

Hilltop Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Phillipa Wallis

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Type of setting Childcare - Non-Domestic

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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*.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

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Description of the setting

Hilltop Pre-School first opened in the 1960s and moved to the current premises in September 2007. It now operates from a designated room, with toilets and kitchen area and is located within the Portishead Children's Centre. Children have access to three outside play areas, one of these areas is covered by a canopy and is also enclosed. It is managed by a committee that includes parents of the children that attend.

The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 22 children in the early years age range may attend the pre-school any one time. Of these no more than 16 can be under three-years-old.

The pre-school is open daily during school term time from 9.00am to 12.00noon and 12.30pm to 3.30pm, and also includes a lunch club. Two sessions are for two-year-olds only. There are currently 58 children in the early years age range on roll. The pre-school receives funding for the provision of free early education for children aged three and four years. The pre-school supports children who learn English as an additional language. Children come from the local area and most go on to attend local primary schools. The pre-school employs eight members of staff to work with the children; all hold appropriate early years qualifications.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Staff's knowledge and awareness of children's individual needs enables them to support their welfare and development very well in most areas of learning. Staff provide a warm welcome in a highly stimulating, dedicated environment, with a wide range of activities and a highly effective key person system is implemented. Positive partnerships with parents are developed overall. There are good links with other providers and professionals to enhance the quality of care the children receive and to support transitions to school. Steps have been taken to improve the pre-school and children now have access to outdoor play in all weather. Staff and parent committee members demonstrate a positive attitude and commitment to continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- improve further the two-way flow of information with all parents to seek their views on the pre-school and include them in decision making on future improvements

- develop further children's understanding of how to address and resolve conflicts through consistent staff support.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Robust recruitment and induction arrangements are in place to assess the suitability of staff working in the pre-school. Documentation, records, policies and procedures are well developed. Risk assessments are undertaken by staff and these are effective in promoting children's safety. Children's welfare is safeguarded as all staff have a sound understanding and knowledge of child protection and reporting procedures if needed. Records are in place, well organised, completed appropriately and stored confidentially. Effective self-evaluation of the preschool includes ongoing review of the staff's practice and developing the pre-school environment.

Staff provide a welcoming, highly stimulating and well resourced environment, with a wide range of activities arranged for the children on arrival. Children are supported to make choices regarding the activities they choose. These engage and sustain their interests well. There is free flow access to a sheltered and enclosed outside play area. Additionally children can access two further areas, under supervision, to support their physical development by accessing a range of equipment such as tricycles, scooters and a roundabout. Children appear confident and settle very quickly, developing clear knowledge of expectations in behaviour. The staff engage in positive interactions with the children, delivered in a friendly, cheerful manner. There are clear daily routines in place to support the children, with well developed activity plans in place for the term ahead. Children use toys that reflect a diverse society, and participate in some good planned activities that explore different celebrations and include parent's personal knowledge and experience.

Staff promote good partnerships with parents. Parents appreciate informal discussions with staff at the beginning and end of day. Children's progress is recorded in individual learning records and formally shared three times a year, although is freely accessible at all times. Parents receive information about the setting through regular newsletters and an informative notice board. Systems are in place to involve some parents in decision making about the pre-school, for example, committee members. This has not been fully developed to ensure all parents' views are sought. Pre-school staff have established good links with other professionals, the children's centre, and also local schools. These help support children's learning collaboratively and also their transition to school.

The staff team work well together and communicate effectively. This results in sessions running smoothly where children settle quickly and, overall, have their needs well met. Regular staff appraisals help to recognise areas for staff development. This provides an experienced, skilled, motivated team that provides effective care and development opportunities for children.

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

Children enjoy their time in preschool where they play and learn in a friendly atmosphere. A number of highly stimulating activities and play opportunities are set out for children, which enable them to settle quickly. They enjoy activities both independently and working in groups, sharing experiences with friends. Children receive regular praise and encouragement for effort and achievement, which helps boost their self-esteem and confidence and they are happy, settled and secure. The well developed key person system is used effectively to support children's progress in partnership with their parents. The daily routine is clearly planned and supports children to establish trusting relationships with staff, which aids their learning.

Children enjoy a healthy lifestyle. Children learn to use the bathroom independently and wash their hands, knowing the importance of removing germs before they eat. Children choose from a selection of healthy options at snack time, which includes a variety of fresh fruit and are confident to request alternatives. They have daily fresh air and exercise, which children can access freely through the sessions. They practice large muscle skills as they manoeuvre wheeled toys around a large former school playground, which is well resourced and has shaded areas. A further area is used for activities, such as growing vegetables and flowers. Children are involved in regular fire drills, which mean they know what to do if they must leave the building in an emergency. Children's birthdays are acknowledged and celebrated. Visits from people working in the local town such as police, nurses and vets help children understand their place in the wider community.

Staff plan a broad range of activities, both inside and out, linked to planned themes, such as colours and numbers. Children communicate confidently making their needs known and organising their own play. They enjoy stories and books in small groups, learning to listen well, and joining in as appropriate. Children are supported in recognising their name and start early letter recognitions by copying their name to make their marks to identify their own work.

Staff use a clear assessment system that identifies children's achievements and interests. They use this effectively to plan for children's next steps in their learning, allowing time and space to follow children's interests which arise spontaneously. Staff interact positively during activities and praise children's achievements and good behaviour. Although staff do not always consistently address and help them to resolve issues of conflict, for example, the need to share the toys. There is good use made of information and communication technology equipment to support children developing skills for the future. Children's own self-esteem and sense of value is promoted through 'Wow' moments, where children share their recent achievements from home, or at pre-school, with the group and through display on the magic tree.

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

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

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
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

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	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	2
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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Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met