

Hartcliffe Early Years Centre

Inspection report

Unique reference number	108906
Local authority	Bristol City Council
Inspection number	377347
Inspection dates	July 2012
Lead inspector	Jane Burchall HMI

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The registered childcare provision, managed by the governing body, was inspected under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Nursery
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	149
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Monica Turnbull and Sue Daniel
Headteacher	Lynne James
Date of previous school inspection	25 February 2009
School address	Hareclive Road Hartcliffe Bristol BS13 0JW
Telephone number	01179 038633
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Registered childcare provision	Hartcliffe Early Excellence Centre
Number of children on roll in the registered childcare provision	89
Date of last inspection of registered childcare provision	25 February 2009

Age group	
Inspection date(s)	July 2012
Inspection number	377847



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Introduction

Inspection team

Jane Burchall

Her Majesty's Inspector

Neil Gillespie

Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors observed approximately nine hours of teaching and child-initiated activities (when children move freely between activities both indoors and outdoors as they choose). Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior leaders, staff and the governing body. Inspectors spoke with parents and carers during the inspection and took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. They observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans, children's profiles and assessment records, lesson planning, and the school's data on its performance. Inspectors also analysed questionnaires returned by 95 parents and carers and 17 staff.

Information about the school

Hartcliffe Early Years Centre is sited within Hartcliffe Early Excellence Children's Centre. It is located in an area among the most 20% disadvantaged in the country and is of average size for a nursery school. An above average proportion of children are known to be eligible for free school meals. Most children attending come from White British backgrounds, with a small but increasing proportion from a range of minority ethnic groups including some who speak English as an additional language. The school supports 22 children at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs which is above average. Children attend on both a part-time and a full-time basis and some children attend all year round.

The governing body operates provision for children aged from birth to three years from the same site. This provision is registered on the early years register and on both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the childcare register. It was included in this inspection.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness	1
Achievement of pupils	1
Quality of teaching	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils	1
Leadership and management	1

Key findings

- This is an outstanding nursery school where high expectations of leaders and staff have led to children making extremely rapid progress in their learning and development; by the time they leave they are extremely well prepared for the next phase of their education. The day-care provision is good. It is not yet outstanding as there are some inconsistencies in the rigour with which staff track children's progress and, on occasion, opportunities to maximise children's learning are not followed up.
- Achievement of children in the nursery school is outstanding. Children of all abilities, including those who are disabled and those with special educational needs, make excellent progress. Children thoroughly enjoy their time at the nursery and are very eager to attend. They settle to their learning quickly and happily because of the warm and caring approach of staff and the outstanding curriculum on offer.
- The majority of teaching in the nursery school is outstanding and it is never less than good. Adults are extremely skilled at supporting and extending children's learning through sharp questioning. Their enthusiasm and high expectations inspire children to fully engage in their learning and foster their curiosity.
- Children's behaviour is exemplary; children show excellent, enthusiastic attitudes to learning. They understand that their behaviour has an impact upon others and are increasingly able to employ mature strategies to evaluate and modify their behaviour. They show a strong understanding of how to keep themselves safe.
- The headteacher, staff and the governing body have created an exciting and welcoming learning environment in which children are valued highly and thrive. Leaders have improved the quality of teaching through effective performance management linked to regular training opportunities. Previous outstanding practice has been sustained and enhanced because of accurate evaluation and aspirational development planning.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

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Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

- Sharpen the focus of the leadership and management of provision for children aged birth to three years by ensuring all practitioners:
 - track children’s progress with rigour
 - fully maximise opportunities to promote children’s learning and progress.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

The vast majority of children enter the nursery school with skills which are below those which may be expected for their age. During their time in the school they make rapid and sustained progress in all areas of their learning and leave with skills which are in line with developmental milestones. Many develop skills which are above those expected for their age, particularly in their personal, social and emotional development. They work collaboratively and understand the need to take turns as they wait patiently to use the computer. They are developing high levels of resilience, independence and confidence and are being very well prepared for entry into primary school. Easy access to a very wide range of resources and activities enables children to make effective choices and engage in the full breadth of the curriculum. They show exceptional levels of concentration in their play, which they sustain for long periods of time when they have direct adult support and when working unaided.

