

Inspection of Hilltops Pre-School

Stones Methodist Church, Ripponden, Sowerby Bridge, West Yorkshire HX6 4JU

Inspection date: 22 March 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children confidently enter the pre-school. They say goodbye to their parents and carers, beaming with delight. Children settle in quickly with the help of the caring staff. They feel happy and safe, and enjoy taking part in a range of interesting activities. All children learn skills that help them with their next steps in learning, including school. Children benefit from impressive learning opportunities outdoors. They master their physical skills, such as climbing on apparatus and completing an obstacle course. Older children have fun with their friends while counting balls, and become enthralled while rolling the balls down a pipe.

Children benefit greatly from the close attention which they receive from staff. At lunchtime, children sit at a table with a member of staff. They learn lunchtime routines, such as washing their hands, getting their lunchboxes and pouring their own drinks of water. Children relish these social times and are excited to tell staff about events at home. Children of all ages are confident communicators. They behave well and have positive attitudes towards their learning.

What does the early years setting do well and what does it need to do better?

- Staff provide children with an exciting curriculum that builds on what they know and can do. They help children to build their self-esteem. For example, staff encourage children to contribute during circle time. They praise them, as children show their swimming badges that they have received and eagerly tell everyone how they swim.
- The manager monitors staff's practice well. She has a clear understanding of their strengths and areas for development. All staff have good opportunities for continual development to build on their current teaching skills and to support individual children, including through training.
- The manager uses funding effectively, such as by creating additional resources based around individual children's interests. For example, when children bring dinosaurs from home, the manager provides resources and activities for children to expand on their interests.
- The experienced and established staff are skilled at supporting children's play and understand how they learn. They regularly introduce children to new words, ideas and good mathematical concepts. Staff are excellent role models for children. They continually show children how to be respectful and kind. This creates a calm environment for children to play and learn in.
- Overall, staff promote children's communication skills well. Staff use a range of strategies, such as modelling language, to support children's pronunciation and speech. However, when staff ask children questions, they do not always give them time to think and respond. At times, staff are too quick to provide an answer themselves or move on. This does not give children time to process new

information, and strengthen their communication and language skills to the highest level.

- Parents praise the pre-school staff and stress how well they were supported during the COVID-19 pandemic. They say that staff provide high levels of support for their children's and families' well-being. Parents feel that their children are extremely well cared for and that they receive lots of valuable information about their children's learning. They receive regular advice, including how to support their children's learning and development at home.
- Staff know children well. They gather a range of information from parents before children start. This supports staff to consider children's needs and interests when they plan learning opportunities.
- Staff provide whole-group activities for children to participate in. Older children show focus and engage well at these times. However, staff do not consistently plan large-group times effectively to engage the different age ranges of children. Consequently, some of them lose focus.
- Staff support children to develop their large- and small-muscle skills, to promote skills for early writing, very well. For example, children have lots of fun during 'gym and funky fingers sessions', where they place pegs on paper plates and skilfully place rubber bands over different tubes.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager and staff have a sound knowledge of the possible indicators of abuse. They know how to make a referral to the relevant agencies in the event of a concern about a child's welfare. Staff are clear about how to identify and respond to concerns relating to children being at possible risk of radicalisation and extremist behaviours. Staff focus on children's safety consistently well. They carry out effective risk assessments to keep children safe. In addition, staff regularly count children when they are outdoors. Staff know how to identify and report concerns that they may have about a member of staff. The manager ensures that there are secure systems to check the ongoing suitability of staff working with children. Staff are deployed effectively to help to keep children safe.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

To further improve the quality of the early years provision, the provider should:

- provide children with more time to think and respond to any questions, in order to support their thoughts and ideas further
- strengthen the organisation of large-group times so that younger children remain fully focused and engaged.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY368722
Local authority	Calderdale
Inspection number	10131596
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	30
Name of registered person	Knight, Kathryn Ann
Registered person unique reference number	RP903248
Telephone number	01422 825 596
Date of previous inspection	26 January 2016

Information about this early years setting

Hilltops Pre-School registered in 2008 and is located in Sowerby Bridge, West Yorkshire. The pre-school employs four members of childcare staff. All staff hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above. The pre-school opens during term time from 8.30am until 3pm, Monday to Thursday. It provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Jane O'Callaghan

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- The pre-school manager carried out a joint observation of practice with the inspector.
- The inspector spoke with staff, children and parents at appropriate times throughout the inspection.
- A learning walk was completed with the manager to discuss the curriculum intent and how the provision is organised.
- The inspector held a meeting with the manager. She reviewed a variety of documents, including qualifications, first-aid certificates and policies.
- The inspector observed interactions between staff and children during activities, and assessed the impact of teaching on children's learning.

We carried out this inspection under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the early years foundation stage.

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