



## Crowle Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	205215
<b>Inspection date</b>	24 November 2006
<b>Inspector</b>	Valerie Fane
<b>Setting Address</b>	Crowle Parish Hall, Crowle, Worcester, Worcestershire, WR7 4AZ
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<b>Registered person</b>	Crowle Pre-School
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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*

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 outstanding.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Crowle Pre-School is a committee-run group that opened in 1967. It operates from the main hall, the committee room and associated facilities at Crowle Parish Hall and has a fully enclosed area for outdoor play. The pre-school serves the village and the surrounding area.

The pre-school is open from 09:00 to 15:30 on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday and from 09:00 to 12:00 on Wednesday and Friday in school term time. Children are accepted from approximately two and a half years of age. Children attend for a variety of morning, afternoon or full-day sessions and some sessions are restricted to children of a particular age. There are currently 46 children on roll. Of these, 33 children receive funding for nursery education. The pre-school supports children with learning difficulties or disabilities.

There are 10 staff working with the children. Of these, five have appropriate qualifications to Level 2 or above. Three staff are working towards a qualification. The pre-school receives support from a mentor teacher from the local authority.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children develop their understanding of the principles of healthy eating as they enjoy an exceptionally interesting and varied range of healthy snacks. The menu includes features such as 'oatcakes and cream cheese' or 'kiwi fruit and raisins'. Children become used to handling healthy foods because the older children are involved in the preparation of the snack at some sessions. They begin to exercise control over their eating because they help themselves to their snack at the child-sized self-service cafeteria and have drinking water readily available throughout the session. Children bring their own packed lunches. These are stored safely because staff have made arrangements to store lunch boxes in fridges and encourage parents to provide additional ice packs.

Children learn about the importance of good hygiene routines as they wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating with increasing independence. They access the toilet facilities independently throughout the morning except on occasions when other people are using different parts of the premises. They receive good care in the event of an accident or needing medication because several staff have current first aid knowledge. Staff keep accurate records of any accident that occurs or medication given and ensure that these are signed by parents. Children are protected from cross infection because the pre-school has a clear policy not to accept children who are unwell. This is made known to parents before their child attends, and a reminder is posted on the notice board.

Children understand the benefits of fresh air and exercise because they play outside twice every day in most weather conditions. In summer children have free access to the outdoor area throughout most of the sessions. Older children also attend forest school one day a week during one term of the year. Children access a range of activities such as ball games or climbing and balancing on the climbing frame and develop their physical skills by pedalling on cars and bicycles. This enables the children to develop their confidence on a wide range of equipment that provides sufficient challenge for this age group of children. Staff support children's learning well. They set up the climbing frame differently so that children can try new moves or they help them to practise throwing and catching skills with a range of balls of different sizes. Older children also enjoy structured sessions. They learn how to warm up their body before exercising and take part in specific activities such as throwing and catching bean bags or developing their balancing skills on the benches and other balance equipment.

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

The provision is good.

Children use premises that are suitable and are kept clean and well-maintained. The layout of the equipment is attractive and welcoming with good use made of display boards and room

dividers to promote children's learning. Children see their own work displayed as well as information relating to the current topics. They use a good range of high quality, well-maintained equipment. Some smaller equipment is stored in mobile drawer units for children to self-select.

Children are cared for in a generally safe and secure environment where most risks have been identified, but staff do not always review and minimise hazards identified on the risk assessments. For example, there are unidentified berries growing in the hedge. Consequently, children's safety is compromised in the outdoor area. Children learn to keep themselves safe. They understand that they must not use the climbing frame when it is covered up at lunch time. They know that they should not drop toys on the floor because they will get broken. In forest school they learn to carry sticks safely and learn the correct way to use sharp knives to whittle sticks.

Children go on regular local outings. They are safe because the setting has good procedures in place such as the provision of reflective jackets for adults and extra parents come along to improve supervision. Children develop their awareness of road safety because they learn to walk in pairs when they are on the pavement and they learn to look both ways and listen when crossing the road.

Children's welfare is safeguarded because staff have a sound understanding of the symptoms of child abuse and the procedures to follow if they were to have concerns about a child in their care. The child protection policy is currently being updated in line with recent changes to the local authority guidelines. Children develop their awareness of their personal safety because they learn not to go with strangers and they are encouraged to be independent in their personal care.

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

The provision is good.

Children of all ages are very settled in the pre-school and develop good relationships with each other and with the staff. The youngest children enjoy an interesting range of activities that is in line with the principles of the 'Birth to three matters' framework, although few staff have received training in this area. They take part in the same activities as older children such as sponge painting, but they are encouraged to experiment freely with the sponges and the paint rather than to produce a specific picture. They explore the texture of the play dough and develop their hand control using a variety of tools such as rolling pins. They make interesting models of insects and improve their communication skills as they chat to staff about their models.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Children benefit from the staff's excellent knowledge of the Foundation Stage that they use to inform their planning, assessment and evaluation of activities. Staff assess each child's starting points throughout the first half term in the group through observation and discussion with their parent or carer. Children then enjoy a diverse range of well-planned activities that covers all aspects of the six areas of learning and is linked to the stepping stones appropriate for their age and ability. This enables them to make

rapid progress towards the early learning goals for the Foundation Stage. Older and more able children enjoy the challenge of the provision of equipment such as more advanced construction toys in the 'plus fours' sessions. For example, they discover the properties of magnets using Geomag and use it to make different geometric shapes. Staff use their time very well to support children's learning through the use of questioning and the development of spontaneous learning opportunities.

