

# Cradley Play Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	253796
<b>Inspection date</b>	18 June 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Elaine Margaret Hayward
<b>Setting Address</b>	12-18 Lyde Green, Halesowen, West Midlands, B63 2PG
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<b>Registered person</b>	Ann Richards
<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 good.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Cradley Play Nursery opened under private ownership in 1972. It operates from two rooms in a purpose built building in a suburb of Halesowen. A maximum of 36 children may attend at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 07:45 to 18:00 for 51 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 70 children aged from seven months to four years on roll. Of these, 16 children receive funding for early education. Children attend for a variety of sessions and from a wide catchment area. The setting currently supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities .

The nursery employs 16 members of staff who work with the children. Of these, 14 hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from a local authority mentor teacher.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is well protected because staff recognise and reduce any possible risks. Children learn the importance of good personal hygiene through well-planned daily routines and by learning from example. They see staff taking positive steps to prevent the spread of infection by keeping the premises clean and maintaining high levels of cleanliness and hygiene, such as immediately mopping up spilt drinks. Children know to use tissues if they cough or sneeze. The toilet areas are well set up to encourage children's independence with low level toilets and sinks. Children can be seen washing their hands and putting the used paper towels in the bins in order to "keep germs away".

Positive steps are taken to prevent the spread of infection, with clear exclusion periods in place. Should children have an accident, need medication or become unwell, they receive prompt appropriate treatment by staff who have training in first aid. Parents are kept fully informed at all times by caring staff who follow clear procedures, including good advice for parents of signs to look for should a child bang his or her head.

All children benefit from the fresh air each day all year round as they enjoy the excellent outdoor facilities, used as 'another room' with both covered and open areas. They develop awareness of how to keep healthy through being active, and learn about the importance of using sun-cream and of wearing hats in hot sunny weather. Children develop the confidence to enjoy moving with control and use their bodies in various ways as they climb the large wooden frame. They love to play in one of the sand pits, plant seeds and tend the garden, experiment in the music area, paint the fence with water or ride their trikes and scooters.

Staff understand the physical needs of the youngest children being cared for and provide plenty of space for babies to roll, crawl and kick. There are good resources available to encourage babies to pull themselves up and staff carefully support babies when sitting. Like the older children, babies and young children enjoy an outside covered area each day, which is full of equipment and resources, positively supported by staff.

Children are provided with three well-balanced nutritious meals each day in order to keep them healthy breakfast, lunch and tea, using high quality ingredients. Lunch is cooked fresh on the premises each day and includes a variety of vegetables and fruit. Meals provided take children's individual dietary requirements into account at all times. Children are helped to enjoy food and understand why some foods are healthy as they grow their own vegetables such as lettuce, tomatoes and carrots. Looks of surprise can be seen on children's faces as they discover they do in fact like cucumber. Children's independence and understanding is further encouraged as they help prepare their own afternoon teas, buttering their own '50/50' bread, choosing their sandwich fillings and helping cut up their fruit. Children are offered choices of fruit drinks at meal times, with artificial additives and sweeteners being avoided where possible. Children can help themselves to water throughout the day from their own individual water bottles. Their consumption is monitored by staff to prevent children's dehydration.

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

The provision is good.

Children enjoy provision that is child-centred. The premises are welcoming for all, including a ramp to enable easy access for wheelchairs. Staff, children and parents all warmly greet each other on arrival. Space is organised effectively, with babies and young toddlers in their own room, so that children can learn, explore and develop safely. Children love the freedom to decide their own activities, especially in the stimulating outside areas, choosing from a wide range of activities and resources.

Children play safely both indoors and out due to the high priority given to safety. Risks are clearly identified and minimised in order to keep children safe. There are clear written assessments and ongoing checks of premises and equipment, with good staff understanding and vigilance, prompted by checklists clearly displayed. Any problems are quickly identified and promptly dealt with. New equipment is rigorously checked and assessed before being put into use. There are good procedures for the safe arrival and departure of children which includes an intercom system with an electronic door release, along with a safety gate to prevent children's access to the door and lobby area. Staff are carefully deployed to ensure children's safety at all times. Children learn about possible dangers and how to keep safe, responding to gentle reminders if needed, such as not throwing sand. They understand how to keep themselves safe on outings. They learn about fire safety through frequent and effective practices.

