



Hilltop Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY270274
Inspection date	16 January 2006
Inspector	Ceri Ann Mills
Setting Address	Lebanon Gardens, Biggin Hill, Westerham, Kent, TN16 3HA
Telephone number	07980 506343 (pre school hrs)
E-mail	
Registered person	Hilltop 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.

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 satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Hilltop Pre-school opened under new ownership in 2004. The pre-school is based in the Women's Institute Hall in Biggin Hill, Bromley. Children have access to one hall, which is used as the main activity room and for physical play.

It is open Monday to Friday between 09:30 and 12:00 during term time only and may care for up to 26 children from 2 years to under 5 years. There are currently 15 children on roll, of whom 8 children are in receipt of funded nursery education.

The pre-school serves families from Biggin Hill and the surrounding area. It supports children with special needs and children who speak English as an additional language.

There are five members of staff, of these four have early years qualifications and one is working towards NVQ level two. A minimum of three staff work directly with the children each session. The pre-school receives support from the Bromley Early Years and Childcare Service.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a clean, spacious and well-maintained environment. Children's good health is protected because staff have effective procedures in place for ensuring toys and equipment are kept clean and hygienic. Spills are quickly cleared up and tables are cleaned thoroughly with anti bacterial spray before refreshments are taken. Children learn about personal hygiene and are developing good skills in self-care. They know to wash their hands after using the toilet and before snack time because staff talk to them about the importance of good hygiene habits. However, the current practice of children using a shared water bowl compromises their health. Children's privacy is respected by staff during nappy changing routines and sound procedures are followed to prevent the spread of infection. Children's welfare is promoted appropriately through accident and other health records being well documented and shared with parents. Staff act in the children's best interest if they become unwell whilst at pre-school. There is a least one staff member trained in first aid on the premises at all times.

Children have a good awareness of their environment, move freely around and take part in regular physical activity indoors which contributes to keeping healthy. Staff plan a different physical play experience each week which focuses on one aspect of development such as climbing, balancing or peddling. However, this limits the opportunities children have to practice and enhance a range of physical skills on a daily basis.

Children's health and dietary needs are appropriately met because staff know and respond to children's individual specialist requirements, as a result of information provided by parents. Children have access to drinking water throughout the session and have a choice of milk or water at snack time. Children receive mostly healthy snacks and enjoy eating food which they have helped to prepare, such as a savoury sandwich. Children are beginning to understand why different types of food are good for their bodies because staff talk to them about healthy eating habits.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play in a safe and secure environment because staff are vigilant in ensuring

their safety. For example, regular risk assessments are undertaken to ensure the premises and equipment is not a hazard to children. Staff are effectively deployed during arrival and collection times and children are closely supervised, especially when going to the toilets and when using kitchen utensils during snack preparation. Visitors are not able to gain access to the building without alerting staff and their presence is recorded.

Children demonstrate a growing understanding of keeping themselves safe from harm as they listen attentively to the gentle reminders from staff. Children know why running around the hall can be dangerous and that untied shoe laces and the wearing of dressing up clothes on the climbing frame present a trip hazard. Children safely use toys and play materials which are well maintained and effectively arranged around the hall to ensure easy access. Staff create a bright and welcoming environment, despite having limited wall space for displays. As a result children take most of their work home. Good fire safety procedures are in place with regular fire drills carried out to ensure children are evacuated safely. Children are kept safe and protected from harm because staff know how to respond to child protection concerns should they arise.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's interest in activities, particularly when they are new, is generated by supportive and kind staff. Children who are familiar with the setting, quickly engage at their chosen activities because resources are attractively set out so that children can move around freely and initiate their own play and learning. The range of activities are planned to cover all areas of learning and provide appropriate developmental challenge for most children. Younger children's progress is generally observed, though not specifically planned for or monitored.

Children are sociable, make friends and play well together. They enjoy sharing what they can do and demonstrate their skills to others. For example, younger children learn how to operate the computer and tape recorder correctly, following the guidance of older children. Staff sit with the children so that they are directly available to support their play. This helps children to sustain interest and concentration. Children happily talk to staff about what they are doing and involve them in their imaginative play by, for example, serving them "a cup of tea" from the home corner. Staff join in and are attentive to what children say and do, however there is a lack of open questions to extend some children's thinking and learning. Children feel valued and are confident because staff provide them with decision making opportunities, such as taking part in a vote to decide what book they would like the staff member to read at group story time.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff have a sound knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage framework which is evident in their planning. Children make steady progress in most areas of development because staff provide a well balanced curriculum, which offers a range of appropriate activities and

first hand experiences.

Children's individual development is monitored by key staff through observation and their next steps for learning are identified. However, planning does not clearly show what children of different ages and abilities are expected to learn and how activities are extended to provide challenges for them.

