



Creative Kids Pre-school Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector	Toni Hanson / Deborah Ann Benn
Setting Address	56 Butts Green Road, Hornchurch, Essex, RM11 2JN
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Registered person	Barry Stack
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day 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

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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 satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Creative Kids is one of three privately owned day nursery's in the London Borough of Havering. It opened in 1996 and is situated in a residential area of Hornchurch, Essex. The nursery opens five days a week, all year round. Sessions are from 07:00 to 18:00. Children come from a wide catchment area, as many parents travel into the area for work. The nursery operates from a single storey, purpose build premises with an enclosed outside play area. A maximum of 108 children may attend at any

one time. There are currently 147 children on roll. Of these, 34 children receive funding for nursery education. The setting supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children who have English as an additional language.

A qualified manager is responsible for the day to day running of the nursery. In addition there are 29 staff who work directly with the children. All of the staff, including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications to National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) level 2 or 3.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, clean and well-organised environment. They benefit from the nursery's effective procedures and staff's good hygiene practices. These meet children's health needs well. Children stay healthy as staff have attended relevant first aid training and know how to deal with accidents. Staff complete basic food hygiene training as part of their induction to ensure they know how to prepare children's food properly. Nappy changing routines are hygienic. Staff wear disposable gloves and aprons and cleanse changing mats thoroughly. Children's bedding and sleep comforters are stored in separate, individual boxes to reduce the risk of cross infection. A very good standard of hygiene is maintained throughout the nursery.

Children learn about the importance of good hygiene and personal care. They watch staff cleanse tables with an anti-bacterial spray before food is served, to get rid of any 'germs'. Children see staff wearing disposable gloves when serving food and older children ask for a 'clean' fork if they accidentally drop it on the floor at mealtimes. Older children know they must wear hats and sun cream in the summer to protect them from the sun.

The nutritious meals and snacks cooked from fresh ingredients on the premises, help children to develop healthy eating habits. The catering staff have a good understanding of the nutritional needs of young children. Children enjoy snacks of dried fruit and rice crackers. Their meals are attractively presented, contain fresh fruit and vegetables and are cut into child-size portions to ensure food is easy for them to eat. Extra portions are always available to children who want more. Although menus are displayed in the entrance hall, these are not updated until late morning. This limits opportunities for parents and staff to talk to children about the days menus when they arrive at nursery. Children's individual dietary and religious requirements are fully respected with regards to the food and drink they are given. Any health needs such as food allergies are carefully recorded, made known to all staff and catered for.

The youngest children are offered drinks regularly during the day. Most staff understand the importance of babies receiving quiet, close, physical contact with the adult who is bottle feeding them, to give children the physical and emotional comfort

they need. Although many children competently handle and use cups, only the older children have free access to jugs of water and cups. Enabling children to help themselves to water when they are thirsty encourages them to learn to meet their own needs.

Children have frequent opportunities to be active, explore, test and further develop their physical skills both indoors and outdoors. This helps them to develop a healthy attitude to exercise. Children enjoy opportunities to participate in music and movement sessions, learning to move their bodies in different ways. The attractive, well-resourced garden area is used every day, weather permitting. The youngest children have their own fenced off area to make sure they can play outdoors safely. Older children make very good use of the garden. They run freely up and down the small hills and enjoy grappling with the more difficult climbing frame. Children skilfully pedal tricycles and follow a "road" route. They are learning ball skills as they are encouraged to throw, catch and kick well supported by staff. Children have frequent opportunity for vigorous exercise as they access the outdoor play area a minimum of three times a day and also have two music and movement sessions a week. Pre-school children use different sized paint brushes, scissors and drawing implements with accuracy.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children benefit from the layout of the nursery, which enables them to move freely and safely around the provision. The environment is brightly decorated, well-maintained, secure and inviting to children and their parents. It provides a safe environment for them in which to play and learn. Although colourful posters and pictures and children's art work is displayed throughout the nursery, most are located at adult eye level, rather than children's eye level. This makes it difficult for children to see and enjoy them. Children have access to age-appropriate and well-maintained furniture, toys and equipment. These are checked and cleansed regularly to ensure they remain in good condition. In some baserooms the play resources are stored in low-level boxes and open storage units, this enables children to self select the equipment they need, learn to make decisions and further develop their independent skills.

Children are protected from harm as staff have a clear understanding of their role with regards to safeguarding the children in their care. They have a secure knowledge and understanding of child protection procedures, know the different types of abuse and possible signs and symptoms that may indicate a child is at risk. Effective procedures are in place to ensure the safe arrival and collection of children, for example through the use of passwords. Children's safety is ensured around people who have not been vetted, for example, visitors are supervised at all times and sign in and out of the provision. Children are never left with any adult other than those who have been cleared as suitable to work with children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff create a calm, caring environment where children are confident, keen to develop new skills and have fun. Children arrive happily to nursery and most children separate from their parents and carers with confidence. Settling in procedures work well. This important process helps children to feel secure, build trusting relationships with staff and work out what the new experience of attending nursery is all about. Children are settled into nursery life by their key worker. Key workers spend time working with their key children and liaise with parents regularly to provide consistency of care for children. However, young children's care needs such as nappy changes are undertaken by staff on a rota basis. This means that children do not have the security and reassurance of a consistent person such as their key worker being responsible for their intimate care.

Overall, children receive an interesting and stimulating range of play experiences. Although, not all children are encouraged to access play resources independently and learn to make choices about their play. Most staff working with the children aged under three years have a secure understanding of child development and how young children learn. They are beginning to use their observations of children and the Birth to three matters framework appropriately to help children make progress in their learning and development. The youngest children's early language development is supported well. Staff talk and sing to babies to encourage them to vocalise. They listen carefully to and respond to the sounds and words children use. Children respond excitedly to familiar songs and rhymes, by babbling and clapping. The youngest children enjoy and learn from a satisfactory range of practical play experiences. They have sufficient space to roll, crawl and explore. Babies stare in fascination at their reflection in the mirror. They laugh and giggle as they snuggle into staff and enjoy tickles and cuddles during the 'this little piggy went to market' game. They investigate the push button toys and squeal excitedly as they work out how to make the lights flash and the music play. However, most play resources provided for the youngest children are commercial, plastic toys. This limits opportunities for children to discover, feel and ponder safe, clean everyday and natural materials, such as tins, corks, pan lids, ribbons, cardboard tubes and wooden clothes pegs.

The 18 month old children confidently choose from the sufficient selection of activities the staff make available to them. Staff plan and provide a satisfactory range of play experiences for children. Children enjoy looking at books and listening to stories. They join in enthusiastically with the words and actions to familiar songs and rhymes, such as 'twinkle twinkle little star'. However, most of the play equipment in this baseroom is stored out of children's reach. This limits opportunities for them to further develop their independence and learn to make choices and decisions.

Children approaching their third birthday have access to a wide range of interesting play resources and activities. They squeeze and investigate the different, interesting materials placed in the sensory bottles, such as brightly coloured plastic fish, glitter, buttons and marbles. The children use their imaginations well and further develop their communication skills in the 'doctors surgery'. They take each other 'temperature' to see if anyone is 'sick'. Children's arms are carefully bandaged as they talk to staff about the terrible, pretend accidents they have had at nursery, such as being bitten by a cow and falling in the road. They build tall towers with bricks and shouting 'oh

no' as it falls and has to be repaired, yet again. The children enjoy being creative, they draw with chalk and explore the texture of thick paint.

Nursery Education:

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children's needs are provided for by practitioners who have a sound understanding of the Foundation Stage of learning and have developed warm relationships with them. A sufficient range of activities and experiences are provided, however these are not consistently well presented and teaching lacks innovation. Children have little opportunity to make their own choices or discoveries as set resources are put out daily. They do not have access to dressing up clothes or encouraged to use the role play areas on a daily basis, which although well resourced, are not always invitingly displayed. Children enjoy using paint and glue but the majority of art and craft activities are adult-designed or directed and children are given a limited range of colours or textures. This limits their ability to create their own designs, fully express their individual ideas or develop their own learning.