Children are well protected from harm. Staff have attended training. They have a good understanding of how to protect children, and recognise that this is their first priority. They are vigilant, are aware of signs and symptoms, and know the appropriate procedures to follow should they have concerns about a child.

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

The provision is good.

Children are very happy, well-settled and confident, thoroughly enjoying their time in the nursery. They experience a wide range of stimulating and interesting play experiences. The setting places emphasis on children learning through play, with children spending a large amount of their time outdoors. Children are able to access a wide range of activities and resources independently, both indoors and out. Changes are in the process of being made to the layout and resources in the toddler room, to further enhance children's experiences.

Babies and young children benefit from trained, knowledgeable staff and enthusiastic implementation of the 'The Birth to three matters' framework which positively enhances the care and development of young children under three. It is very evident that staff develop warm and caring relationships with the children in their care. Good information is gained about young children's starting points and routines so that staff know the children's likes and dislikes and build on this. There are close working relationship between staff and an effective key-worker system. All this provides a continuity of care to ensure children feel secure and nurtured so that they clearly want to be involved as they make confident choices about their activity and care.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. As a result, children are making good progress towards the early learning goals. A varied educational programme is offered to provide a broad balanced range of activities across the six areas of learning. Planning and assessment is comprehensive with individual observations and tracking used to effectively inform planning

to provide stimulating activities to develop and extend children's individual learning to ensure they progress to the next step. Staff are attentive and supportive. Overall, staff have good knowledge and understanding of the early learning goals and of how children learn and progress. However, there are, at times, missed opportunities, when not all staff have the confidence to consolidate and extend children's learning and progression through the stepping stones. The setting is in the early stages of implementing new ways of working to rectify this in order to enhance children's progression further.

Children's personal, social and emotional development is particularly well promoted. Children have a positive attitude to learning. They are confident and self-assured, showing concentration, pleasure and excitement as they read and hunt for their name cards or paint a picture. They are becoming skilled in managing their personal care. They are confident in their relationships with adults and children, showing sensitivity towards others. Children play harmoniously together and take turns as they play at hospitals.

Children are expressive speakers who see a wide range of familiar words displayed around them. They love to visit the library and choose books. They have numerous opportunities to see their name in print, such as at registration, confidently picking out their names. There are good opportunities for children to make marks, with many older children forming recognisable letters and writing their own names. Children show confidence in speaking in both small and large groups. Children can be heard imaginatively and humorously recounting the story of 'Little Red Riding Hood'. They are learning to link sounds with letters, although there are some missed opportunities to extend children's learning and development in this area.

Children hear staff using mathematical language and show good understanding of shape and size as, for example, they make holes in which to plant their carrot seedlings. Counting and number recognition is threaded through many activities by staff, and children show that they are developing positive attitudes to counting, as they count out the number of knives and forks to be set out at the table for lunch. However, staff miss some opportunities at times like these to extend children's learning to solve simple number problems such as adding or taking away objects.

Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is a particular area of strength. Children show great delight in taking part in activities outside where they have many opportunities to observe and question and explore their natural curiosity, such as when they plant their seeds and examine the bugs they find in the soil. They love to smell, feel and examine the variety of herbs growing in the garden and taking their bottles to the nearby re-cycling centre. Children design and freely build and construct with a variety of construction toys, boxes, and foam bricks. They become familiar with everyday technology as they use the computer, or play with the washing machine in the role play area.

Children are physically confident and enjoy a variety of active times throughout the day to practise moving creatively. They learn to move confidently, showing a sense of personal space as they play alongside each other, climbing in and out and up and down the climbing frame. They peddle their cars and sit and rides skilfully to avoid obstacles and each other, and control their speed so that they do not bump into their friends. Frequent use of small equipment such as scissors, pens, brushes and construction helps children develop good hand and finger control.

Children express themselves freely through paint, drawing, music and role play. They love to join in with songs and actions such as 'The Rainbow' or 'Twinkle Twinkle Little Star' with some fun variations. They have many opportunities to play with musical instruments, especially in

the outdoor musical area with its range of sounds to experiment with, such as piano strings, pots and bells. Children express themselves as they play at being hairdressers or in hospitals, or cook a meal in the role-play area.

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

The provision is outstanding.