Children are engrossed in their play throughout the session. Most children confidently select their own activities and staff support the younger children to help them learn to make choices. Children know that they can choose when to stop and have their snack and that they must count how many children are at the table to see if there is a space for them. They discover the purpose of books and reading as they look at a book about migrating birds at circle time. They extend their vocabulary through the use of words such as 'migration' and talk about how birds fly away to other countries in the winter. They confidently use a wide variety of tools and materials, such as wool, scissors, Sellotape and glue to create a picture of birds sitting on a wire ready to fly away. They count the number of birds they have put on the wire and write or copy the numerals under each bird. Older children then write with a purpose as they name their own work and younger children are encouraged to make marks to represent their name.

Children take part enthusiastically in a wide range of well-resourced creative and imaginative role play. They make a bus with the chairs and pretend to go the seaside. They tell the member of staff playing with them where they want to go on the bus. Staff ensure that quieter children have opportunities to join in the conversation and express their ideas and opinions. They have great fun with the dolls hospital and then ask a member of staff to be a patient. They listen to her heart with the stethoscope and then bandage her up thoroughly. They develop their co-operative play as they put on dressing-up clothes and go to a party.

Children develop an exceptionally high level of confidence and self-esteem through their participation in forest school. They develop an excellent awareness of the natural world in a very wide range of weather conditions; very cold days, rain and even some warm sunshine! They improve their design and construction skills as they work together to create wood shelters and bring these skills back to the pre-school and try to use them in their own grounds. They learn to identify birds such as blackbirds and robins and listen carefully to woodland noises. They use tools such as knives to whittle sticks to toast marshmallows over an open fire and try weaving with strips of willow. They freely explore textures as they enthusiastically roll down a muddy bank. Staff support children's learning in the outdoor environment and encourage the more nervous children to take part.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. They improve their understanding of our wider society as they play with toys such as books, puzzles, small world dolls and dressing-up clothes. They have excellent opportunities to discover other cultures and religions as they celebrate a variety of different festivals. They celebrate Diwali by making masks and cards, colouring Rangoli patterns and making divas. At Christmas they rehearse and perform a Christmas play and have a party. They become aware of those who are less fortunate

than themselves as they take part in a balloon race to raise money for 'Children in need'. They learn about their local community through regular walks to visit places such as the school, the church and the post office. They enjoy a wide range of visitors from the community such as the police, the firemen and the 'Tesco Direct' delivery van.

Children behave extremely well. They respond very positively to the excellent role models provided by staff and the clear boundaries for their behaviour. Staff reinforce these using age-appropriate strategies. Children learn to say 'sorry' when they have hurt another child because staff help them to understand that the other child feels sad and to think how they would feel if they had been hit themselves. Children share toys and begin to understand the reason for rules because staff explain why it is inappropriate to run around the room.

Children with learning difficulties or disabilities receive excellent care because the pre-school staff liaise very closely with their parents and with outside agencies to develop their understanding of the child's particular needs. They together put in place an individual education plan with clearly defined achievable and measurable targets for the child and then work closely with the child to support their progress.

The partnership with parents and carers of funded children is outstanding. Children flourish because their parents are fully involved in their learning. Parents receive detailed information about the group before the child starts. Information about the Foundation Stage and the current stepping stones that are being covered through focused activities are displayed on the board in the entrance hall so that parents can support their child's learning at home. Children's home/school links are fostered because they are encouraged to bring items in for the topic table and talk about them at circle time. Older children also choose a book from a special library box each week to take home to share with their parent or carer. Children benefit because parents are aware of their progress in pre-school through regular informal conversations with their key worker as well as either a report or a consultation evening each term. These include parents and staff setting targets for each child's learning and development. Children are secure because many of their parents are actively involved in the life of the pre-school; either on the committee or by helping in sessions through the rota for parents or carers.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children thrive in the well-organised pre-school environment. They are protected from harm because the recruitment procedures are thorough. This ensures that all staff have undergone Criminal Records Bureau checks and are suitable to be in contact with children. Children's welfare is generally safeguarded because all required policies and procedures are in place. Parents also provide all necessary information and most consents before their child attends the group. However, children's welfare is potentially compromised because parents are not asked for written consent for staff to apply the sun cream that the children bring from home each day during the summer. Children benefit from the care and support of a high ratio of staff, half of whom are qualified. However, the manager is still in the process of implementing the action plan for her to achieve a Level 3 qualification.

Leadership and management of the funded children is outstanding. Children make excellent progress because both the manager and her excellent team of staff are totally committed to providing high quality childcare. They make detailed use of the self-evaluation process to identify areas for development and timescales for making changes. The committee work extremely closely with the staff to monitor the quality of the nursery education. The chairperson visits the group at least once a week and also has a separate weekly meeting with the manager to discuss plans and any issues that have arisen.

Overall the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

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

At the last care inspection the pre-school was recommended to ensure staff are all aware of child protection issues, to develop the complaints procedure and to improve fire safety procedures. At the last inspection of nursery education there were no key issues but the preschool was recommended to consider how to maximise children's learning opportunities during snack time.

Children's welfare is now safeguarded because all staff have a firm understanding of child protection issues and procedures. Fire evacuation procedures are clearly displayed in each room, fire exits are kept clear and children learn to protect themselves in an emergency because they have regular opportunities to practise the evacuation procedures. Children are further protected because parents now have ready access to the complaints policy, which includes Ofsted contact details and a complaints log is in place that conforms to recent changes to the national standards.

Children's learning opportunities at snack time have improved considerably. Children are now involved in the preparation of the snack. They then develop self-help skills further through use of the child-sized self-service cafeteria where they help themselves to food and drink and clear away afterwards.

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

Since 1 April 2004 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 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 outstanding.

## 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):

- check that there are no poisonous plants in the outside area that are accessible to children
- obtain consent from parents for staff to apply sun cream to children.

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

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of nursery education are outstanding.

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)