

# Hillcrest-Northern Counties Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY340071
<b>Inspection date</b>	19 May 2008
<b>Inspector</b>	Shirley Peart
<b>Setting Address</b>	Northern Counties School, Tankerville Terrace, Jesmond, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE2 3BB
<b>Telephone number</b>	0191 2815821
<b>E-mail</b>	nursery@percyhedley.org.uk
<b>Registered person</b>	Percy Hedley Foundation
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Full day care, Sessional care, Out of School care

## ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

### The key inspection judgements and what they mean

*Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality*

*Good: this aspect of the provision is strong*

*Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound*

*Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough*

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).

## THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Hillcrest-Northern Counties Nursery was registered in August 2006. It is located within the grounds of Northern Counties School, which is situated in a residential area in Jesmond, Newcastle-upon-Tyne. The nursery operates from the purposely, refurbished nursery rooms, which contain specific rooms for babies and toddlers and pre-school children. There are enclosed outdoor areas available for outside play. The provision offers sessional care, full day care, out of school and holiday play schemes. They are open five days a week from 07.30 until 18.00.

The group cares for a maximum of 86 children from babies to under five years at any one session. Older children can attend the out of school and play schemes. Of the 49 children on roll, 17 receive funded nursery education. The group supports children with learning difficulties, disabilities, and complex needs as a fully integrated provision. Children and families who speak English as an additional language are also supported.

The group is managed by the Percy Hedley Foundation. Teaching and on-site specialist staff offer support to the manager and staff of the nursery. The majority of nursery staff have

relevant early years qualifications; a lunchtime assistant and two qualified supply workers are also available.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Babies and children are cared for in clean, very well maintained rooms. Their nappies are changed in a hygienic manner in very well organised nappy changing areas with their own belongings. Two to three year olds competently use the bathrooms independently and pre-school children follow good routines, such as hand washing after using the toilets and before meals. Therefore, children's health and personal care is attended to very well.

Children are involved in good activities that help them understand about healthy eating. For example, younger pre-school children have made good attempts to copy pictures for the 'fruit is healthy' display. Children have plenty of fresh drinking water after outdoor play and with meals and snacks. Some children have the school meals, which are substantial and healthy, such as fresh vegetables and hot pot, other children enjoy their packed lunches from home. This ensures that their nutritional needs are very well met.

Staff wear protective clothing when dishing out meals, some hold food hygiene certificates, the fridge temperature is recorded regularly and any allergies or special diets are prominently displayed. This all protects children well and ensures that they are only given foods that they are allowed or can tolerate.

Children have very good, regular opportunities to be outside in the fresh air. However, on the day of the inspection, the sunlight was strong and some children spent too long outside with insufficient protection. Staff are aware that children need sun protection and shade to protect their health and safety and have recently reminded parents to bring in appropriate sun creams and hats for the children.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

The rooms are very well organised, light and airy. Children are grouped according to their age and ability and there is an abundance of space throughout. Displays and photographs enhance the welcoming environment very well. Babies and children with additional needs benefit from the quiet, calm atmosphere of the sensory room. Older children use the soft playroom on a planned basis and move freely between the creative and imaginary areas. A parents room is available should parents wish to meet up or discuss issues with staff.

The nursery is very well resourced. Babies and children have easy access to a very good range of toys and equipment, which are bright, clean, age appropriate, well maintained and varied. Natural and recyclable materials are also used well, so that children's imagination, creativity and exploratory skills are enhanced further.

The environment is very safe and secure for the children. For example, door security is effective, child safety equipment is used appropriately and babies and toddlers are strapped into high chairs and buggies. Staff carry out head counts regularly and signing in and out procedures are robust so that staff always know who is on the premises. Risk assessments, fire drills and

monitoring records such as, nappy change charts, sleep checking records, and room temperature charts are all-effective and promote children's safety very well.

Visits from a safeguarding and compliance officer ensure that staff are aware of the child protection procedures. The government posters, booklets and documentation are readily available so that staff know what to do if they have any concerns. Most staff either have attended updated child protection training or are due to attend, which ensures that children's welfare is well protected.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

All staff caring for children under three use the 'Birth to three matters' framework extremely well. They record observations and use photographs and captions, which link children's achievements effectively to the framework, so that they are well aware of the progress that each child makes.

Babies and toddlers are very well cared for by staff. They receive lots of verbal reassurance, warm interaction and cuddles when they are upset or unsure, which helps them to settle. Sensory play and creative activities are provided and planning is in place, although staff tend to provide activities around the children's interests and demeanour.

Toddlers are very independent and are becoming self-aware. For example, they know that their shoes go on their feet; they manage to climb up onto the settee by themselves, sit comfortably and happily look at a book. They run towards familiar staff for cuddles and have good attachments to them. They all clearly enjoy singing as they clap their hands and sway happily.

