

Inspection of Hilltop Nursery

Brighton General Hospital, Elm Grove, Brighton BN2 3EW

Inspection date: 6 September 2023

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection Inadequate

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Managers have taken swift and effective action to make improvements to staff practice and promote children's safety and well-being. This has significantly raised the quality of the provision. Staff offer a welcoming, friendly environment where children come in happily and settle quickly. Children and staff all get to know each other well due to the small size of the nursery. These strong relationships help children feel safe and secure. Staff give them calm consistent guidance that helps them behave well. Older children know what staff expect of them and confidently recall the daily routine. They play well together, cooperating as they negotiate the rules of a game.

Children especially enjoy playing outside. Staff offer them exciting opportunities to practise their physical skills and to explore and investigate the natural world. Children dig and pour as they experiment with water and mud. Staff organise resources and equipment so that children can make independent choices and decisions. For example, children use the hose pipe to refill buckets or help themselves to a watering can or bowl.

All children, including children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), benefit from the support they receive to develop their independence. Staff encourage them to do as much as possible for themselves. Older children confidently serve their own snack and lunch and pour out their drinks. Younger children feed themselves with spoons. They look after their belongings and find their shoes when they go outside. This prepares them well for the next stage of their education.

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

- Managers have made changes to staffing and daily routines to ensure that children are well supervised and have appropriate support throughout the day. Staff receive effective supervision, mentoring and coaching to help them develop their practice. For example, more-experienced colleagues mentor less-confident staff to improve how they manage children's behaviour. All staff have completed risk assessment training, including specific sessions about children's safety when eating.
- Staff are particularly responsive to children's interests and ideas. When children express a desire for pink play dough so they can make cakes, staff provide the ingredients to create some. Staff build on children's fascination with the seaside through a variety of experiences. Children enthusiastically find out about different types of holidays and have great fun making a campfire when they learn about camping. This approach helps to create a lively and engaging curriculum that inspires children and captures their imaginations.

- There are effective arrangements in place for staff to monitor children's progress and quickly identify any gaps in learning. Staff offer well-planned support for children with SEND. However, although staff know children well, at times they do not identify precisely what each child is ready to learn next. For example, they have a broad idea of what they want children as a group to learn from activities and how these extend their interests. They are less clear, however, about how activities link to individual learning needs to build consistently on each child's existing knowledge and skills.
- Following the COVID-19 pandemic, staff recognise that some children need extra support with their language skills. All children delight in singing songs and listening to stories every day. Where needed, staff use agreed strategies to include children with SEND, such as simple sign language and picture cards. They introduce new words to broaden children's vocabulary. However, on occasion, they do not give children all the time they need to think and respond during conversations to further extend their confidence and skills.
- Children receive sensitive support when they struggle with their emotions. Staff give them gentle encouragement to help them express how they feel. Children learn about the importance of being kind to their friends. They understand the rules and boundaries in place to help keep them safe. For instance, all children remember that everyone in the group must be sitting at the table before anyone starts eating their meal.
- Parents speak highly of the nursery and value the friendly staff team. Staff keep them well-informed on a day-to-day basis, with regular updates about children's activities and care routines. They offer useful resources for parents to continue children's learning at home, such as a lending library, activity packs and ideas for outings.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff complete daily checks of the environment and have improved their awareness of potential hazards and risks to children. They supervise children closely and are vigilant in promoting their safety. Leaders implement robust procedures for ensuring staff are suitable to work with children. They make sure all staff have a secure understanding of child protection, including a broad range of safeguarding issues. Staff understand how to recognise and report any concerns about a child's welfare or the behaviour of a colleague.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- strengthen activity planning to focus more closely on what individual children are ready to learn next to build effectively on what they already know and can do

- support staff to recognise when to give children more time to think and respond during conversations to further extend their language skills.

Setting details

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| Unique reference number | 130691 |
| Local authority | Brighton and Hove |
| Inspection number | 10284038 |
| Type of provision | Childcare on non-domestic premises |
| Registers | Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register |
| Day care type | Full day care |
| Age range of children at time of inspection | 1 to 4 |
| Total number of places | 22 |
| Number of children on roll | 28 |
| Name of registered person | Sussex Community NHS Foundation Trust |
| Registered person unique reference number | RP905489 |
| Telephone number | 01273 696011 3302 |
| Date of previous inspection | 9 March 2023 |

Information about this early years setting

Hilltop Nursery registered in 2001. The nursery operates in the grounds of Brighton General Hospital, in Brighton, East Sussex. It is open each weekday from 8.30am to 5.30pm, all year around. The nursery receives funding to provide free early education for children aged two, three and four years. There are seven members of staff, all of whom hold relevant childcare qualifications at level 2 and above.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Rebecca James

Inspection activities

- The inspector discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the nursery.
- The manager and the inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the nursery and discussed the early years curriculum.
- The inspector spoke with the nominated individual about the leadership and management of the setting.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The manager and the inspector carried out a joint observation of an activity.
- Parents shared their views on the setting with the inspector.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery.

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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