



Hartcliffe Childrens Centre

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 108906
LEA Bristol, City of
Inspection number 278075
Inspection dates 26 April 2006 to 27 April 2006
Reporting inspector Jill Arnold HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Nursery	School address	Hareclive Road
School category	Maintained		Hartcliffe
Age range of pupils	2 to 4		Bristol BS13 0JW
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0117 9038633
Number on roll	102	Fax number	0117 9038634
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs Debbie Bailey
Date of previous inspection	22 November 1999	Headteacher	Ms Lynne James

Age group 2 to 4	Inspection dates 26 April 2006 - 27 April 2006	Inspection number 278075
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Hartcliffe Children's Centre is situated on the southern edge of Bristol in a densely populated area of high deprivation. It provides integrated care and nursery education for children under five. The centre opens for 51 weeks of the year, offering an additional range of services which includes family support and training, in partnership with other providers. Although children start at the centre with a wide range of skills, the majority are well below the levels expected for their age, particularly in speaking, listening and personal development. About one third of the children have additional learning needs and almost two thirds receive free school meals. A few children are at the early stages of learning to speak English as an additional language.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Hartcliffe is an outstanding Children's Centre, held in very high regard by the community it serves. All children achieve well, enjoy learning and establish very good relationships with each other and staff. By the time they leave to start in a Reception class, the majority have made good progress towards reaching the levels expected for their age and are well prepared for the next stage of their education. However, despite this good progress, standards remain a little below the level expected, particularly in language and mathematical development. The key strengths of the centre lie in the effectiveness of leadership at all levels and the commitment of the staff to pupils' well-being and achievement. The centre provides a wide range of very effective services to support the whole family. Liaison between the centre and its partners, for example, health and social services, is very successful. This quality of partnership contributes significantly to the high standard of care provided to children and to their learning. The staff are a strong team with diverse skills, committed to providing a safe, stimulating and inclusive environment where all children can develop into confident, self-motivated learners. Teaching is predominantly good and has some outstanding features. Occasionally, the teaching is satisfactory but the senior staff have already identified ways to secure further improvements. There is an excellent curriculum, which is carefully planned with children's interests and needs in mind. The centre rigorously evaluates its performance and its improvement plan identifies appropriate priorities to develop further its educational provision and childcare services. The centre modestly judges itself as good rather than outstanding. This is not because it has an inaccurate view, but because it has very high expectations of its performance and is constantly striving to do even better. When the new building work is complete, the accommodation will be a dramatic improvement on that found inadequate at the last inspection. The centre's progress since then demonstrates a very good capacity for continued improvement. It provides excellent value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- continue to raise attainment, particularly in children's language and mathematical development
- ensure that all the teaching is of a consistently high standard.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

All children achieve well at Hartcliffe. Each group starting at the centre has a wide range of abilities, but the majority have skills that are well below those expected for their age. Their personal, emotional and social development and their language skills are particularly weak when they start. During their time at the centre, they all make good progress, as a result of the high quality care and education they receive. This includes children with learning difficulties or disabilities, and those learning to speak English as an additional language. Learning is purposeful and children are successful in meeting their challenging targets. Children learn to listen carefully, develop good

concentration and make good gains in their language skills and personal development. Their physical skills have developed particularly well by the time they leave to join a Reception class. However, the majority are still below the nationally agreed levels for their age for language and mathematical development.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Children's personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are outstanding as Hartcliffe places these aspects at the heart of its work. The centre provides a very caring and positive atmosphere which helps to develop children's confidence and self-esteem. Children love coming to school and enjoy learning. They settle quickly into the daily routine and participate fully in the activities provided. They develop very good attitudes to learning and social skills which equip them well for starting primary school. Children form positive relationships with all the adults at the centre and with each other. The vast majority of children attend regularly and when absence occurs, usually as a result of illness or holidays, it is followed up appropriately. Children's behaviour is outstanding as it is promoted successfully by all staff, who provide clear, consistent guidance. Children willingly share, take turns and show consideration and care for others. They are beginning to take responsibility for their own safety when playing outdoors or handling equipment. Children enjoy their healthy morning snacks and wholesome lunches that are cooked at the centre. They know that exercise and vegetables are good for them and too much sugar is not!