Children’s success in understanding the world around them is due to the exciting environment and the excellent range of activities. Together with adults children hunt for bugs, slugs and snails in the Forest School and explore the force of wind on bubbles in the outside play area. A good focus placed on promotion of language and communication skills has seen this aspect of children’s development improve significantly over time. Children make excellent progress in their early reading skills. They have many opportunities to enjoy books and stories with adults and with their friends. They spend extended periods of time retelling stories with props. For example, they use bricks, sticks and straw to build houses for the ‘Three Little Pigs’ and talk excitedly about what happens when the wolf comes to visit. The implementation of a programme to promote children’s understanding of how to link letters and sounds has resulted in the school significantly increasing the proportion of children who achieve at or above age-related expectations in this aspect of their development. Children make equally good progress in their writing skills. They frequently incorporate mark making into play as they make shopping lists and record what they see around them using clipboards.

The school has been very successful in narrowing the achievement gap as all groups of children, including those whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable, make equally rapid progress. Disabled children and those who have special educational needs also make outstanding progress. This is as a result of effective engagement with a range of external agencies, such as speech and language therapists, programmes that are tailored to meet their specific needs and the high levels of support these children receive from adults. The vast majority of parents and carers who sent in

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questionnaire responses agree that their children make outstanding progress. 'Our children's confidence has grown in leaps and bounds and their communication skills.' 'My son has lots of learning difficulties and I have found the school very supportive and helpful. He has come on so much more than if he had gone elsewhere.' These were just two of the comments made which illustrated parents' views.

Quality of teaching

All parents and carers who responded to the parental questionnaire say that their children are taught well and inspectors endorse their view. Adults constantly observe children in their play and evaluate their progress and attainment. They know the children extremely well and understand where they need to take their learning next. Planning of the curriculum is comprehensive and individualised so that the needs of each child are successfully met and gaps in children's learning and progress are eliminated. Adults make very creative use of resources to enhance children's learning. Excellent use is made of the outside play space in order to provide children with an outdoor classroom where they can access the full breadth of the curriculum. Stories, such as *The Three Little Pigs* and *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* are brought to life by the use of props. Staff are skilful at using opportunities which naturally occur, such as putting washing-up liquid into puddles so that children make bubbles while they splash in their wellington boots.

Teaching makes a positive contribution to children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, particularly in supporting children to work together. Adults skilfully support children to make informed choices. Through clear explanations they help children understand how their behaviour affects others and how to make acceptable choices. Photographs of activities are used extremely well to help disabled children and those who have special educational needs make informed decisions about what they are going to learn. Sensitive support, such as the use of signing, means that they have equal access to the curriculum. There is a very good balance between children's self-initiated play and adult-led activities; adults intuitively recognise when to stand back and allow children to direct their own learning. As a result, pace of learning across the nursery is excellent. Very effective staff deployment means that children engage in activities immediately on arrival, resulting in very little learning time being lost.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

All of the parents and carers who completed the parental questionnaires agreed that their children are well looked after and feel safe. The vast majority agreed that children were well behaved. Children demonstrate highly positive attitudes to their learning and, as a result, very few activities are interrupted by disruptive behaviour. When adult intervention is required, practice is consistent and staff take time to discuss the unwanted behaviour in a positive way, supporting children to make positive choices. The calm atmosphere promotes strong relationships, turn taking, sharing and children's excellent spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development. Adults support children extremely well to help them to listen to the views and thoughts of others. There is no evidence of bullying.

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Children's management of their own safety is impressive, particularly in the nursery's extensive outside area. Even in wet weather, children safely negotiate their way around the outside and Forest School areas. Children are extremely eager to attend and enjoy their time at nursery, so much that they are sometimes reluctant to leave activities to go home. Overall they attend regularly and, due to excellent support for families, attendance rates are rising.

Leadership and management

Leaders and managers communicate high expectations and have a clear vision of excellence for the children they care for. They promote equality extremely well and plans are fully developed to tackle any discrimination. Together with staff, leaders show a very strong commitment to improvement and make excellent use of data to help identify what the school does well and where it would benefit from improvement. This leads to the development of a comprehensive improvement plan which focuses extremely well on key areas. As a result, the school is very well placed to continue improving. Members of the governing body are well informed and have an excellent understanding of the factors within the community which affect children's learning and progress. They provide the school with good support and are beginning to more effectively challenge the school and hold leaders to account.