All children are treated with equal concern and are highly valued and respected as individuals. All children are welcomed, ensuring that their individual backgrounds are respected and that their needs are met. Children benefit from numerous activities and resources which help them learn about the wider world and acknowledge diversity. They love to be involved in numerous charity events such as Dr Barnardos 'Big Toddle', and to collect stamps to raise money for dogs for the blind, having so far purchased three paws, a tail and an ear. They prepare and try foods from around the world, use chop sticks in their role play, learn songs in other languages, and frequently visit nearby facilities such as the library, bottle banks, and various shops. Children are encouraged to send postcards and bring something back from their holidays and to take care at home soft toys from nursery, keeping a diary of their 'adventures'.

Children benefit from excellent adult sensitivity and understanding of disabilities. Staff and several parents have recently attended a sign language training course in the nursery to enhance children's care. Clear assessment and monitoring procedures, along with close liaison with parents and other professionals, ensure that children's developmental, care and learning needs are promptly identified, and that excellent support, activities and resources are provided. Children are clearly becoming aware of the needs of others as they support peers with difficulties or disabilities, using cue cards, signing and 'time lines'.

Children behave extremely well, understanding the environment created by staff that encourages children to respect boundaries and begin to control their own behaviour. Children understand clear and consistent guidelines and expectations of behaviour, listening, helping and caring for each other. They happily and enthusiastically tidy away or help younger children find the card they are looking for. They play harmoniously together, learning to share and take turns. They respond positively to staff's gentle questions and explanations. Staff are excellent role models, promoting children's confidence and self-esteem through ongoing praise and encouragement. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. An excellent close, informal relationship with parents helps them understand the setting's aims and practices and contributes to children's well-being. Full information is gained from parents about their children, both initially and throughout the children's time at the setting. The nursery provides excellent information to parents, including the nursery's policies and procedures, through a welcome pack, notice boards, photographs and regular newsletters. Parents receive excellent information about their children's progress and about the Foundation stage and the 'Birth to three matters' framework through both open evenings and individual appointments. Parents views are valued and acknowledged, and responses to queries and questionnaires are acted upon promptly. Parents are actively encouraged to be involved in their children's development and learning, with information about their children being shared on a daily basis through discussions, records and photographs of their children's activities. Children's records are linked clearly to the Foundation stage or 'Birth to three matters' as appropriate to further aid parents' understanding. The excellent partnership with parents and exchanges of information ensure continuity between home and staff, which enables children to settle extremely well and to achieve their potential.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Leadership and management is good. There is a strong commitment to ongoing training and development. New ways of working in order to further enhance provision, are welcomed. This, along with good staff communication ensures that children are cared for by staff with up-to-date knowledge of developments in early years. Effective steps are taken to evaluate and improve the services that are offered with on-going observations, regular meetings and evaluations to assess practice, looking for ways to move the setting forward so that children are developing positive attitudes and are making good progress towards the early learning goals.

The organisation of the setting ensures that children are happy and settled with their needs well met. Staff are enthusiastic and dedicated, and work well as a team. Children benefit from continuity of care with stable staff who have been in the setting a long time. Staff are well qualified and are effectively deployed, using an effective key-worker system to ensure that children receive a high level of care and attention. Clear documentation, policies, procedures and records ensure that children's health, safety and well-being are a priority and are always carefully considered. There are very clear and effective registration systems in place for staff, children and visitors to the nursery to ensure the safety and well-being of all, along with good staff to children ratios. 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 provider agreed to develop a procedure for recording physical intervention with children. Full written procedures and records are now in place to ensure the safety and well-being of the children.

At the last nursery education inspection, a point for consideration for the improvement of the nursery education was raised. This was to extend parents involvement in their children's learning. This has clearly been addressed, with full written information being provided to parents about the Foundation stage and their children's progress. Frequent open evenings are held and parents are invited to individual meetings. There are ongoing discussions and parents have access to their children's records at any time. Full observations, clearly linked to the early learning goals, and including photographs are also given to parents.

## **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 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 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):

- continue to develop and monitor the changes in progress regarding the organisation of resources and equipment for children in order to further enhance their play and learning

### **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):

- continue to monitor and develop the new ways of working, including staff's understanding and confidence in the implementation of the Foundation stage curriculum to ensure that teaching is even more effective, to enhance further children's progression through the stepping stones.

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)