Most children are able to recognise their names on the chairs and named pegs, which helps them to feel a sense of belonging. Children develop good relationships with their peers. For example, children welcome each other and show sensitivity to new children by inviting them to sit next to them. Children have a good understanding for counting and the opportunities through many routine parts of the session reinforce this knowledge. Children learn about shape, space and measure through practical activities, however there are fewer opportunities to extend children's understanding of calculation. Children use a range of writing materials and are keen to label their work. Some children are beginning to write their names competently.

Children enjoy exploring materials such as water and show interest in how information and communication technology works. Good staff interaction at circle time helps children learn the sounds and names of letters, and about the changes in the environment such as the weather and seasons. Children take part in completing a daily weather board and talk confidently about what they wear in the rain to keep themselves dry.

Children concentrate and sit well when listening to stories, as staff read expressively and use visual aids to bring the story to life. Children use their imagination in a variety of ways including role play where they take on family roles or those familiar people in the community, such as hairdressers and doctors.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children settle very quickly and look forward to the pre-school session. The familiarity of the routine and the warm welcome given by staff helps children feel secure, as they separate from their parents. Less confident children receive lots of reassurance as they are comforted by staff.

Staff provide good role models for children by being polite and calm. As a result children behave well, are sensitive to the needs of their friends and play together harmoniously. Children respond with enthusiasm to requests from staff at tidy up time and enjoy the opportunities given for taking responsibility at snack time. Staff recognise children's achievements and give lots of praise, which helps build their self esteem. Children learn about different cultures and festivals through a range of activities, including baking and food tasting. They see visual aids which reflect positive images of people in society and words in other languages which helps children to develop an awareness of diversity. Children's spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is being fostered within the setting. Children relate well to staff and show care and concern about absent members of the team. Their curiosity is managed sensitively and reassuringly by staff.

The quality of the partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents have good opportunities to share information about their children with those caring for them, so key staff get to know the children extremely well and provide appropriately for them. Staff involve parents in their children's learning by providing activities that can extend learning at home, such as a book loaning scheme.

Children with special needs and those who speak English as an additional language are able to participate fully. This is because staff are committed to inclusion and undertake relevant training to support a specific need. For example, some staff are able to communicate in sign language.

Parents have clear information about the setting through, for example, a prospectus, regular newsletters and displays. A range of policies and procedures, including one for complaints is readily available and details about the Foundation Stage Framework used for the development of funded children are displayed. However, there is a lack of information about the Birth to three matters framework.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children receive a good level of adult supervision because staff are deployed effectively. Staff organise space well to ensure all children are able to participate and gain fully from an appealing range of resources. The schedule of the session is well organised so that children have plenty of time to see activities through and achieve positive results. Children spend valuable time together at registration and snack time, providing them with opportunities to engage in conversation and talk about things that are important to them.

There are robust recruitment and induction procedures in place, which includes all staff being properly vetted to ensure they are suitable to look after children.

All required documents for the safety and wellbeing of the children are in place and efficiently maintained. Data, such as accident records are regularly monitored to identify any weaknesses in the provision. Staff keep records of the children in their care, which helps them to meet the children's individual needs. Key staff observe children's development and regularly inform parents of their children's achievements.

Leadership and management is good. The setting has clear aims which reflects a commitment to improving the quality care and education. Staff work very well as a team and have defined roles and lead responsibilities in areas such as Health and Safety, Child Protection and Equal Opportunities. In the absence of the manager the deputy ensures continuity of care and acts as a good role model for staff by promoting good practices, which help children develop and progress.

Most staff hold a relevant childcare qualification, have relevant experience and continue to enhance their professional development through a range of early years workshops. Regular staff meetings enable staff to monitor and evaluate the curriculum and plan activities to support children's learning. As a result, the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last education inspection the following key issues were raised. To develop activities that allow children to explore and investigate the natural environment, to review creative play opportunities to ensure children develop creative skills through a range of activities, and to develop assessment systems which can be used to identify children's progress and learning needs.

All three key issues have been addressed. Children have access to interesting resources such as a nature table with supporting materials such as books, CD ROM and board games. As a result, children develop an understanding of the natural world around them through a range of senses.

Children use a range of appropriate materials such as dough and paints, which allows them to creatively express themselves. The role play area fires their imagination and gives children the freedom to develop their own ideas, which are extended to other areas. Children take part in group singing each day and use a tape recorder independently to select and dance to a favourite tune.

A system is in place for recording what children are able to do in the six areas of learning. Staff observe children's progress and keep a record of their findings which are then used to plan children's next steps for learning.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since registration.

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.

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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):

- make hygienic arrangements for hand washing prior to children taking refreshments and after using the toilet
- ensure Birth to Three Matters framework is used to support the needs of the younger children

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 range of physical play opportunities offered to children on a daily basis
- extend short term planning to clearly show what the children are expected to learn in all areas, using observations to plan next steps, and how the activity can be differentiated to accommodate all ages and abilities

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