



# Whitney Crocodiles Pre School

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	223613
<b>Inspection date</b>	01 March 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Janette Elizabeth Owen
<b>Setting Address</b>	The Village Hall, Whitney-on-Wye, Hereford, Herefordshire, HR3 6EG
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<b>Registered person</b>	Whitney Crocodiles 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 satisfactory. 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?

Whitney Crocodiles Pre-School opened in 1974. It operates from the village hall in Whitney-on-Wye. A maximum of 26 children may attend the setting at any one time. The setting is open from 09.00 to 15.00, Tuesday to Friday during term time. Children have access to an enclosed grassed area and a paved area adjacent to the village hall for outdoor play. There are currently 22 children aged from two years to under five years on roll. Of these 10 children receive funding for early education. The setting supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs five members of staff. Of these two staff hold appropriate early years qualifications and one is currently training. The setting receives support from the local authority and is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is promoted satisfactorily because the staff take reasonable steps to promote children's good health, and encourages them to begin to take responsibility for their own self-care. Positive steps are taken to prevent the spread of infection and appropriate measures taken when children are ill so that health needs are met. Children receive suitable care in the event of an accident because a trained first aid member of staff is available every session. Records are kept, signed by parents, of any accidents that occur. However, children who require medicine do not receive good continuity of care when they return home because parents do not sign the medication record to confirm that they have been informed of details of medication administered. Younger children are developing their independence physically and emotionally. Most children separate from parents happily because staff are supportive and caring offering reassurance until the child is settled. They are active and are becoming increasingly independent, acquiring control over their bodies and developing new physical skills. For example staff work well with parents to enable children to become toilet trained.

Children are appropriately nourished and have satisfactory opportunities to learn about healthy eating because they enjoy a varied range of healthy snacks that include different types of fruit. Children learn about different foods through topic work and food tasting. There are effective arrangements to ensure all staff are aware of any child with specific dietary needs or allergies. Children are developing their independence and social skills as they sit together for snacks and meal times. They are learning to manage their own lunch boxes and use good manners such as remembering to say 'please' and 'thank you'.

Children benefit from regular daily access to fresh air and exercise. A variety of physical activities take place indoors allowing children to develop their physical skills, for example, their coordination and dexterity as they build with blocks or their balance and confidence as they use the wooden climbing frame. Children are able to use a variety of tools and activities which promotes their small muscle movements. They use cutters and rolling pins with play dough and a range of different construction activities to build and assemble models. Children have access to outside play using different areas such as the car park where they can use wheeled toys including bikes with stabilisers, which they pedal confidently. They are developing their awareness of space and movement as they move freely around. Children also use an enclosed grassed area and a barked area where they can observe the wildlife and grow plants in the garden. Children have time to be active and quiet times. Staff recognising when children need to calm down or burn off energy and respond appropriately by providing quiet activities such as stories where children can cuddle up and relax and boisterous sessions where children can be active.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's safety is not well protected because the premises are not secure. Arrangements for ensuring the premises are secure are not effective because the main door can be opened from

the outside allowing access to the building. This is a risk to children's safety. There is a designated member of staff responsible for carrying out informal risk assessments on a daily basis these are used to identify any potential hazards. The staff encourage the children to begin to understand about safety issues both within the setting and outside, for example staff explain to children how to play safely when using the car park and how to use tools and equipment correctly. Fire safety equipment is fitted and children learn to evacuate the building safely during regular fire drills.

Children are well cared for in premises that are suitable for their purpose because the setting ensures that the environment gives children good access to a sound range of facilities that successfully promote children's development. Children and their parents and carers are made welcome as they arrive at the provision, activities are set out in readiness for the children and staff are available to talk to parents and carers. Children always use a wide range of equipment that is suitable and safe. This is because the setting provides furniture equipment and toys which are of good quality and varied; they are age-appropriate and enjoyed by the children.

