



New Road Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY241948
Inspection date	23 May 2006
Inspector	Sheila Harrison

Setting Address	Croxley Methodist Church, New Road, Croxley Green, Herts, WD3 3EP
Telephone number	01923 221583
E-mail	NEWROADPRESCHOOL@aol.com
Registered person	Maria June Smith
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Sessional 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.

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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

New Road Pre-school moved to the current premises in January, 2003. Previously, they were based at the Community Centre in Croxley Green. The provision operates from two rooms, a large hall and another room for small group activities and story time. There is an outside play area, kitchen and toilets which has facilities for nappy changing. The premises has access for those people who are physically impaired and suitable toilets. New Road Pre-school serves the community of Croxley Green.

There are currently 21 children from two-years six months to four-years on the roll. Of these, 13 children receive funding for early education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities and who those speak English as an additional language.

The group opens four days a week during school term. Sessions are from 09.15 until 12.00. A lunch club operates on Tuesday and Thursday from 12:00 until 13:00.

Four part-time staff work with the children. Half of the staff have early years qualifications to Level 3. The setting receives support from a teacher from the local authority and a mentor from the Pre-School Learning Alliance (PLSA).

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are encouraged in good hygiene practice through washing hands before snack and after using the toilet. They wash their hands after painting and before cookery. Children independently pull up their own sleeves and use the easily available soap and paper towels. Practitioners assist the children as they learn to become independent in their toilet training. Children are made to feel comfortable as they can bring in their own pull-ups and toilet seats.

Children are well nourished as the parents bring a variety of fruit to add to the fruit bowl each day. They can name the various fruit including some of the more exotic tastes and they discuss where the fruit is grown by looking at a map of the world. They have access to milk; squash or water during snack time and drinking water is available during the general session for children to access independently. The lunch club gives children the chance to have a social time in a relaxed atmosphere.

Children are protected in an emergency as all staff have a current first aid certificate and there is suitable permission for medical treatment in an urgent situation. The accident records are completed satisfactorily however they are not fully confidential.

Children make suitable progress in their physical development. Practitioners supervise the physical play although the lack of clear learning intentions outside limits the chances for children to extend their experience and to move with control. For example they confidently balance on a low ledge although they have little climbing apparatus. Children develop self confidence in their physical skills as they move with control and co-ordination outside. They enjoy a range of hula hoops, balls and skittles. They have chances to use the sit and ride toys. In the better weather, large paintbrushes with water allow the children to learn on a larger scale. Practitioners have increased the number of children walking to school as they provide space for parents to leave the pushchairs. Indoors, they use a range of equipment to develop competent small motor control. Children have suitable chances to rest with a comfortable book area. There are bean bags and a small carpet. Children who are tired are acknowledged and their individual comforters are easily accessible.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a secure and welcoming environment. Children's work is displayed generally at a height suitable for the children to see. Staff check the premises daily and they have a secure procedure for dealing with any maintenance problems to ensure children's safety and comfort. Children's interest are maintained as they can select from a pre-determined range of appropriate resources. Children choose and replace the mark making equipment and explore the suitable exhibits on the discovery table.

Children are learning to keep themselves safe as the consequences of swinging on their chairs are clearly explained to them. Staff from the road safety unit visits annually to speak to children and parents. They have the chance to play with the suitable and life like road crossing equipment. Staff evaluate and record the frequent fire drills to ensure children are familiar with the evacuation procedures.

Practitioners are aware of the child protection policy and know who to contact if there are any concerns. They have completed suitable child protection courses. This ensures children's welfare is safeguarded.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children settle well upon arrival and have a friendly relationship with the practitioners. The children's sense of trust is increased and well supported through the key-worker scheme. They are secure in the routine and willing to participate in self chosen activities and games organised by the practitioners. For example, staff support children's imaginative play with the small world toys on the table and on the floor. Staff are beginning to introduce 'Birth to three matters' framework and plan activities in line with the outcomes to extend the children's learning.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children are making progress in their learning as they are offered activities and experiences that reflect the six areas of learning. Practitioners are deployed with the children for most of the time sitting at the children's level supporting their play. However, the children are often in large groups leading to children waiting a long time for a turn in a purposeful activity.

Practitioners are experienced and have an adequate understanding of how young children learn. They are mostly familiar with the Foundation Stage having attended some short courses. However, they do not always take the opportunity to extend the children understanding by asking open ended question and ensuring children's attention is extended.

Staff follow the suitable curriculum plans which covers the six areas of learning and details of the stepping stones. Brief evaluations are made of the plans to adapt the

activities for the older or more able children. Staff are developing an assessment system linked to the stepping stones and are observing children's achievement in group activities. Practitioners know the children well as information is informally shared with other staff members during the session.

