

Inspection of Hilltop Children's Centre Pre-School

Latimer Road, Cinderford, Gloucestershire GL14 2QA

Inspection date: 1 December 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children arrive happy and form good relationships with staff who support them to feel safe and secure. Their individual personalities are well known and supported by staff who promote children's self-confidence.

Children lead their own play and learning. They benefit from a carefully considered curriculum that places a strong focus on their communication and language skills. Children enjoy small-group music activities. They sing enthusiastically to familiar songs and rhymes. Children use drums and shakers to tap out the beat. They take turns to lead the group and model actions while their peers copy. Older children develop good early writing skills. They make marks, draw pictures and write the letters of their name on note paper. Children are proud of their achievements. They read their writing back to visitors and hold it tight before they place it in their drawer to take home.

Children have daily access to the setting's outdoor area. They develop good physical skills as they climb on tyres and balance on wooden planks. Children are independent and take themselves off to collect saucepans of water to add to a muddy puddle. They walk through the puddle in their wellies to assess the depth. Children jump in the puddle with both feet. They say, 'it's even splashier now!'

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

- The setting has a well-established, key-person system. Detailed information about children's interests and previous learning is gathered from parents to support staff to plan the settling-in experience. Staff complete home visits and spend time with children and their families in their own home. This helps to develop a trustworthy bond and gives parents the opportunity to ask any questions or raise any concerns they may have.
- Staff use mealtimes to support children's independence. They give children small responsibilities, such as handing out the plates to their peers around the table. Staff remind children to concentrate as they pour themselves a cup of milk. Some purposeful conversations between staff and children take place. However, at times, the environment can be noisy and over-stimulating. This means that children become distracted by what is going on around them and do not fully engage in discussions with their key group.
- Overall, the quality of teaching throughout the setting is good and children display positive attitudes to learning. Staff offer children praise, which supports their motivation to learn. However, on occasions, staff do not always organise themselves effectively or recognise the best times to intervene in children's play. For example, when playing outside, some children lose interest and begin to wander around. Staff do not always adapt their teaching and interactions to fully

support children in their learning.

- Children enjoy helping staff to care for the setting's pet rabbits. They display an understanding of the rules in place when caring for the rabbits and proudly explain these to visitors. For example, children learn that they must not poke the rabbit's face. They learn to be respectful and treat animals with kindness and consideration.
- Partnerships with parents are good. Staff use an online system, alongside verbal feedback, to share information about children's learning and development. They support parents with children's learning at home. For example, children take home pictures of characters from familiar stories to support their understanding of feelings and emotions. Parents speak highly of the setting and comment on the strong bonds their children develop with staff. They state their children thrive following the setting's routine and that they feel safe and settled.
- Additional funding is used effectively to meet the needs of the children it is allocated to. Staff are trained to lead small-group music activities to support children's communication and language. The setting has also recently purchased additional percussion instruments for these focused activities. All children, including those with special educational needs (SEND) and those that speak English as an additional language, make good progress in their learning.
- Leaders and managers monitor staff's performance through regular observations and six-monthly supervision meetings. Staff state that they feel happy and supported in their role. They value team meetings when they have the opportunity to share their early years experience and ideas for children's future learning. This supports staffs' overall well-being and helps them to feel valued members of the team.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager and staff have a strong knowledge and understanding of how to safeguard children. They are aware of the indicators of abuse and are confident in explaining the setting's procedures for reporting concerns, including those about a colleague's practice. Leaders ensure that all staff receive safeguarding training during their induction period. This is updated regularly to keep their knowledge current. The premises are kept secure and well maintained. Staff regularly check the environment to reduce and minimise potential hazards, which could impact on children's safety.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- review arrangements at mealtimes to make sure all children are supported to engage in purposeful conversations that extend their learning

- strengthen ways to guide and support staff, to help them better organise themselves and recognise when to adapt their teaching and interactions, to promote the best possible outcomes for children.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY465544
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	10233897
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare 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	36
Name of registered person	Barnardo's
Registered person unique reference number	RP518879
Telephone number	01594827595
Date of previous inspection	11 January 2017

Information about this early years setting

Hilltop Children's Centre Pre-School registered in 2013 under the ownership of Barnardo's. It is located in the children's centre, next to Forest View Primary School in Cinderford, in the Forest of Dean, Gloucestershire. The pre-school opens each weekday during school term times from 9am to 3pm. It employs six members of staff to work with children, all of whom have appropriate early years qualifications at level 3. The pre-school is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education for children aged two, three and four years.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Holly Smith

Inspection activities

- This is the first routine inspection the setting received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the manager and has taken this into account in her evaluation of the setting.
- The manager and inspector completed a learning walk together and discussed the early years curriculum the pre-school provides.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector observed the quality of education during activities, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The inspector spoke to staff, children and parents and/or carers at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector sampled documentation including evidence of staffs' suitability.

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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