Children are generally well protected by staff who are vetted and have a satisfactory understanding of their role in child protection and are able to put appropriate procedures into practice. They follow child protection procedures in line with Local Safeguarding Children Boards guidelines in order to protect children from harm. However, there are no consistent procedures for recording existing injuries to children, this potentially compromises children's welfare.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are mostly well settled and content, they enjoy their time at pre-school, responding well to staff who are caring and show a genuine concern for the welfare of the children. All children have their individual care needs met and are developing a satisfactory range of knowledge and skills because the staff plan and provide activities and play opportunities that help children make satisfactory developmental progress. Although children are provided with a good range of interesting activities considerable time is spent in free play with limited adult direction or focus to these activities. Children are confident and are developing their independence. They are confident to ask questions and use their own initiative to invent games as they play together. Children are generally well behaved although sometimes boisterous. The staff are able to use this natural exuberance, channelling children's energy constructively. The two-year-olds are unable to benefit fully from an approach such as the 'Birth to three matters' framework because activities are planned with the curriculum for the Foundation Stage in mind. However, staff are aware of their particular learning needs and differentiate appropriately.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The staff have a generally good understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and plan a suitable range of activities and learning experiences for the children. The systems to support the planning process are not effective in providing information for staff, as links to the stepping stones towards the early learning goals are not clear. Daily plans do not identify how activities can be adapted to suit

children who learn at different rates or who have particular needs. Methods used to help children learn are satisfactory. The interaction between staff and children is generally good, staff use questions and conversations with children to introduce new ideas and help children to learn, but these need to be used more effectively to give clear explanations and offer more challenging questions, enabling children to demonstrate what they know and understand. Children use the free play time well, they are confident and able to initiate and sustain activities for considerable time. Their imagination and social skills are developing well as they play harmoniously together. They are becoming independent learners. Staff carry out observations and make assessments of children's progress over time. This information is used to help children move on to the next stage in their learning.

Children are making good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. They are becoming increasingly able to manage their own self-care and to express their needs to staff. The children are forming friendships with each other, they are beginning to know the names of other children at the pre-school and join together in groups to share activities. They are confident and self-assured and enjoy talking with adults present, sharing their experiences and explaining what they are doing. For example they explain how they are going to make a tractor using construction materials, and are able to talk about what the tractor can do and why it needs big wheels. Consequently children are confident and self-assured and able to express themselves well. They are confident talkers who enjoy the company of adults and other children. The interaction between children and staff at circle time is very good, this time is used effectively to engage the children in conversation, to enable them to share their ideas and talk about their families in a group situation. They have good opportunity to link sounds and letters and learn about rhythm and rhyme as they sing a rhyme about their names using the initial letter sound. They are able to develop their enjoyment of books and stories because they have access to a good supply of quality books which they can choose to read for themselves. They also enjoy having stories read to them by staff; they cuddle up and sit quietly enjoying the close contact. Writing skills are encouraged through providing children with writing materials such as pencils and crayons during structured activities. They are provided with work sheets to complete. However, writing materials are not readily accessible during other times to enable children to further develop their use of writing for a purpose.

Children are developing a satisfactory understanding of mathematical concepts. They are able to use numbers in a meaningful way as they count the number of children and adults present each session and use number songs and rhymes to begin to learn about more and less than. Children are beginning to develop problem solving skills for themselves, for example when building walls with wooden blocks. However, staff do not make effective use of teaching methods or questions to add to children's learning by making use of these opportunities to consolidate and extend children's learning further. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is developed well through many practical activities such as experimenting with water and sand. The children explored the concept of ice; they were given blocks of ice with small world animals frozen inside. They were able to investigate ways of getting the animals out as the ice melted. They learn how plants and animals live by watching living creatures and by growing plants. They develop a sense of time as they talk about days of the week and months of the year. The well organised daily routine enables children to recognise how the day progresses, from when they arrive until home time. Children are developing an understanding

of the world around them as they participate in activities celebrating festivals and traditions from around the world. Children took part in several activities relating to St David's day, making Welsh flags and painting pictures of daffodils. Children are able to express themselves freely through art, music and dance. They can explore imaginary situations using dressing up and role play. They act out their own experiences creating situations they are familiar with for example, using the climbing frame as a fire engine helping to put out a fire. They have regular access to explore a variety of different materials in their play including sand and water, dough and paint which enables them to use their senses, be creative and to use their imagination.

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

The provision is good.