Children are generally purposefully involved although some activities do not hold the children's attention. A skittle game outside helps children to take turns but staff do not stay to see the game complete and as a result children wander away. Children's thinking is encouraged through a memory game. The older children enjoy calling out the missing items. However, because of the large group of children the younger children do not get the opportunity to join in.

Practitioners motivate the children's learning as they bring interesting objects from home. The large wasp nest prompted children to discuss the plants used by the wasps to build a nest as they observe the prickly holly leaves. They are reassured that the nest is empty of wasps as they recall their previous experiences.

Children are learning in a meaningful and practical way, using real objects, as they calculate the most and least amount of various types of fruit in the fruit bowl. They count the legs on spiders and insects and use familiar numerals at snack and circle time. They record their height on the height chart and use measures while making playdough.

Children's listening skills are encouraged as they enthusiastically answer to their names at registration and enjoy favourite stories in a group. They listen to a range of popular classical tunes at snack and tidy up time. Children can access writing materials but there is lack of writing for a purpose inside and outside. They have plenty of opportunities to see their names and the older children recognise the names of their friends.

Children have valuable opportunities to investigate materials and objects by using their senses and tools such as magnifying glasses indoors. Practitioners plan for the children to observe various mini beasts although this learning is not frequently revisited outside. Children are acquiring knowledge as they examine the exhibits on the nature table. Staff show the children a horse chestnut tree with the roots growing from the conker. Information on insects, fruit and plants is available from the non fiction books displayed. Children see the changes to the playdough mixture and feel the warmth after it has been cooked.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children show some independence skills by putting on their own coats but staff serve the prepared snack. They are beginning to respect the needs of others and they are developing positive friendships. Children spend time in the book area reading a book and turning the pages together. Practitioners support the children's understanding of right and wrong as they encourage children to say sorry if another is hurt. Children mostly work well with each other although turn taking is not fully supported and practitioners are not always available to give children strategies to negotiate for

themselves when playing board games.

Practitioners meet children's individual needs to settle well. Activities are linked to the children's interests and this helps them to develop their sense of belonging. They encourage the children to work together to make a large painting of individual children, observing each others hair, eye and skin tones. Children take pleasure in seeing the work displayed. Children are confident to talk about their own families. Staff ensure children's belongings are respected as they carefully label and store a leaflet brought in by a child. Children are becoming aware of the wider world as they observe the weather every day and complete the calendar, they acknowledge various festivals. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Practitioners ensure parents have easy access to information on the setting. Parents receive a brochure outlining the policies of the setting and some information on the curriculum. Practitioners make available a file of compliments from recent parents. A complaints log is in place. However, details in the accident book are not fully confidential. This means some sensitive information may be shared inappropriately. Parents share what they know about the child on starting and then there are frequent informal opportunities to discuss the children's progress with the staff. Parents have regular newsletters with details of current themes and some ideas to bring items from home. Children enjoy sharing their baby photographs with the other children.

Practitioners, parents and external agencies work together to meet each child's requirements. There is a secure system to quickly identify children's needs, ensuring they receive appropriate support strategies.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are broadly content and settled in the setting. They are cared for by adults who have relevant experience and a long term commitment to the setting. Staff are aware of their training needs and have attended various courses in the past year. They are beginning to introduce the 'Birth to three matters' framework into the setting's planning systems. However, the recent changes in legislation regarding recruitment procedures are not yet fully established into current practice and as a result children's well-being is potentially compromised.

Leadership and management is satisfactory. The manager has begun to improve the experiences for children by establishing a suitable monitoring system. This includes fully considering the self-evaluation form. She has drawn up an action plan to address the weaknesses in the provision for children with English as an additional language. Staff meetings, appraisals and regular informal discussions are used to monitor and improve the quality of care and education. The setting receives support from a qualified teacher and the Pre-School Learning Alliance(PSLA). Overall the needs of the children are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

The setting has made substantial progress in addressing the recommendations made in the last report. The setting has developed a system of risk assessments with daily weekly and monthly checks of the premises. Good records are kept to ensure any maintenance issues are followed up. Children are learning about personal hygiene and healthy eating at snack time with a sound routine of hand washing and using paper place mats on the tables. Parents provide a variety of fresh fruit for children to try. There is a comprehensive brochure giving some details of the complaints procedure.

Children are making positive progress in their learning as practitioners have increased their knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage by attending courses, taking advice from a qualified teacher and reviewing the planning and assessment systems. Staff use their time more effectively by sitting at the tables to extend child's conversational skills. However, there are occasions when too many children are crowded around activities leading to some waiting a long time to be involved. Staff have obtained some advice on suitable resources for children with English as an additional language.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

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 records of individual children in the accident book are kept confidential
- improve the recruitment procedure in line with the recent changes to the

National Standards.

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):

- review the grouping of children during activities and expand opportunities for children to extend their thinking
- extend the learning outcomes for children outside

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk