

Hilltop Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector

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Setting address

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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*.

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Description of the setting

Hilltop Pre-School is committee run, opening in 1975 and operating from a large hall within the Holy Trinity Parish Centre in Rayleigh. There is level access to the entrance of the premises, where all children share access to a secure, enclosed outdoor play area. A maximum of 30 children may attend the setting at any one time, with session times being 9.15am until 12.15pm on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays and 9.15am until 11.45am and from 12.15pm until 2.45pm on Thursdays.

The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register, with currently 51 children on roll. The pre-school is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early years education for children aged three- and four-years-old. Children from the local catchment area attend for a variety of sessions, including children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs 10 members of staff, of whom seven hold level 2 and two hold level 3 early years qualifications, while one holds a foundation degree in early years. The setting receives outside support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are offered a broad range of experiences to capture imagination and to support their learning, while ensuring that they are making good progress towards their early learning goals given their ages, abilities and starting points. Staff are proactive in recognising the uniqueness of each child and some developing partnerships with other agencies and settings ensure that children's individual needs are well met. Written policies and procedures enable staff to support and protect children at all times. Self-evaluation reflects rigorous monitoring, while actions taken by staff are well targeted to ensure sustainable improvements to the early years provision.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop opportunities to share relevant information about children's progress with other providers to ensure support of individual children's progress within the Early Years Foundation Stage and to promote effective continuity and progression
- develop an environment that is rich in numbers and words that take into account children's different home backgrounds and cultures.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are protected from harm through yearly risk assessments identifying potential dangers, while daily checks are undertaken before staff open the setting. Good procedures ensure that all children are protected from the other users of the premises, including staff escorting them to and from the designated toilet area. Good care plans fully safeguard children with particular medical conditions by including how staff will manage their needs. The designated safeguarding officer and staff team attend training to ensure that their knowledge of procedures is kept up-to-date to protect children from harm. Children are safeguarded by the setting's robust recruitment, vetting and induction procedures ensuring staff's suitability to work with them. In addition, through reflective practice, staff have identified that some policies and procedures require further consideration and updating to fully safeguard and protect children's well-being and safety.

The well-qualified and established staff team work enthusiastically together and support each other to ensure consistency of care for individual children. They demonstrate a commitment to promoting positive outcomes for children by consistently developing their own knowledge through ongoing training and local authority support. Required ratios are well met and registers are maintained for children and staff to ensure that everyone can safely be accounted for at all times.

Staff's awareness of issues of equality and diversity underpin their everyday practices. Children learn about the local community through visits to the library and a national charity website. The special educational needs coordinator is improving outcomes for children by taking effective steps to close identified achievement gaps. She works closely with parents and interagency teams to develop individual education and care plans for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Effective links with the local primary school support children's smooth transition to school. Some children attending this setting also attend other settings delivering the learning and development requirements. However, staff have yet to fully develop the relevant information sharing with all these settings to ensure continuity in children's learning and the meeting of their needs.

Effective management of resources ensure that children have safe access to a worthwhile range of enticing activities that help to promote their good progress. Staff value what children do, for example, those returning from a previous session, being able to find the construction set to complete their model. Children are able to take decisions and to make choices as to whether they wish to enjoy energetic outdoor play on very cold days.

The managers and their staff team have taken positive steps to improve the outcomes for children by appropriately addressing actions and recommendations from the last inspection. They have worked closely with the local authority to organise systems to ensure that children enjoy challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their individual needs. They have accurately identified the strengths and weaknesses of the pre-school and set

achievable targets to further enhance the outcomes for children, for example, by improving the outdoor play area.

Staff have established effective relationships with parents and carers. Information is shared with them through discussions with their child's key worker at arrival and collection times. They know each child well and understand how to meet their differing needs by promoting fully inclusive practice. They actively involve and value all parents. For example, actively encouraging their involvement in extending children's knowledge and experiences of the world when celebrating the Chinese New Year. Parents spoken to during the inspection passed very complimentary comments about the care and education their children receive and confirmed that they can regularly review their children's learning profiles.

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

Children are eager and enthusiastic learners through being keen to explore and investigate activities and resources. Staff's secure knowledge of children enables them to successfully plan interesting and challenging experiences to meet their individual learning styles and interests. Children's progress is effectively monitored and assessed through regular observations by staff, before being systematically recorded to reflect their achievements, including being illustrated by photographs and samples of their work.

Children have ample time and space to concentrate on activities and experiences to develop their own interests, such as when using blocks to create vehicles, including developing fine movements of their fingers and hands when twisting large screws. They talk about keeping their dinosaurs safe when problem-solving as to how they can fix a safety belt to their vehicles. They successfully negotiate space while running and chasing bubbles to investigate the effects of wind. They have many opportunities to interact with others while building the foundations for literacy, including writing during role play. Their awareness of different communication systems include the use of Makaton during role play. However, children only occasionally see writing systems other than English, resulting in bi-lingual children not seeing their other language in written form. Children have many opportunities to work through routines during role play, such as feeding and putting a 'baby' to bed. The creative area is resourced with materials to enable children to make choices and to express their ideas, thoughts and feelings by using a widening range of materials and suitable tools, such as, scissors, paint brushes and pencils.

Children are active and inquisitive learners and are developing the fundamental skills for their future. They click on different icons to dress a person when completing simple computer programmes. They solve problems when completing jigsaw puzzles and are able to point to numbers when counting and recognising numerals zero to nine. Children are able to follow good hygiene practices and are taking increasing responsibility for washing their hands throughout sessions. Snack times provide good opportunities to promote their social development and

independence. For example, when choosing from a varied food selection of healthy options provided by parents. Children's behaviour is good and they sing a song to re-enforce how they should work together by taking turns and sharing fairly. While understanding that there is a need for codes of behaviour to keep everyone safe.

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	2
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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