

Inspection of Hillside Playcare Centre

Hall Road, Southminster CM0 7EH

Inspection date: 28 April 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	Not applicable

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children are warmly welcomed by happy and caring staff. They are interested, inquisitive and show an eagerness to learn. Their interests, developing needs and what they already know fully inform the curriculum. The nursery implements several approaches to teaching, such as 'planning in the moment', the Montessori ethos, and the 'curiosity approach', therefore children have many exciting opportunities to learn. They leave their parents with ease and immerse themselves in play. Children are aware of the high expectations of the staff, who are good role models. They speak with kindness and respect to the children, who in turn demonstrate good manners and behaviour.

Children particularly relish their time outdoors. The nursery offers ample, exciting outdoor spaces in which children learn throughout the day. Children proudly show the visitors their growing garden. They dig soil to reveal worms, and then carefully cover them to keep them safe. They discuss the plants and flowers they have grown with pride. Children recall previous learning; for example, they explain that a tree had been cut down and that a chainsaw was used. They replicate this in their play as they fill a wheelbarrow with logs. They negotiate space well and learn the skill of balancing a full and heavy wheelbarrow with ease, ensuring not to bump into their friends.

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

- The nursery is fully inclusive and all children make good progress, including those who need additional support. The special educational needs coordinator is extremely knowledgeable, experienced and passionate about her role. Positive professional relationships have been established with outside agencies to ensure that all children reach their full potential. Outcomes for children are good.
- The new owner and manager are very dedicated and committed to provide children with an inspiring, safe and homely environment. The staff team are supported through supervision, peer-on-peer observations and training opportunities. The management team is fully aware of the impact the knowledgeable staff have on positive outcomes for children. All staff speak of feeling valued and enjoy their time at work. They comment that they appreciate that their own well-being is considered and are happy in their role. There is a culture of self-evaluation, and plans to develop the nursery are in place, as the management team strive for excellence.
- Babies receive good care from the attentive and nurturing staff. They are happy and secure within their environment and have formed strong bonds with their key persons. The staff know all babies extremely well. However, the organisation of play areas and storage of some baby equipment within the room means that babies cannot always access some resources. They cannot initiate their own play

without the support of the staff, and demonstrate their frustration when their play is interrupted. The new owner and manager are aware that storage of equipment impacts the space and accessibility for the babies. Extensive and exciting plans have recently been developed, but are yet to be implemented to rectify this.

- Parents discuss their complete satisfaction with every aspect of this 'incredibly lovely' nursery. They comment that the friendly staff are 'absolutely fantastic', show a genuine interest in their children and families and that their children are thriving. They comment on the excellent care the children received during and after the COVID-19 pandemic and the superb support offered during transitions to school. Written comments from parents detail the strong bonds their children have developed with their key persons and they are very appreciative of the planned outdoor adventures their children receive.
- Children's literacy skills are developing. Children's speech and language are supported and staff are skilful in their interactions with them. They provide running commentary during activities. They allow children ample time to respond to questions, and broaden their vocabulary by introducing new words to the conversation. The nursery has been selected as one of two nurseries in Essex to pilot a speech and language programme. However, while children enjoy group story time, the presentation of books and their accessibility does not consistently inspire children to choose books independently and develop a love of reading.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Safeguarding is a priority at the setting, and staff fully understand their responsibilities to protect children's welfare. All staff show a secure knowledge of safeguarding, whistle-blowing and the wider issues of child protection, such as female genital mutilation and domestic violence. They have a comprehensive knowledge of how to respond promptly and appropriately should they have a concern about the well-being of a child in their care. Staff attend safeguarding training and have many opportunities to refresh their knowledge on a regular basis. A robust recruitment process means children are cared for by staff who are suitable to do so.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- ensure the play space within the baby room enables babies to easily access all resources available to them and they have sufficient space to play
- provide more opportunities for children to expand their enjoyment of books.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2631755
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10281157
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	0 to 4
Total number of places	85
Number of children on roll	159
Name of registered person	Hillside Playcare Centre Limited
Registered person unique reference number	2631753
Telephone number	01621-774422
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Hillside Playcare Centre Nursery registered in 2021. It is situated in Southminster, Essex. The nursery employs 46 members of childcare staff. Of these, 32 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 and above, including one with early years professional status and one with qualified teacher status. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday, all year round. Sessions are from 7am until 6.45pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Lynn Hartigan

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 setting.
- The manager and the inspector completed a learning walk together and discussed the curriculum and what it is that the team want the children to learn.
- 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 together.
- The inspector spoke with staff, parents and children at the inspection.
- Parents provided the inspector with verbal and written feedback.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and 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.

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk

This publication is available at <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2023