Children generally concentrate well, they listen with interest to stories and participate readily in group conversations, taking turns and responding to both adults and their peers. However, the length of time they are expected to sit down is not always appropriate to their age and stage of development and they can become restless. For example whilst children are having individual support for a specific activity the other children are expected to sit and play with a limited range of table top activities for up to an hour. Children hold pencils and crayons with control, many can form individual letters with support and some make very good attempts at writing their own names. However, the organisation of resources does not encourage children to access writing materials freely across the curriculum and see the different purposes of writing. Children identify their own name cards at snack time and learn short rhythmic rhymes which help them to identify phonic sounds. However, children's understanding of the wider purposes of writing and the printed word is limited by the lack of use of clear signs and lists such as recipes or menus.

Children use mathematical language naturally. They are aware of shapes, understanding concepts such as being asked to make a triangle so that three people can play ball together, or to ride their tricycle in a circle around the garden. Children use calculation readily, recognising practical issues such as if there were 10 children and one goes home there are now nine. They join in number rhymes with enthusiasm and accuracy, using their fingers to correctly represent numbers. Children complete number matching games easily and copy and recognise numerals with staff but have limited opportunity to see the practical use of numerals across the curriculum. Children learn about growth and the natural world as they help care for the nursery rabbit and plant and nurture flowers and vegetables in the garden. Children use computers with skill and confidence, they follow instructions and use the mouse with precision.

Key workers have a clear understanding of how individual children are progressing and chart this against the stepping stones toward the early learning goals. However, this is not clearly evidenced and assessments and individual learning plans are not used effectively to plan how children will be supported to work towards the next stage

of their development; apart from children with identified special educational needs.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are welcomed and included in the life of the pre-school. Children become aware of their own and each others' needs through discussions with staff and themed activities about themselves and the wider world. They have access to an appropriate range of play resources designed to increase their awareness of diversity and the wider world, including posters, books, puzzles and dressing up clothes. Older children's understanding of their own and others' cultures and faiths is not consistently supported as some activities are not fully planned or thought through. Children explore their local community as they visit the library and enjoy visitors to the nursery, such as the fire fighters and their fire engine. Consequently, children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development is fostered.

Children behave well in response to the high expectations staff have of them. Staff have recently attended in-house training and worked closely as a team to ensure children's behaviour is managed consistently throughout the nursery. Consequently, children are treated with care and respect and staff use age appropriate, positive techniques such as explanation and distraction to deal with children's unwanted behaviour. Staff intervene appropriately when there are difficulties between children and use discussion effectively to help them learn to take turns and share. Many positive systems are in place to reward older children for behaving well, such as rewards of stickers. Each day an older child is chosen to be a 'helper' or 'monitor' and help staff with everyday tasks. This builds children's self-esteem and helps them to learn about responsible behaviour.

Staff are committed to providing an inclusive environment for children. An appropriately qualified and experienced Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) works closely with parents, children's key workers and other relevant professionals to ensure that children receive good support to help them make progress in their learning and development. Staff have a good understanding of children as individuals and work hard to ensure their individual needs are known and met well.

Parents receive good quality, useful information about the setting and how it works, including copies of all policies and procedures. There are appropriate formal and informal systems in place for parents and staff to exchange information, including regular newsletters, discussions with key workers at the end of the day and daily care sheets for the youngest children. This provides continuity of care for children. Parents are informed about changes and nursery news through the parents display board. An appropriate complaints procedure is in place for parents to use if they have concerns about the care of their child.

