

Hillcrest Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector

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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

Hillcrest Nursery School Ltd has been operating for a number of years and registered as a company in 2004. The premises consist of a converted detached building in its own grounds, located in the Fulwood area of Preston.

The nursery is open each weekday between 8am to 6pm all year round, except for Bank Holidays. A maximum of 52 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. There are currently 66 children on roll in the early years age range. The nursery supports children who speak English as an additional language

The manager employs 16 staff, the majority of whom hold appropriate level 3 early years qualifications, and one member of staff holds level 4. The manager holds a teaching qualification and is directly involved in the running of the nursery. Support staff are employed to provide meals and maintain the building. Meals are freshly prepared on the premises each day. Training and advice is obtain from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

An excellent knowledge and understanding of each child's needs ensures that staff are very successful in promoting children's welfare and learning. Children are safe and secure, displaying exceptional awareness of safety issues and recognising and understanding how to keep themselves safe. Highly positive and well-established relationships with parents and other agencies are significant in children's ability to settle well and gain confidence. Individual needs are met as effective observation and assessment procedures are in place, however, some staff are not aware of procedures to track children's progress. Self-evaluation involves all staff and the manager is confident about what the nursery needs to do to improve further.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- ensure all staff are aware of systems to track children's progress towards the early learning goals
- ensure parents contribute to children's records to provide a full picture of their learning and development.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's welfare and well-being are exceptionally well promoted as the nursery has robust procedures in place for safeguarding children. There is a designated person and all staff have a first-class knowledge of child protection issues. Staff make effective use of up-to-date risk assessments to support them in ensuring the areas used by children are safe, and as a result children display an excellent awareness of safety. The indoor and outdoor areas are secure at all times. There are a comprehensive range of policies and procedures which are regularly reviewed and shared at staff meetings. This means there is a comprehensive awareness of safeguarding issues among the staff within the setting at all levels.

Staff have excellent understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and use this well to support children in their learning. The environment, both indoors and out, is organised flexibly and creatively, and as a result children choose to access areas and resources, experiencing different activities to extend their play and develop their independence. Furniture, equipment and resources are of high quality and suitable for the ages of children to support their learning and development.

Ambition and drive are effectively communicated by the manager and she secures improvement well. Clear expectations and plans for the future are in place which aim to bring about further improvement to the provision and outcomes for children. Self-evaluation involves all staff, considers views of parents and children and provides an accurate diagnosis of the strengths and weaknesses of the nursery. As a result, staff are focused on helping all children to make good progress in their learning and development and promoting their welfare. There is a common sense of purpose between adults who work well together to ensure that all groups of children have the opportunity to achieve as well as they can.

Partnerships are well established and make a strong contribution to children's achievements and well-being. Links with other providers are effective when children transfer from one setting to another, and as a result continuity is maintained and children's social, emotional and educational needs are addressed appropriately. The nursery liaises with external agencies or services to ensure children get the support they need. Parents and carers are kept well informed about their children's achievements, welfare and development, and there are clear and accessible channels for them to communicate with the nursery. They are very happy with the provision and regularly send thank you cards and show their appreciation of the nursery. For example, grandparents describe how their lives have been transformed by the help and support the nursery has given them.

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

Children are happy, confident and enthusiastic to learn in an interesting, well-equipped and welcoming environment. Activities are well planned, based upon

thorough and accurate observations and assessment, and matched to the full range of children's needs. As a result, children are making good progress in relation to their starting points and every child is suitably challenged by the learning experiences provided. Children have individual learning journals containing observations which are matched to the Early Years Foundation Stage, and next steps in learning are clearly identified, which are effectively threaded through into planning. Progress tracking information is in place, however, some staff are not aware of these procedures which means they are not always clear about the progress children are making towards the early learning goals. Staff regularly share this information with parents and carers and provide opportunities for them to add to both planning and assessment information. However, most do not contribute towards this information, meaning that a full picture of children's learning and development is not achieved.

Children have access to a good range of high quality resources and equipment in both the indoor and outdoor environments, which allows them to make choices and become independent learners. They develop literacy skills as they make up rhymes with staff and listen attentively to stories read aloud. Babies and very young children make sounds as they actively explore their surroundings, point to pictures in books and enjoy mark making with crayons. Problem solving skills are enhanced outdoors as children fill various containers and transfer one to another. They tip sand into buckets containing water and work out how to make a boat sink to the bottom. Staff provide support where necessary but allow children to be creative, take risks and use trial and error to find things out. The manager and staff are passionate about the use of the outdoor environment and provide free-flow access throughout the day. As a result, children are able to experience the elements first hand and are developing the skills they need in order to secure future learning.

Children show an excellent understanding of what standards of behaviour are expected and apply these in order to keep themselves and others safe. For example, they wait until other children are clear of the rope swing before they begin to use it. They are extremely confident and competent in communicating their thoughts and show a mature response to taking responsibility for their own and others' safety. The high quality adult interactions and exemplary organisation of routines help babies to gain an exceptionally strong sense of security. For example, very young children respond to cuddles from staff after waking from a sleep and quickly settle when they are upset. Children's behaviour is exemplary and they are beginning to show an excellent awareness of responsibility within the nursery. Children have innovative opportunities to engage in a wide range of physical activities, both indoors and out, and gain a secure understanding about the importance of regular exercise as part of maintaining a healthy lifestyle. Pre-school children confidently describe healthy foods and talk about how yoghurts make them 'big and strong'. Very young children are extremely content and settled because their individual health, physical and dietary needs are met to an exceptional standard.

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	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
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	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
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
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The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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