Children in the two to three year group are looked after by caring staff who join in enthusiastically with their play. Children have lovely relationships with them. For example, they spontaneously throw their arms around staff demonstrating that they are very happy and settled. Children thoroughly enjoy playing 'hide and seek' and successfully use varied equipment, such as sturdy scooters, small bikes and toy pushchairs. Activities usually stem from the children's interests, for example, when children showed an interest in 'Pirates' the staff initiated a themed week for them. Therefore, children achieve well and thoroughly enjoy what they do.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Planning and assessment is sound and staff clearly know how to implement it in practice. Permanent staff manage the children's behaviour very well, providing lots of positive encouragement. Some adult led activities are well planned, interesting for the children and follow themes through very well. However, adult led activities in the form of worksheets, that take children away from their self-directed play and rich learning experiences, are not beneficial.

Children are very confident and concentrate well. They are given lots of responsibility that raises their self-esteem. For example, they eagerly take the register to the appropriate place or enjoy being 'snack monitors.' They know the routine and behave very well. They are helpful, tidy away their toys, line up at doors, wait patiently and listen to instructions. They have very good relationships with each other and spontaneously give each other cuddles. They are all very settled and happy and approach staff easily.

Children listen attentively to rhyming stories which are told enthusiastically by staff. Therefore, they are enthralled and their attention is held. At registration time, they talk about the weather and sing the days of the week song, which reinforces learning in a meaningful, fun way. Some children talk confidently within the group and know that Monday begins with 'M' and most recognise the sounds of letters in their name.

Children are successfully learning mathematical concepts through everyday routines. For example, they count their friends and the number of cups and plates for snack time correctly. Older children competently state that '19' is the number that comes after '18.' They use mathematical language to describe concepts and problems. For example, they know that adults cannot get into the tent because the hole is too small and that it would need to be 'bigger.'

Children use their imaginations very well during creative play. For example, when they play with play dough they name their objects that represent real items or dig for 'jewels' in the sand. They use language, gestures and facial expressions effectively during stories and songs as they demonstrate actions that represent bears growling or whispering.

Children have very good opportunities to explore their local environment and therefore develop a good understanding and knowledge of the world. For example, they go on interesting visits to the nearby building site then recreate their experiences by building 3D models and displays. They plant flowers and dig in the soil tray; they have been to a discovery museum and the library, use technology well and learn Spanish songs with a parent.

Children choose to play indoors or out, as this is freely accessible during the session. They enjoy free play and pedal vigorously on bikes or successfully move on scooters. There are plans in place to develop the outdoor areas and activities to benefit the children's physical play and learning further. They chalk on boards making good attempts to write their names, climb into tents and balance on tyres competently. They successfully use small tools when they play with the play dough or use the stencils.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Children's needs are really well met. Completion of individual records and children's profiles ensure that staff gain sufficient information of their needs. Babies' personal care and routines are prominently displayed in the baby room and these are updated regularly, as their development needs change. Children's birthdays and the skills of parents from other cultures are recognised, so that individuality and diversity is celebrated well.

The nursery is well equipped to care for children with complex needs. Specialist staff and equipment are available where needed so that a fully integrated provision is available. Staff also receive on site training and they work together very well with other professionals to ensure that each child receives the individual care that they need.

Children behave very well. Staff talk quietly to them offering gentle reminders where necessary so that they gain a good understanding of responsible behaviour. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Staff have friendly relationships with them, which helps to develop secure and trusting relationships for the children. Relevant posters, leaflets, staff profiles, activity planning and topics are all prominently displayed, which ensures that

parents are well informed. Parents of babies and toddlers receive regular written updates on their children's day. Parents of children who receive nursery education are kept informed of their children's progress through regular, informal meetings. The children's individual development files are also readily available for parents to view their child's progress.

Parents are extremely pleased with the provision. Highly positive comments include; 'Staff are excellent, approachable and friendly and genuine about what they do.' They feel that the nursery has 'something special' and they would 'highly recommend it.'

### **Organisation**

The organisation is outstanding.

The general management of the nursery is exemplary. Staff are very well supported and staff training and development is given high priority. They access ongoing training and benefit from planned one to one and room meetings with the person in charge on a regular basis to discuss their practice and performance. This ensures that they are up to date, very well trained and knowledgeable. An after school club is available although this is not currently used. The play scheme runs during school holidays and this is usually well attended.

The person in charge links children's care to the 'Every Child Matters' outcomes. Self-evaluation is completed on a regular basis and parental questionnaires have been collated so that the provision is very well assessed. Routines and high staff-child ratios ensure that children are extremely well supported within the provision.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is outstanding. The nursery has excellent links with the school staff. They support the nursery very well and use effective monitoring systems. For example, senior staff within the school complete regular impromptu monitoring visits within the nursery covering areas of practice, procedures or policies. This sometimes results in action plans for the person in charge and staff to work on with the aim of continuing to provide high quality childcare and education. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

Not applicable.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since registration there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards. The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaint record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

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## WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

### **The quality and standards of the care**

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure that children are sufficiently protected from strong sunlight

### **The quality and standards of the nursery education**

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure that all adult led activities are meaningful for the children.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education (HMI ref no 2599)* which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)