The partnership with parents and carers of children who receive nursery education is satisfactory. Parents have access to basic information about the Foundation Stage curriculum and are made aware of monthly themes as well as being informed on a daily basis of what activities have taken place; although they are not given guidance

or ideas as to how they could be actively involved in their child's learning. Parents are kept well informed of their child's nursery day and general progress through the use of detailed key-worker communication books updated fortnightly; although these do not specifically refer to the early learning goals. Parents are able to speak with their child's key-worker at any time on an informal basis and have an annual meeting where their child's progress toward the early learning goals is shared.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit as staff work well as a team and are clear about their roles and responsibilities. This ensure that the nursery day is well-organised and runs smoothly. Staff have a clear understanding of the nursery's policies and procedures and implement these effectively, particularly in relation to children's safety and health. Consequently, the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. Procedures for the recruitment and vetting of staff ensure they have the required qualifications and childcare experience and are suitable to work with children. The staff appraisal system and regular in-house and external training are used to identify and further develop the staff's knowledge and skills. Staff have a secure understanding of the National Standards for Full Day Care and their responsibility to comply with these to promote children's well-being. Most of the required documentation is up-to-date, well-organised and stored securely.

Systems to monitor and evaluate staff's planning of the play programme and use of resources for children aged under three years, are in the process of being developed. This task is being undertaken by the nursery's newly appointed Birth to three matters framework co-ordinator.

The leadership and management of nursery education is satisfactory. All staff receive training in the Foundation Stage of learning and are aware of the stepping stones toward the early learning goals. Staff plan themes and topics together and the two rooms adapt activities to provide for the two different age years. However, there is no formal assessment tool in place to measure the delivery of the curriculum. Weaknesses regarding the way in which evidence of children's progress is recorded have been identified and a new system is being developed.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection, the provider was asked to devise a complaints statement and procedure, ensure staff interact consistently with young babies and improve support for children who speak English as an additional language. Secure systems are now in place to make sure that parent's know what to do if they are concerned about their child's care. Staff caring for the younger children have attended relevant training and are now using the Birth to three matters framework to ensure children receive consistent, appropriate care. Staff support children who speak English as an additional language appropriately, for example by learning a few key words of the child's first language and using picture cards to help children communicate.

There is limited improvement in response to key issues identified at the last nursery education inspection. These referred to the provision of resources to support children learning English as an additional language and increasing children's awareness of the different purposes of reading, writing and numbers. Also to use children's individual assessments more consistently for forward planning how children will be helped to progress through the stepping stones towards the early learning goals.

No children currently receiving funded nursery education places are learning English as an additional language. There is evidence of a variety of written languages within the playrooms, although labelling is not consistent and its purpose regarding outcomes for children, unclear. Children have access to resources reflecting different cultures and languages and older children take part in weekly French lessons. Although the use of work sheets has been reduced and children use diaries to make their own marks, opportunities are missed to provide children with examples of the purpose of reading, writing and the use of numerals within every day activities. Children do not have daily access to written instruction such as recipes, menus and guidance on how many children may access a particular resource. Although there are planned activities where children are involved in recording their findings this is not a part of usual routines, children do not use lists or have access to note pads in the role play areas. Individual learning plans are in place for all children receiving nursery education, regarding all areas of learning. However these do not reflect specific targets and are not used effectively to affect planning.

Complaints since the last inspection

There has been one complaint made to Ofsted since the last inspection. In November 2005 concerns were raised regarding inappropriate language used by staff and adult:child ratios. These concerns related to Standard 2: Organisation. Ofsted conducted an unannounced visit to the premises on 25/11/2005. No evidence was found that the nursery was not meeting National Standards. The provider remained qualified for registration.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record 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 good. 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):

- improve staff's planning of the play programme and use of resources for children aged under three years. Ensure all children are encouraged to make decisions about their play and choose from a wide range of activities and resources
- further develop opportunities for children to explore diversity and the wider world through play resources and activities.

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):

- develop systems to monitor and review the delivery of the Foundation Stage curriculum
- improve the systems for monitoring children's progress toward the early learning goals and use the findings to affect planning
- provide more opportunities for children to learn about the purpose of the written word within daily activities.

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