



Croughton Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY233529
Inspection date	10 January 2007
Inspector	Rachael Mankiewicz
Setting Address	Croughton Village Hall, Wheelers Rise, Croughton, Northamptonshire, NN13 5ND
Telephone number	01869 811968
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Registered person	Croughton Pre-School
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 good. 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?

Croughton Pre-school has been registered since October 2002. It operates from the community centre on the village playing field, and is close to the centre of the village. The group serves the local community in Croughton and the surrounding villages. The premises consist of an entrance area, main room, wet-play room, kitchen, storage cupboards and toilets. The parish room and pavilion are not used. There is an enclosed paved area for outdoor activities, and the adjacent playground is also used.

The group is managed by a committee and five members of staff work with the children. Two of the staff have Level 3 qualifications in early years child care and two are working towards Level 2 qualifications. There are currently 22 children on roll, including 17 children who receive funding for their nursery education. The group is able to support children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school is open each Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday during term time, from 9:15 to 12:15 and continues with a lunch club. The setting receives support from a local authority advisory teacher and is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children benefit from a clean, warm, comfortable and child-friendly environment where effective hygiene routines are carried out by knowledgeable staff. Older children have some understanding of why they need to wash their hands and clean the tables before eating as they imitate the role models of the staff. They learn the importance of good hygiene practices in promoting their health as they become increasingly independent in their personal care. Many children access the tissue boxes and appropriately dispose of the used tissues. Children's welfare is safeguarded because staff have up-to-date first aid knowledge in the event of any accidents and appropriate procedures are in place if children are unwell.

Children develop a good understanding of the benefits of a healthy diet as they choose snacks and chat about the healthy foods they have brought in their lunch boxes. They show preferences and talk about flavours and textures, and this is extended as they take part in cooking activities. Children access the water jug and beakers and begin to understand why it is important to drink.

Children enjoy very good opportunities to develop their physical skills. They have daily opportunities of fresh air to promote their development. For example, they use the outdoor area and large static equipment on the adjacent public recreation area or go for walks around the village. Children excitedly ride bicycles and negotiate space within an area of the large hall. They skilfully move around the space in different ways and take part in vigorous action rhymes and dances. Large and small equipment is used well to allow children to develop good control of their bodies. Quieter activities take place spontaneously outside as children explore the environment as they look for mini-beasts, notice road signs and listen to the sounds around them.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe, secure environment where the risk of accidental injury is minimised by the staff's vigilance and good practices based on required documentation. This enables children to move freely and to develop their play and ideas within the premises and the paved area outside. They have opportunities which offer challenge within safe limits, both indoors and outside, such as climbing and balancing on the static equipment. Children learn about safety and use high quality equipment appropriate to their age and stage of development, and they begin to take personal responsibility for their safety. For example, they play enthusiastically with large play equipment and safely negotiate space around the large hall. They learn about road safety as an activity in the pre-school and transfer their knowledge as they walk around the local environment. Children safely and deftly manipulate tools and

implements as they cook and garden and they develop good hand-eye co-ordination as they use craft tools.

Children's are well protected and their well-being is safeguarded and promoted because staff have a good knowledge and understanding of child protection issues. However, the relevant policy and procedures lack some current information. Children's safety and welfare is further enhanced by staff carefully monitoring access to the premises, checking all equipment and complying with fire requirements such as completing regular fire safety evacuations and having regular checks of fire fighting equipment.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy their time at the pre-school and have fun with their friends and in the company of adults. Their development through play is promoted by knowledgeable and experienced staff who provide an exciting learning environment for the children. Children's needs are met through effective organisation and planning for the progress of all children. Staff have good knowledge of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and use this and the Foundation Stage curriculum guidance to plan for the children's progress. Independence is encouraged from the time they start at the pre-school and children also learn to play in groups as they participate in a range of interesting activities. For example, individual children build their own models with pride but with encouragement they all relish the large-scale construction they have built together. Children are forming positive relationships with other children and seek out friends to share experiences when they walk together around the village. Children use their imaginations well and with enjoyment as they take part in a wide range of art and craft activities. They respond to significant experiences showing a range of feelings where appropriate. For example, they talk enthusiastically about their toys and what they did at Christmas as part of their theme of toys. Children learn by participating in many day-to-day domestic routines and activities as well as from planned activities. For example, they learn as they help to tidy away ready for snack and as they count the number of children present at registration time.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff use their knowledge of child development and good understanding of the Foundation Stage to plan an interesting range of activities and opportunities for learning in all six areas of the curriculum, based on a good range of resources. Staff support children in a mixture of adult-target and child-led activities and enable them to make progress. A key worker system ensures that one member of staff takes a special interest in the development, welfare and progress of each child in their group. Children's individual challenge is ensured through good questioning and enabling by the knowledgeable staff. Observations and assessments are used for planning for the individual child's progress. Although opportunities for children to operate independently, take initiative and extend their interests are limited as they have to stop playing at snack time and cannot access some resources easily. Initial information of abilities and further information gained from the parents is used to inform planning. Daily information about what the children have done helps inform and suggest how parents can extend their children's learning at home.

