

# The Hillside Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY234059
<b>Inspection date</b>	12 November 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Jill Lee
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<b>Registered person</b>	Domalo Ltd
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Full day care, Out of School 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?

The Hillside Nursery is one of four nurseries run by Domalo Limited. It opened in 2003 and operates from a purpose built, two storey building in Sholver, near Oldham.

Children are cared for in five rooms. They have access to secure enclosed outdoor play areas. The nursery is open each weekday from 07.30 to 18.00 throughout the year. The out of school club operates before school from 07.30 to 09.00 and after school from 15.00 to 18.00. The holiday club is open from 07.30 to 18.00 each weekday during the school holidays.

A maximum of 62 children may attend the nursery at any one time and there may be a maximum of 23 children in the out of school club, at any one time. There are currently 50 children on roll in the nursery, plus 49 children in the out of school club. There are 11 children attending the nursery who receive funding for nursery education. The nursery supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities, and children for whom English is an additional language.

The nursery employs 19 staff to work directly with the children, 13 of whom hold an appropriate early years qualification and several are working towards this. The nursery operates within

'Quality Counts', the quality assurance scheme of the National Day Nurseries Association. They achieved Oldham's 'Safer Food, Better Business' in 2006.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children have some planned access to the outdoor environment on most days, weather permitting, although this is less consistent for babies. Staff plan occasional visits to the local park to use the large play equipment. Children use the small outdoor space well, enjoying the freedom of movement. They play throw and catch, ride on the bikes and bounce on the trampoline. Children in the after school Posh Club 'like the scooters and skipping ropes best'. Opportunities for some large physical activity are also planned indoors, for example, toddlers enjoy crawling through the tunnel and disappearing into the ball pool.

The nursery environment is cheerful and welcoming. Parents are clearly informed that sick children cannot be cared for and information about infectious diseases is shared, so that children are protected from infection. Children have their own bedding at sleep time. Arrangements for first aid and administering medication meet requirements. Staff understand the importance of good health and hygiene practices and raise children's awareness within everyday routines. Posters help children to remember to wash their hands after using the toilet and staff remind them before they have their snack. They are developing independence in their own personal care, as they put on their own shoes and coats and learn to manage the toilet independently. They get tissues to wipe their own nose.

Staff liaise with parents about children's rest and sleep routines and they are consulted about their child's health and dietary needs. Children are provided with a healthy, nutritious diet and menus are clearly displayed for parents. Older children have made a healthy foods display and posters in the foyer promote awareness of healthy eating, healthy lunch boxes and the importance of cleaning teeth. Meal times are relaxed, as staff and children sit together. Children are encouraged to become independent in feeding themselves, although they do not pour their own drinks or serve their own food. Drinking water is always available.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff provide opportunity for children to develop appropriate levels of independence within a safe environment. Children begin to take responsibility for keeping themselves safe, as staff remind them of risks within everyday activities and routinely explain and reinforce safe practice. For example, children know they must not run indoors and need to hold the banister as they go down the stairs to play out. They know they must ask staff if they want to use the sharp craft knife. Children are reminded to take care when using scissors and when moving chairs to set up the dolls' tea party in the home corner. Staff use outings to promote children's awareness of issues like road safety.

Children access a range of resources, which are available at child height. Children's risk of accidental injury is minimised, as staff conduct appropriate risk assessments. This increases children's safe participation in everyday activities. The recording of accidents and incidents has recently been reviewed to increase clarity. The nursery has a clearly defined security policy, which includes coded locks, a clear collection policy and consistent use of the visitors' register.

There is clear planning for safe evacuation in an emergency and regular drills are held. Arrangements for outings and for taking children to and from school are appropriately considered.

Most staff have a basic awareness of child protection issues and their role if concerns are identified, although only four staff have attended safeguarding training to become familiar with the procedures and requirements of the Local Safeguarding Children Board. The child protection policy reflects current guidance. Parents are clearly informed about the child protection policy and procedures. Appropriate procedures for recording any concerns, like existing injuries, are in place.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children settle well and are happy in the nursery. The play environment is child friendly and staff plan experiences to support all areas of their development. Children are able to select a reasonable range of resources independently, helping them develop confidence as they plan their own play. They use their imagination well in role play and small world activities. They set up a dolls' tea party and organise a train journey. They enjoy reading stories independently in the book corner. Children look forward to meeting their friends in the Posh Club after school.