Children are developing a sound understanding of the world around them because they are able to learn about the wider multicultural society as they celebrate different festivals and events such as the Chinese New Year and St David's day. Children are developing good relationships with adults and other children in a setting where they work well with parents and carers to meet individual children's needs and ensure they are fully included in the life of the setting. Children are developing a good sense of belonging; they work harmoniously with others making choices and decisions for themselves. These all contribute to the children developing good self-esteem and respect for others. Children are generally well behaved; they are busily engaged in activities which are interesting and fun, playing harmoniously together. For example developing their own ideas and imagination as they act out being fire officers using the climbing frame. Staff use age-appropriate strategies for managing children's behaviour and for promoting their self-esteem and confidence. Effective use is made of a timer to demonstrate how long the children can use the bikes before allowing another child a turn. This enables children to learn the importance of turn taking and sharing in a way that is easy to understand.

The staff demonstrate that they know all children well and that some children may require additional support. Children receive an appropriate level of care because staff have a good understanding of each child's needs. Arrangements to ensure children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive appropriate care and developmental opportunities are satisfactory. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Children benefit from links between home and pre-school. Parents are able to contribute to children's learning by providing items for the interest table or to support the current topic work. Children are able to settle well in pre-school because staff are caring and able to meet the needs of individual children and their families; there are suitable arrangements in place for exchanging information with parents. Parents are provided with information on the provision in the form of newsletters and other required documents; they in turn provide information on their child's individual needs when they enter the pre-school. Staff are available to discuss children's progress with parents and to deal efficiently with any complaints or concerns parents may have.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children's needs are met through generally effective organisation. The daily organisation of the provision is the responsibility of the play leader who is supported by a team of staff and an active management committee. Key staff hold appropriate qualifications. Documents required for the efficient and safe management of the provision are available, although there is no system in place for ensuring any training information or changes to the operational plan are shared with all staff. This affects children's experience and limits staff knowledge of childcare issues which contributes to the quality of care provided. Children's well-being is generally safeguarded because staff obtain all required information and any required consents from parents when children are admitted to the group. The physical layout of the provision is organised well ensuring that children are provided with sufficient space to move around and have access to a very good range of activities. Children are well supervised both indoors and when outside. Consequently children are appropriately cared for in the setting and their needs are met appropriately.

The leadership and management is good. The management committee is very supportive of the setting and staff, valuing their commitment to the children. They play an active role within the provision and are aware of their roles and responsibilities. They are responsible for ensuring that the recruitment procedures are effective and that appropriate checks are carried out on persons associated with the provision. This ensures children are cared for by appropriate persons and helps protect children. The management committee have a clear vision for the setting and are working towards this but have been hampered by recent staffing changes. There are systems in place for monitoring the quality of the provision through staff appraisals and regular staff meetings although some issues raised at the previous inspection have not been fully addressed.

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

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

Following the last inspection four recommendations were made to improve the quality of the care children receive and two points for consideration in regard to nursery education. Some progress has been made in developing staff's knowledge and understanding of child protection issues because some staff have attended training and the policy has been improved. However, arrangements for ensuring all staff are aware of recent changes and information has not been improved. Children's safety has been improved because they are not allowed access to the kitchen without direct adult supervision and the fluorescent strip lights have been made safe. Although advice has been sought in relation to the safety of the climbing frame no changes have been made to the use or position of the equipment as none of the recommendations made the equipment more safe. Good progress had been made in ensuring all policies are reviewed and updated, this ensures that current information is available for staff and parents to access.

Some progress has been made in addressing the points in relation to the nursery education. Opportunities for children to practise their early writing skills have been provided during structured activities but they still have little opportunity to use these skills during free play.

Children are able to develop more independence during snack time because they are able to pour their own drinks when capable.

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

Since the last inspection 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 satisfactory. 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 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 the continuity of children's care by making effective use of the procedure for keeping parents informed of any medication administered
- make premises secure and ensure there is an effective system for managing access to the premises
- review procedures for recording any existing injuries when a child arrives.

#### **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):

- improve system for planning to show how activities can be adapted to suit children who learn at different rates or who have particular needs
- extend opportunities to encourage children to think and demonstrate what they know and understand
- develop and use varied teaching methods, for both three and four year olds, which include effective interaction in children's play to give clear explanations and offer challenging questions.



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