Children begin to make sense of the world around them as they explore a variety of materials. For example, they use a variety of tools with play dough, water and sand. Children investigate how things are made and how they work as they explore construction materials and make models. Their computer skills are developing well and they use simple working technology such as tills and programmable toys. Children are aware of their own bodies and their ability to use their senses through planned and unplanned activities. They explore different ways of moving around and develop throwing and catching skills through following Action Kids programmes and in imaginative games with their friends. Children find out about the local environment as they walk around the village and as they welcome visitors to the pre-school. They begin to explore the wider world through looking at holiday destinations and taking part in the celebration of festivals.

Children use their imagination well in role play and with small world figures. Creative and imaginative skills are promoted through a good range of art and craft activities using a variety of textures and materials. Children's hand and eye coordination develops as they play with construction kits, manipulate jigsaws and use one-handed tools. Older children are confident speakers and have a good vocabulary. They listen to letter sounds, recognise their names, regularly share books and enjoy group story time. Children use marks to represent their ideas, for example, as they colour and paint and as they begin to write their names. Most children are successfully making sense of simple numbers in their play. Older children are beginning to develop the use of mathematical ideas, including sorting, playing maths games and solving problems in planned activities. They recognise shapes and use words to describe size as they make pictures with hammers and tacks.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are made welcome, settle well and are respected as individuals by the staff. They begin to understand the wider world as they gain knowledge of different cultures and religions and celebrate festivals and national days. Older children understand their own needs and begin to respect the needs of others. They make sure their friends are included in the activities and are aware that some children have different needs to themselves. Children's individual needs are discussed with parents in detail. Currently there are no children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities or children who speak English as an additional language attending the pre-school. Staff have knowledge and past experience in this area and ensure that they work with parents and other professionals to meet each child's needs. Children gain confidence and self-assurance through making choices about the activities offered and moving around the room interacting with staff and other children. Children have free access to the outdoor area when weather permits. However, older children's interests are not always extended as they need to stop play for snack time and have restricted access to further resources.

The children behave very well as they respond well to the consistent boundaries set for them and the encouragement to behave well given by the caring staff. Children's self-esteem and confidence is promoted as a result of regular praise and reassurance. Staff have high expectations of all children and are good role models. Older children begin to take responsibility as they learn to control their own behaviour and to negotiate with others. They need little reminding

about right and wrong and to say sorry with meaning when they have upset someone by breaking up their model. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The children's well-being at the pre-school is enhanced by the good partnership with parents. Parents are informed how the setting operates and many are involved in the management of the setting. Their access to updated policies and procedures is generally good although these have not been updated recently and include some information which is no longer relevant. They receive a welcome pack, written notices and newsletters about the care of the children.

The partnership with parents and carers of children receiving funding for their nursery education is good. Planning is displayed and parents are able to contribute their skills and help with the pre-planned themes. Regular discussions take place to ensure that parents know how their children are developing and scrap books and achievement records can be accessed at any time. Systems are in place for parents to contribute to their children's progress and show how parents can consolidate and extend what the children have learnt previously. This helps foster children's progress in the pre-school.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The good quality of care and education offered to the children is based on effective organisation throughout the pre-school. Space and resources are laid out well and children benefit from this as they make the most of the play and learning opportunities. Children's well-being is promoted by the very good staff to child ratios and the good supervision and sensitive interaction given by skilled, experienced staff. They support children well during activities and generally allow them time and space to initiate their own learning. All documentation which contributes to children's health, safety and well-being is in place to ensure that the individual care plans are met. The operational plan showing how space, time and resources are organised and comprising in part the policies and procedures is not always reviewed regularly.

Leadership and management of the nursery education is good. Staff and management work well together as a team committed to the continuous improvement and development of the setting. Practitioners know their roles and responsibilities and are managed by a knowledgeable committee of parents and interested parties from the surrounding area. The management team and staff have recruitment systems to ensure children are cared for by staff with appropriate qualifications and experience and have an effective appraisal system to ensure they remain suitable. They regularly reflect and monitor the quality of care and education and they continue to look to upgrade the training and knowledge of the staff team. Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

As an outcome of the past care inspection, the setting was asked to review some elements of their documentation regarding insurance and the visitors book. These have been updated helping ensure that the well-being or welfare of children is not compromised. The setting was asked to address the requirement that half of all child care staff hold a relevant Level 2 qualification in early years child care. At this inspection two members of staff had progressed

to a Level 3 qualification and two are working towards Level 2 which helps the children develop and progress.

At the last inspection of nursery education, the setting was asked to review planning in general to show the planned intentions and to increase the learning opportunities for children in the areas of children's knowledge of information and communication technology and the recognition of letters and sounds. Planning has been reviewed to cover these areas and further experiences have been increased. This helps ensure that children have opportunities to play and develop across the six area of learning.

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.

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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 that policies and procedures, including those for making complaints and dealing with child protection issues, are reviewed regularly and made available to parents.

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):

- increase opportunities for children to operate independently, take initiative and extend their interests by reviewing their access to resources and planning for individual children.

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