Babies and toddlers enjoy planned exploratory activities. They mix their own play dough and delight in the stickiness of their hands. They make sponge painting pictures, sprinkle water everywhere in water play and enjoy action songs. They use the book box frequently, selecting their favourite stories and reading happily to themselves. Staff interact warmly with them and interpret their non-verbal communications appropriately, but they are not always fully tuned into younger children's needs during larger group times. Babies enjoy cuddles as they play and toddlers increase in confidence, as they seek out their own activities.

Planning of the environment for all age groups, including out of school care, does not consistently ensure that a balanced range of activity choices is always freely available. There is limited stimulus at child height for younger children, to prompt spontaneous exploration and conversation. Babies and toddlers have regular planned access to exploratory and tactile play experiences, like sand, water, paint and dough. However, these activities are often adult-led, so children cannot explore them freely or return to extend their exploration. Staff caring for younger children do not have a sufficiently thorough knowledge of the 'Birth to three matters' framework. They observe children but do not actively use their observations to reflect and enhance children's individual interests through planning.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff have a reasonable knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum, so that children make sound progress towards the early learning goals. Children have experiences in all areas of learning, although planning does not extend to use of the outdoor environment. Children are motivated to learn and confidently explore new experiences. They concentrate well on activities they enjoy and use initiative to develop their own play ideas. Planning of adult led activities clearly outlines what children are intended to learn and these activities are clearly differentiated to support individual learning. However, some activities and resources are not freely accessible within the continuous provision.

Children communicate well and confidently share their own ideas and experiences. They look at books independently and listen with pleasure to stories. They learn to recognise and write their own name and write for real purposes in their role play. Their interest in letter sounds is promoted, as they enjoy rhyming songs and clap out rhythms. Children become very familiar with numbers and count with confidence; for example, a three year old, almost without any assistance, built up a number line from one to nine. They sort and group objects, using language of shape and size with comprehension. Staff do not fully maximise opportunities to consolidate children's understanding through practical activities and problem solving in everyday play.

Children enjoy planned activities to raise their awareness of the natural world, growth and change. For example, they talk about autumn and hibernation and consider all the sensory experiences of bonfire night. Planned activities help them explore concepts like full and empty and baking activities help them consider changing textures as they add ingredients. Children have limited opportunity for free exploratory play, to be creative and to design and make models with different media, using their own ideas. This means that opportunities for free exploration to extend learning independently are not maximised.

Staff interact positively with children, encouraging their interest. They model skills and reinforce expected behaviour, so that children learn to work cooperatively. Staff routinely observe children's individual progress and record their achievements against the stepping stones to help plan next steps in their learning. The observations do not sufficiently clearly inform staff interactions and planning to maximise learning opportunities in children's everyday free play, so that challenge is enhanced daily in all areas of the continuous provision.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children have their own key worker and get to know other staff at times when age groups mix together. They enjoy warm, caring relationships. They become familiar with routines and are able to make some choices about their own play. Resources are not consistently well organised within the planned continuous provision to maximise children's independent learning in all areas. Staff do not sufficiently encourage children's opportunity to contribute actively to daily routines, like preparing fruit for snack time, setting the tables, pouring their own drinks or wiping up spills. Staff work closely with parents and other professionals to support individual needs, adapting planning and activities to facilitate children's inclusion. For instance, they are developing use of signing and communication books.

Children's good behaviour is sensitively encouraged and rewarded. Children in the Posh Club enjoy getting 'Posh Club stars' when they behave well and are kind to others. Staff gently reinforce rules and boundaries, so that children learn to negotiate difficulties and help each other. Staff clearly explain why certain behaviour is unacceptable and remind children why certain rules are in place, like sharing, taking turns and looking after the toys. They enjoy being chosen to be a 'monitor' to give out the buns at tea time. Staff liaise closely with parents where difficulties are identified.