Leaders undertake a systematic approach to monitoring the quality of teaching and learning. Opportunities for staff development have resulted in an improvement in the quality of teaching so that it is at least good and much is outstanding. They have developed a team of highly skilled practitioners who effectively engage children in their play and learning, where the need for modification of behaviour is rare. The school's safeguarding procedures are effective and meet statutory requirements.

Children experience an outstanding curriculum where all areas of learning are successfully promoted and contribute to children's outstanding social, moral, spiritual and cultural development. Provision has been enhanced by the addition of a Forest School area, where children can engage in learning and discovery in a natural environment. This has had a very positive impact on children's communication skills, particularly those who were often more reluctant to speak.

The school has extremely positive relationships with parents and carers, who are fully involved in their child's experience at school. This is borne out by the volume of positive responses received to the inspection questionnaire. Access to extended services provided by the children's centre means that the school is extremely well placed to support the whole family, particularly those whose situation makes them more vulnerable. Parents truly value from the opportunities provided to develop their skills in order to be able to support their child's learning. One parent commented, 'Staff are wonderful, very easy to talk to and I've been able to support my child in his learning at home.'

The Early Years Foundation Stage delivered in the registered childcare provision

This section of the report applies only to the provision for children aged from birth to three years.

Children commence at the setting with skills which are typically well below those which may be expected for their age. During their time in the provision, they make good progress overall and outstanding progress in personal, social and emotional development. They show growing confidence in their skills and abilities. They understand how to share the toys and equipment and are beginning to understand that their actions have an impact upon others. Children show great care and concern. They show particular interest in the family of blackbirds nesting in the nursery garden and understand that they are being cared for by their 'mummy and daddy' who bring them food. While looking at snails one boy advised that he 'must be careful' so as not to hurt them. Children's ability to concentrate on and persevere with tasks is developing well. For example, the children work well together for extended periods playing with sand and even very young children listen well to stories which are brought to life by staff using props.

Practitioners support children's learning well. They have a good understanding of what children know and can do as they regularly observe them in their play and learning. Most practitioners use this information to regularly track children's progress against developmental milestones and use this information to tailor the planning of activities to meet individual children's needs and interests. In most activities staff use questioning skills to good effect helping children to extend their thinking. On occasion, however, staff do not take all opportunities that present themselves to maximise children's learning. For example, times when they could extend children's language or help them to solve problems are not always exploited. Children have access to an interesting and well-equipped learning environment. They move freely between the indoor and outdoor learning environments, which both reflect the breadth of the curriculum. Children's welfare is effectively promoted. Practitioners support children to learn about how to keep themselves safe and about the impact of their actions on others. They are well deployed in order to supervise children and quickly respond to children when they have minor accidents, offering comfort and reassurance.

The setting effectively promotes the inclusion of all children. Good relationships with outside agencies mean provision is successfully adapted to meet the needs of all children, including those who are disabled and those who have special educational needs. Practitioners work extremely closely with parents, which means that when children enter the setting they have a good understanding of their needs and wants and can effectively support them to quickly settle. Through effective communication, practitioners maintain this positive start and ensure parents are kept well informed about their child's progress.

Leaders have a good understanding of the strengths of the provision and the areas which require improvement. They have begun to implement plans to refine the quality of tracking of children's progress to improve the rigour with which

practitioners track prime areas of development. Currently, some practitioners record assessments with regularity and appropriate detail, but other records are patchy.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage of the registered childcare provision, inspected under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage for the registered provision	2

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



5 July 2012

Dear Children

Inspection of Hartcliffe Early Years Centre, Bristol BS13 0JW.

Thank you for making us feel so welcome when we visited your nursery school. It was lovely to meet you all and to see the exciting things you do when you are at nursery. We could see how much you enjoy coming to nursery and that you really like being with your friends. Your parents and carers told us how pleased they are with the nursery. We think that your nursery school is outstanding and that the nursery for the younger children is good. Here are some of the reasons why.

- You are all working really hard and learning a great deal.
- Your teachers look after you really well and are very good at helping you to learn. They give you lots of really exciting things to do in your classrooms and outdoors. You are very lucky to have a Forest School to explore in.
- You are all very well behaved and are very kind to each other.

Your headteacher and teachers want to make sure that your nursery is the best. To help them to do this I have asked the teachers who look after the younger children to make sure they know exactly what you can already do and help you to learn as much as you can in all activities.

Thank you for letting us share your play. Enjoy your time at nursery and continue to have lots of fun.

Yours sincerely

Jane Burchall
Her Majesty's Inspector

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