

# Hamilton Early Years

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number** 226890  
**Inspection date** 10/06/2010  
**Inspector** Janet Keeling

**Setting address** Hamilton Community College, Keyham Lane West,  
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**Type of setting** Childcare on non-domestic premises

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

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## **Description of the setting**

Hamilton Community College playgroup opened in 1988 and in 1999 opened an out of school club on the same site. Both groups operate from a designated early years base room within the college and have access to other defined areas within the college. The college is situated between the districts of Hamilton and Netherhall and takes children from these areas.

The setting is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

A maximum of 15 children from two to five years may attend the playgroup at any one time and 45 children from five to under eight years may attend the Out of School Club. The playgroup is open school term times only on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday mornings from 9.00am to 11.30am and on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 12.30pm to 3.00pm. The Out of School Club is open each weekday from 3.00pm to 5.30pm during school term times only. There are currently 31 children from two to five years on roll in the playgroup. All children receive funding for early years education.

The setting has procedures in place to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and is able to support children for whom English is an additional language.

There are three members of staff who work directly with the children, all of whom, hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the local authority.

## **The overall effectiveness of the early years provision**

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy and enjoy their time at the setting. Children participate in a range of activities and share warm, friendly relationships with staff and their peers. Staff have a growing understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Framework and as a result, children make satisfactory progress in their learning and development. Staff strive to offer an inclusive and welcoming service where all children are valued and respected as individuals. Successful partnerships have been established with parents, although, links with other agencies are still in their infancy. Staff demonstrate a commitment towards continuous development and have recently introduced a system to identify their strengths and areas for improvement.

## **What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?**

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- review and develop the assessment procedures to ensure information gained through observation is regularly evaluated and used to inform planning, identify next steps in children's learning and provide appropriate challenges
- improve links with other providers of the Early Years Foundation Stage in order to further support children's ongoing learning
- review and develop the risk assessment procedures to ensure they clearly demonstrate what action has been taken to minimise hazards to children in the outdoor areas
- review all documentation including policies and procedures to ensure they fully comply with the Early Years Foundation Stage requirements
- review the learning environment to ensure it is organised in a way that meets the needs of all children.

## **The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision**

Children are safeguarded. Staff have a sound understanding of their roles and responsibilities whilst protecting children in their care. This includes their duty to record and report any concerns and to share the setting's safeguarding policy with parents on admission to the group. Effective vetting procedures for the recruitment and vetting of staff are in place together with effective procedures for the induction of new staff and students. Staff demonstrate a sound understanding of health and safety issues and have written policies and procedures in place to support the running of the setting. However, policies and procedures have not been reviewed and updated to ensure they fully comply with the Early Years Foundation Stage Guidance. Staff routinely verify the identity of all visitors and have a visitors' book in place. Written fire evacuation procedures are in place and staff ensure that regular fire drills are completed. Risk assessments are in place, however, they do not clearly identify what action has been taken to minimise all risks to children with regards to the outdoor areas. The deployment of resources is satisfactory. Staff provide a generally enabling environment where children move freely and access a range of resources, however, the environment is cluttered and is not organised effectively in order to meet the learning needs of all children.

Staff warmly interact with children during play and respond to their individual needs. Consequently, children feel safe and secure. The key person system strengthens links with parents and further promotes children's well-being. A positive equality and diversity policy outlines a commitment to promoting inclusive practice within the group where all children are valued. The manager and staff are aware of the importance of evaluating the setting's strengths and weaknesses and have recently introduced a self-evaluation process, although this is still very much in the early stages of development. All recommendations from the previous inspection have been implemented effectively except for issues relating to children's assessments, this area remains a concern following this inspection.

Partnerships with parents are good. Children benefit from the warm and relaxed relationships that have been established between their parents and staff. The daily exchange of information ensures that children's changing needs are consistently met. Parents speak very highly of the setting and are confident that their children

are kept safe and secure. Parents say they find the staff very approachable and helpful and that their children are very happy and settled in the group. Many parents have recommended the pre-school to other families because they feel the care of their children in the pre-school group is very good. Parents receive a welcome pack prior to their child's admission which contains relevant information about the group and are kept up to date with daily issues through the use of a parents' notice board. The setting is currently being supported by an early years teacher from the local Children's Centre, however, links with other providers of the Early Years Foundation Stage have not yet been established in order to further support children's continuity of care and learning.

