

# Hillside Pre - School (Chorleywood) Ltd

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number** EY404609  
**Inspection date** 22/06/2010  
**Inspector** Hilary Preece

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**Type of setting** Childcare on non-domestic premises

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

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## Description of the setting

Hillside Pre-school re-registered under a new management team in 2009, having previously opened in 1979. It operates from the Free Church Hall, in Chorleywood, Hertfordshire and serves the local community. Children have access to the hall, small side room, large hall for physical activities and a secure outdoor play area on two levels. There is easy access to the setting and main hall, with ramped access to the large hall and disabled cloakroom. The lower patio of the outside play area is accessible.

The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 26 children may attend at any one time. There are currently 54 children aged from two years to under five years on roll. The pre-school provides support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. It opens from 9.15am until 12.15pm each week day during school term time, with an additional lunch club operating between 12.15pm and 1.30pm each day. The pre-school employs 12 part-time practitioners, with six working with the children each day. The majority of staff hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance. The manager holds a relevant degree and is about to start working towards the Early Years Professional status.

## The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children's welfare is promoted well and they are kept safe and secure in a welcoming setting. Effective partnerships exist with parents and in the wider context that contribute to ensuring children's needs are met. Children's learning and development is generally promoted well and they make good progress given their starting points. There is good capacity to improve because self-evaluation accurately identifies strengths, weaknesses and focused plans for the future.

## What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- review the planning and organisation of some large group activities and routines, such as snack time, to ensure the individual needs of children are always met and they have greater choice as to when they eat and play
- match observations and assessments of children to the expectations of the early learning goals and identify clear learning priorities that are relevant and motivating for each child.

## **The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision**

The pre-school is committed to safeguarding and promoting children's welfare. Policies and procedures have recently been reviewed and staff understand their roles and responsibilities in keeping children safe and promoting their welfare. Staff would have no hesitation in implementing the comprehensive safeguarding children procedure in the event of any concern about a child's welfare or allegation made against staff. Rigorous procedures are followed, and accurate records maintained, in the employment and vetting of staff. As a result, staff are well qualified, experienced and suitable to work with children. They work well as a team, are deployed effectively and strictly follow procedures and routines that keep children safe as they arrive, depart and use different areas of the building and outdoor area. The premises is secure and risk assessments are carried out that help maintain a safe environment for the children. Their health and dietary needs are met because staff follow clear medicine, accident and first aid procedures.

The pre-school is led by a supportive management committee and a newly-appointed, dynamic manager. She has quickly identified where there is a need for further improvement and has made a very accurate assessment of the setting's strengths and weaknesses. Her strong drive and ambition are evident and plans for the future are realistic and targeted where there is a need for development. Some significant changes have already been made that include the introduction of a lunch club to extend the childcare facility for parents, a website that makes information more widely available and more rigorous implementation of emergency evacuation procedures.

Partnerships with parents and carers continue to be strengthened. Parents comment on the recently improved level of communication between the management and parents that include a more detailed prospectus and regular newsletters. Effective systems are in place to share information about individual children between parents and key workers right from the start which helps children to settle and involves parents in their child's ongoing learning and development. There are plans to increase the frequency of formal written reports for parents to keep them better informed and more involved. Helpful links are well established with other agencies that are involved with children's welfare and development, as well as the local schools that children move on to. This provides continuity of care for the children and eases their transition to nursery or school. Equality and diversity is promoted well overall. Children with additional needs receive high quality support and monitoring to ensure they make good progress in relation to their starting points and are fully able to participate. This helps narrow any achievement gap.

## **The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children**

The environment is bright and well equipped and resources easily accessible to the children. Overall staff plan and provide an appropriate range of adult-led activities

and free play to enable children to enjoy their time at pre-school. Each child benefits from a key worker knowing them well and understanding their individual needs. They make observations and assessments of children to show how they are making generally good progress overall towards the early learning goals but these records are not used as effectively as they could to identify and plan the next steps in children's learning. Topics and themes tend to be chosen by adults and are not necessarily tailored to individual needs and interests in order to maximise learning opportunities. Nonetheless, children are happy, settled and make secure relationships with their key workers, staff and other children. They behave well and understand expectations because staff act as positive role models. For example, they are keen to put away toys and move furniture when the tidy-up music is played and enthusiastically clear away their plates after snack time. They show growing independence in daily routines, such as, washing their hands, peeling fruit and pouring their drinks carefully. Snack time is a sociable occasion when children sit together with their key worker and learn to share and take turns. They make healthy choices from the range of fruit and bread and butter on offer and pour their own water or milk. Staff frequently talk to them about the benefits of certain foods on their health and growth so they gain understanding of healthy living. However, a rigid routine for snack time means that children sit for too long after finishing their snack whilst they wait for the next activity and some become bored and restless.

Children enjoy being active in the small garden and indoor hall where they explore movement and develop co-ordination. They use equipment, such as, bean bags to balance on their heads whilst walking and move their bodies like marching soldiers. They listen well to instructions and show a regard for their own safety as they move sensibly between rooms. Good quality interaction by staff helps develop positive relationships so young children feel safe and secure.

Children show positive attitudes to learning and are confident in choosing whether to play inside or outside. They enjoy imaginative play, such as, train sets and talk happily to staff about what they are making. They have opportunities to investigate how things work by using torches, tape recorders, cameras and a computer. Staff are generally good at recognising when children need to be challenged to remain motivated to learn. They support more able children to write their names, write numbers, identify shapes and encourage them to express their ideas through drawing. Younger children enjoy mark-making with paint brushes and experimenting with glue and paper. Children enjoy listening to stories and songs. They are helped to listen better and take part because they are split into smaller groups. Some children express themselves very confidently as they talk about what is happening in the pictures. Meaningful activities are provided to help children explore diversity and difference. Books, such as, 'Handa's Surprise' allow children to find out about African children and their culture, and mirrors are used to allow children to identify and recognise the uniqueness of their own appearance. This promotes children's self-respect and gives them understanding of the needs of others.

## Annex A: record of inspection judgements

### The key inspection judgements and what they mean

*Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality*

*Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong*

*Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound*

*Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough*

### The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

<b>How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

### The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

<b>How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?</b>	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	3
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

### The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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