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching is good overall with some outstanding features. The staff have a wealth of diverse skills, they are highly trained and consistent in their approach. They support the children effectively, helping them to access creative, sensory and outdoor activities at their own level. Communication is supported by Makaton signing, to ensure that children with language delay are fully included. The tracking of individual children's progress is excellent. Staff constantly observe and assess the children. As a result, adults know the children very well and are sensitive to their individual needs. The daily planning of activities is based securely on the adults' accurate observations of what the children achieve and what they need to do next in their learning. Staff plan together effectively and make weekly evaluations in teams. This helps to focus the teaching on children's individual learning needs. The high quality of questions and explanations, clearly focused on encouraging children to respond or speak, was a strong feature of the better teaching seen during the inspection. It was underpinned by an excellent knowledge of the children's needs, high expectations and a clear understanding of how to enable them to take the next step in their learning. Where teaching was satisfactory, these features were less evident.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is outstanding. A wide range of experiences is carefully planned with children's interests and learning needs in mind. Provision for children with additional needs is very good, especially those with speech and language difficulties. The links across the different areas of learning are successfully thought out and there is a good balance of child-initiated and adult-led experiences in the children's day. Good use is made of the recently increased number of computers. The outdoor area is used most effectively to allow children to explore and make their own decisions. Some climb or pedal tricycles, while others dig in the garden or play imaginative games. Children's choices are noted to make sure that, over time, they make the most of all the different activities. Numerous local visits provide meaningful experiences to enhance children's learning, for example, to the shops, café, zoo and a farm. Work with projects such as Creative Partnerships provides a rich source of activities including dance, drumming, story telling, art and music, which inspire the children and develop staff expertise.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The level of care, guidance and support for children is excellent and is maintained successfully throughout the centre, helped by close liaison with external partners. This quality of care contributes significantly to children's enjoyment of learning and their good achievement. There are robust systems for ensuring that the centre is a safe and secure environment, including thorough child protection procedures. Parents appreciate the centre's very welcoming ethos and the attention that staff give to meeting children's needs fully. This is successfully supported by the key worker system, which ensures that children and parents have an identified person to relate to. Staff develop strong and caring relationships with the children and know them extremely well. As a result, they are able to respond quickly when children are upset or need extra support. Children with learning difficulties or disabilities and those who are at the early stages of learning to speak English are given very good additional support. Regular reviews of children's progress provide staff with a very good understanding of the next steps in their learning. Especially good care and attention is given to vulnerable children and those with emotional needs. The centre has excellent links with parents and staff are sensitive to individual parents' needs. All families receive home visits before children start at the centre and these help children to settle in well. Parents receive clear and helpful information on how to support their children at home. Many take advantage of the additional services provided, for example, the fathers' group, baby club and basic skills courses.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Leadership and management are outstanding. The headteacher is passionate about children's well-being and learning. Her clear vision for the centre inspires commitment

and enthusiasm from all members of her staff and the centre is held in very high regard by the community. She is ably supported by an enthusiastic and knowledgeable leadership team who provide clear direction for improvement. There is a strong sense of shared responsibility right across the whole staff. They work very effectively together and with external partners to secure high quality care and educational provision. Partnership with the neighbouring primary school is productive, ensuring children make a smooth transition into a Reception class. Governors are highly committed and actively involved in the work of the centre. Their committees operate efficiently and keep them well informed. The management of finances is astute and the different funds available to the centre are used wisely to support and develop its work. The recent appointment of a social worker is a good example. The centre's rigorous self-evaluation provides an accurate picture of its strengths and areas for development. These include very good procedures for assessment, monitoring teaching and gathering parents' views. The centre has a well thought out plan for further improving the quality and range of services it provides. The outstanding quality of its leadership and management indicates that the centre is very well placed to continue to improve in the future.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	1	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	1	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	1	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	NA
Learners are educated about sexual health	NA
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

8 May 2006 Dear Children Thank you for chatting to us when we came to visit you. We think your school is great and the lunches are very tasty! We think these things are really good. * You love coming to school and enjoy everything you do. * All the adults look after you very well. * You have lots of interesting things to do. * You all play together and behave very sensibly. * You share, take turns nicely and listen really well. * Your school is really well organised. * There are lots of activities for the grown-ups too. We have asked the teachers to do these things. * To help you get even better at speaking and counting. * To make sure that you are always taught really well. Best wishes from your visitors