greeted when they arrive into a bright and welcoming setting. Pictures and paintings are displayed around the room creating a colourful environment. Children enjoy playing with a wide range of toys and equipment which is age-appropriate and conforms to safety regulations. Toys are checked on a continuous basis for their suitability and replaced or thrown away as necessary. Children can self-select from low-level shelves or from a balance of floor or table top activities which they can safely access.

The main play area is comfortable and children have sufficient space in which to play. Children are safe and secure on the premises as the group have taken steps to ensure the setting is safe. The premises are secure, with parents and visitors gaining access by ringing a bell. Staff have a daily check list to ensure all areas of the setting are safe before children's use. Fire safety is a high priority as all the children attending the group regularly take part in an evacuation procedure and would know what to do in the event of a real emergency.

Children's wellbeing is safeguarded by the staff's knowledge and understanding of child protection issues. They are aware of their responsibility to protect children from harm and there are procedures in place for the recording and reporting of any incidents. However, the policy has not been updated to include changes with regard to child protection.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children respond well to the familiar daily routine. Flexible settling-in procedures allow children to become accustomed to the pre-school in their own time, and children grow in confidence and are happy. Their independence is developed as they make regular choices through free choice or an adult led activity. Children investigate what is on offer and take the initiative in their play. They are eager to explore the sand and water play, and enthusiastically join in at story time, looking right to left to find the shark in the park. They concentrate well when they are involved in cutting, rolling and shaping the play dough and building the tower as high as they can. However, staff lack clear understanding of extending children's play and children are not fully challenged. The daily adult led craft activity allows children quality time with a staff member, who spends time talking with them and valuing what they say.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff have a generally sound understanding of the Foundation Stage and children make satisfactory progress towards the early learning goals. However, planning is not linked to the six areas of learning and the learning outcomes for children are not identified. Staff help children to be involved and confident in their play and allow them time to complete their own projects. Although the staff observe children's learning, written assessments do not establish a clear picture of children's progress and as a result, children do not progress in some areas of learning and not all activities are sufficiently challenging.

Children show a sense of belonging. They are beginning to play well together and are developing independence by freely choosing from a variety of resources and putting on their own coats before outdoor play. Children begin to develop responsible behaviour by helping to tidying away their toys at the end of the session. However, children's independence is not fully promoted as staff tend to complete some tasks for them, such as pouring their drinks at snack time and cutting out shapes in activities. Children's mathematical development is encouraged as they count the number of children present and sing about the number of fat sausages in the pan. Children enjoy listening to stories and explore opposite words, such as fast and slow. They use descriptive language and are beginning to practise writing their own names on their work. However, there is no planned or consistent approach to developing writing skills or linking sounds with letters. Children learn about technology and confidently use the computer and complete simple games. They observe living things when they take their magnifying glasses into the field and look for creepy crawlies and discover the beauty of a spider's web. Children have opportunities to paint regularly and enjoy mixing colours and using paints to create different patterns.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are valued when they bring photographs of themselves for display and toys from home to share with their friends. Children's individual needs are appropriately met because staff work closely with parents to identify any additional needs they may have. For example, staff have created a picture representation of the daily routine to help children understand what happens next. Staff support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and work closely with parents and other professions for the benefit of the children.

Children begin to develop responsible behaviour by helping to tidy up at the end of the session. Staff use sound behaviour management methods to encourage good behaviour and discourage unwelcome behaviour. For example, explanations are used to remind children why they need to consider each other and the light is switched off when staff want all the children's attention. The group have developed a behaviour management policy but it does not contain a procedure to be followed in the event of a bullying incident. Resources are provided for the children to show them positive images of our diverse society and children learn about different cultures and traditions by exploring festivals, such as Chinese New Year when they taste noodles and make paper lanterns. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Staff develop relationships with parents and they are made to feel welcome. There is time available before each session for parents to come into the setting and spend time with the staff and each other. Parents are encouraged to become involved in the group by being a parent/helper for a session. They take an active part in their children's learning by taking a story book home for the children to read. Some information about the setting is displayed on the notice boards. However, the group's policies and procedures are not readily available for parents to read. Changes of regulations concerning the complaints record, which includes the requirement to investigate and maintain a record of complaints, is not in place. This is a breach in regulations. Parents receive information about the Foundation Stage and the curriculum in the group's prospectus and parents have the opportunity to informally discuss their children's progress by talking with staff and formally, during the open week.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are looked after by caring staff who have worked together in the setting for a number of years and have developed a sound working relationship for the benefit of the children. The leaders have gained a level 3 qualification in childcare since the last inspection and all staff are experienced. Suitable procedures are in place for the recruitment and checking of staff to ensure their suitability to work with children. The leaders ensure that appropriate staffing ratios are maintained and the daily help from parents continues to ensure that staff work directly with the children. There is a key worker system in place and staff know the children well, which contributes to their wellbeing. Children's welfare is underpinned by the required policies and procedures. However, the complaint's policy does not reflect current requirements. The group has a registration system for the children but does not fully record children's and staff attendance on a daily basis, showing their hours of attendance. This is a breach in regulation. Overall, the setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom they provide.

The leadership and management of the setting is satisfactory. The setting has a well established staff team. Regular meetings and the commitment of the staff contribute to children being settled and enjoying fun activities. The leaders support staff in the day to day care of the children and they have effective communication systems in place, both formal and informal. Weekly planning ensures that children have a balance of free play and structured tasks, but the planning lacks a balanced emphasis on all areas of learning and provide appropriate challenge of all children. Staff have attended continual training since the last inspection and the group is committed to further training to contribute to the quality of care and education they provide for the children. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection the group was asked to ensure the leaders update their qualifications to meet the requirements of the National Standards, to develop a procedure to be followed in the event of a parent failing to collect a child or a child being lost, to update the complaints procedure to reflect that Ofsted is now the registering authority, and for the prospectus to accurately reflect the key areas of learning. The leaders have gained a level 3 qualification in childcare and developed the procedures for a lost or uncollected child, the complaints procedure and the prospectus.

They were also asked to develop further procedures to enhance the care of children which have been put into place.

### **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):

- develop children's understanding of healthy eating by providing a variety of healthy and nutritious snacks
- obtain prior parental consent for emergency advice or treatment
- ensure the group's policies and procedures are made readily available to parents
- develop a record of complaints to share with parents
- develop a system for registering children and staff attendance on a sessional basis, showing the hours of attendance.

#### **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 develop the systems for observations and assessments and their links to planning, in order to ensure that all children make progress and their individual learning needs are met
- fully implement a system for monitoring the effectiveness of the nursery education curriculum, in order to ensure that children receive a balanced range of activities that reflect all aspects of the six areas of learning
- ensure children have consistent opportunities to develop and practice linking sounds to letters, reading and writing for purpose.

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)