## **The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children**

Children benefit from a warm and welcoming environment and from the staff's growing understanding of how to develop learning through play. Children are familiar with the learning environment and settle quickly on arrival at the pre-school. Children are eager to learn and have many opportunities to make choices about their own play and learning as they freely access a range of activities and resources. Most activities are child-led and complimented by the organisation of large group activities, such as, circle-time, singing sessions and outdoor physical play. Children work independently and with their peers and are keen to share their ideas with their friends and staff. All children are valued and treated with equal concern with any specific requirements being met sensitively through discussion with parents and other professionals. On admission to the setting information is gathered from parents and used to support children's individual needs. All children have a 'learning journey folder' which contains information about a child's learning. Staff observe the children as they play and record information which relates to the early learning goals. However, information gained through observation is not regularly evaluated and used to inform future planning. Also, records do not clearly identify children's next steps in their learning, or identify appropriate challenges to help children move forward in their development. These folders also contain evidence of children's own work and are shared with parents regularly.

Children make satisfactory progress towards the early learning goals because staff have a growing understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework. Children enjoy their time at the group and engage in a range of activities. For example, there was great excitement as a small group of children played with the sand, one child carefully filled a container and poured it into the top of the sand toy and watched in amazement as the sand cascaded down and set the wheel spinning!. Another child described how the sand felt as they ran their fingers through it, 'it's very soft and tickles my fingers' said the child. Children begin to recognise that print carries meaning as they identify their own name and self-register at the start of each session. Children access labelled toy boxes with pictorial prompts and recognise their own work which is displayed around the room. They have daily access to books, but the book corner is very poorly organised and is not inviting to the children. Children's creativity is supported through a range of accessible role play equipment, construction toys and access to a range of media, such as, chalks, paint, water and sand. Children are developing

their technology skills as they access the computer and programmable toys. In the outdoor garden area children plant potatoes, carrots and strawberries and watch with delight as they grow. They are also learning about recycling as they talk with staff about saving their fruit and vegetable skins to put in the compost bin. Children enjoy music and movement sessions and engage in physical activities every day. Children enjoy rolling and chasing hoola-hoops, balancing on the lines marked out on the tennis courts and playing games with the parachute. Children attending the out of school group enjoy a varied programme of indoor and outdoor activities. They have good access to a range of resources and equipment which they are able to self-select each day. There is also a designated area where the children can relax and chat to their friends.

Children are secure and develop a sense of belonging at the setting. They are happy and settled, displaying confidence and self-esteem. Children behave well, responding positively to the boundaries set such as helping to tidy up. Gentle reminders from staff help children develop a sense of right and wrong, they are encouraged to share, take turns and be kind to each other. Children are beginning to develop an understanding of the wider world through planned activities and access to resources that are representative of diversity. Children demonstrate a growing awareness of their own health and hygiene needs. They are fully aware of the importance of washing their hands before snacks and why their paper towels should be placed in the bin. Children enjoy healthy snacks each day, they have a good variety of fresh fruit such as bananas, grapes, apples and oranges and also enjoy cucumber, red peppers and bread sticks. A water dispenser in the playroom enables children to access drinking water at any time. Staff encourage children to keep themselves safe as they discuss the appropriate use of equipment, engage in regular emergency evacuation procedures and learn about 'stranger danger' through talks from the local police officer.

## Annex A: record of inspection judgements

### The key inspection judgements and what they mean

*Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality*

*Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong*

*Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound*

*Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough*

### The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

<b>How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

### The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

<b>How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?</b>	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	3
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	3
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	3
The effectiveness of partnerships	3
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

### The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
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### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	3
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
The extent to which children feel safe	3
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	3
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	3

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## **Annex B: the Childcare Register**

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met