Children engage in some planned activities, which help to promote their awareness of the wider world. They use resources, like books and dressing-up clothes, which promote positive images of other cultures and disabilities. A parent helped the children learn some words in Chinese and they enjoyed a Chinese meal, using chopsticks. Local outings, though only possible when numbers are low, help to raise children's awareness of their local environment. For example, children visit the library and local shops and a wider range of outings is planned for older

children in the school holidays. They learn about the people who help us, like the police, the fire service and the dentist. Children begin to learn about difference and to express their own needs and preferences. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Parents enjoy friendly relationships with staff. Settling-in procedures encourage parents to spend time getting to know staff and telling them about their child's needs. The parent handbook contains a summary of all nursery policies and procedures, although information for parents about the 'Birth to three matters' framework is limited. Staff talk daily with parents and use a daily care sheet, to inform parents about their child's experiences. Parents feel confident to raise any concerns. There is a suggestions box in the foyer and questionnaires are sometimes used to consult parents about their views. The Ofsted poster is displayed. The complaints policy reflects current guidance and a system for the recording of complaints is in place. Regular newsletters keep parents informed about nursery issues.

The partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Staff share children's progress with parents at open evenings and by encouraging them to look at the development files. Planning is clearly displayed but parents are not very well informed about the Foundation Stage curriculum. Staff are considering ways to enable them to become more actively involved in their child's learning experiences and to contribute their observations of home experiences to planning.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

The nursery environment is satisfactorily organised to promote children's welfare and safety. Daily routines and organisation of space and resources mostly support children's varying needs and interests. Babies and toddlers are cared for by key staff in group rooms, although planned routines and shared use of space mean that the number of carers encountered by babies and toddlers is often increased during transitions and children's spontaneous play is disrupted. Also planned use of large group activity to manage transition times does not always reflect individual needs or appropriately engage children's active interest. This means that children are sometimes restless and not actively participating. Staff are deployed effectively to ensure appropriate levels of supervision and attention is given to consistency and continuity.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Staff work hard and are committed to identifying areas which need improvement. A system for self evaluation is being developed but is not yet effectively used by the whole staff group as a tool for improvement of practice. Staff share information informally on a regular basis but opportunity for planned staff meetings is quite limited. This means that processes to consider the quality of their practice are not well developed. Training needs are identified through appraisal. Observations of children help staff to identify children's interests but these are not currently used fully to support planning for their progress. Basic systems are in place to monitor the quality of teaching and its impact on children's learning.

Required policies and procedures are in place, to ensure that children's welfare is appropriately safeguarded. Recruitment and vetting procedures are sound, ensuring that staff are suitable to work with children. Appropriate induction procedures help staff to understand their responsibilities. Required documentation, which contributes to children's health, safety and well-being, is in place. Parents' wishes regarding their child's care 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 nursery was asked to monitor staff ratios to ensure they consistently meet requirements, to enhance the play and learning opportunities for all children, to increase the range of resources promoting awareness of diversity, to enhance safety around the kitchen area and to ensure parents know how to make a complaint.

Staff ratios are monitored carefully at all times to ensure children are appropriately supervised. A key worker system has been introduced and staff are allocated to rooms with consistency. This helps to promote children's feelings of security within the nursery. The nursery has clear risk assessments in place, covering all areas, so that children are kept safe. Staff are continuing to develop their knowledge and understanding of effective ways to plan and organise the nursery environment, so that children's individual development needs are supported. The planning process includes reference to other cultures and festivals, to raise children's awareness of diversity and difference. Children also access books and other resources, which reflect other cultures and disability. Information about the complaints procedure is displayed for parents, along with the Ofsted poster for parents.

These measures help to ensure that staff consider children's individual needs and consistently ensure their overall welfare is safeguarded.

### **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 all staff are fully familiar with their responsibilities within the procedures of the Local Safeguarding Children Board
- develop staff knowledge and understanding about ways to promote a consistently stimulating environment for children, using observations of their interests to enhance their play experiences (also applies to nursery education)

- plan to ensure the individual needs of children in the toddler room are supported effectively by key staff and disruptions to their play minimised, especially during times of transition and shared use.

### **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):

- extend challenge and choice within the continuous provision, especially to enhance children's free opportunities to explore with different media, to design and make and to develop their own creativity (also applies to care)
- encourage all children to access stored resources independently to extend their own play ideas, and enable them to participate more actively in daily routines (also applies to care)
- develop further the ways in which parents are actively encouraged to become involved in their child's learning and able to contribute to planning for their progress (also applies to care).

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)