



Crabtree Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	110718
Inspection date	18 November 2005
Inspector	Jenny Scarlett
Setting Address	The New Community Centre, Faircross, Hermitage, Thatcham, Berkshire, RG18 9TL
Telephone number	01635 204387
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Registered person	Crabtree Pre-School
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

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 outstanding. 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?

The Crabtree Pre-School meets in the new Community Centre on the Faircross estate in Hermitage. It opened in 1991 and operates from a self contained purpose built building. A maximum of 26 may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday from 09:15 to 13:00 on Mondays and Fridays and 09:15 to 15:00 Tuesdays to Thursdays. The pre-school operates term time only. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor area.

There are currently 31 children aged from 2 to under 5 years on roll. Of these 24 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from a wide geographical area. The pre-school currently supports a number of children with special needs.

The pre-school employs six staff, two of the staff including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications and one staff member is working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children's good health is promoted effectively by staff who demonstrate an excellent knowledge of the robust procedures for promoting health and hygiene. Children have a clear awareness of their own needs and are developing independence in their personal care. Suitable hand washing facilities and displays of positive images aid the children's development in their personal care and independence skills. They actively contribute to the development of the health and care routines such as tidying up and preparing themselves and the rooms for snack and meal times. Excellent procedures such as, staff consistently wearing disposable gloves when changing children and dealing with accidents sustain high levels of hygiene and help prevent the spread of infection.

Children's healthy growth and development are fostered well as staff show an excellent understanding of their individual dietary requirements. All snacks comply with individual children's dietary requirements to ensure children remain healthy. Children confidently self-register for snack time. They show self-assurance when helping to prepare and choose from a variety of drinks and healthy snacks. Children select and serve their own portions of apple, cheese and raisins and expertly spread butter on their malt loaf. They are aware drinking water is available to them at all times. Children show confidence in pouring their own drinks at snack times. They follow gentle reminders from staff to drink plenty, when arriving at pre-school with a cough. Lunch club meals supplied by the parents are well balanced and take account of the individual and cultural needs of all children. Children are able to talk about 'good' and 'bad' foods and demonstrate a sound understanding of foods that are healthy.

Children experience varied opportunities to develop their physical skills through well planned and spontaneous activities both indoors and out. As a result, they develop an excellent understanding of the importance of a healthy lifestyle. Children move confidently between areas both in and out of doors. They demonstrate excellent co-ordination skills and an awareness of others as they join in the parachute games and ensure they have enough space when joining in singing songs with actions. Children take part in a range of activities in all areas of learning, which help to develop both their fine and gross motor skills. They are able to control pencils, scissors and paintbrushes with a good range of activities to develop their manipulative skills. Children move with confidence, they run and skip, play parachute

games with staff and dig in the garden. Children receive excellent opportunities to explore and visit the community with outings to varied places of interest as well as visits to the local park.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children use an excellent range of safe, good quality, developmentally appropriate resources. These are well organised in child height furniture to encourage independent access. The play areas both indoor and out are spacious and very welcoming. Activities and resources are well presented and provide an excellent range of choice for the children.

Children use high quality equipment appropriate to their age and stage of development. Those with special needs and those learning English as an additional language are safe and fully included because of the sensitive adult support and well planned adaptations to resources and activities. Regular communication with parents contributes to children's safety. Children are well protected by staff who have a clear understanding of child protection policies and procedures and give high priority to the children's welfare.

Children feel confident and secure in their environment through the excellent deployment of staff who work directly with them. Staff's awareness of children's developing abilities helps to ensure appropriate safety measures are in place to avoid dangerous situations and minimise risks. As a result risks of accidental injury to children are minimised because staff are extremely vigilant and use thorough risk assessments to reduce potential hazards both on and off site. Staff have an excellent understanding of how to achieve a balance between freedom and setting safe limits, and how to involve children effectively in organising their environment. This allows children to learn some sense of danger and knowledge about how to protect themselves from harm; for example, being encouraged to be careful in the garden due to the slippery icy surface.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

All children are happy, settled and thoroughly enjoy their time in the setting. They enter the pre-school confidently and children settle well because of the individual welcome staff provide. Children's needs are met effectively through staff's sensitive and appropriate interactions that promote their self-esteem. They achieve well because staff are skilled and use their excellent understanding of early years guidance, such as the Birth to Three Matters framework and the Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage, to provide high quality care and education. Excellent positive relationships are evident between staff and children. Children develop a good awareness of their own needs and a mature respect for the needs of others as they negotiate turn taking using the timer with the computer, share books and take turns to cook meals in the cafe. They build and construct with resources

such as Lego and Mobilo and have excellent opportunities to make informed choices in activities such as parachute games and share and work together co-operatively. They show an excellent understanding and willingness to keep themselves safe and healthy through routines such as hand washing and caring for Bobby the rabbit. Children's behaviour is exemplary. They know right from wrong and show confidence in their negotiating skills. Children are sensitive to the needs of others, readily share toys and resources and co-operate with each other.

Nursery Education

Children are very confident, interested and able to work on their own in activities such as drawing, sticking, imaginary play and looking at books. They have extensive opportunities to explore their senses through music, making bird feeders and exploring in the sand. All children are eager to learn, are self-assured in their play and confident to try new experiences. This is due to the staff demonstrating an excellent knowledge of the individual needs and abilities of the children. Children receive lots of praise in their work and play helping build their self-esteem and confidence. They show a well developed self-respect for others in the setting. They explore different beliefs, traditions and cultures and talk about special events in their lives at circle time.

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Children are confident in their environment, arrive happily and eager to take part in all activities. The staff have excellent relationships with parents and co-operate well to meet each child's individual needs. Children play an active part in the setting. They show immense enthusiasm as they make independent choices and select their own activities from good well presented play equipment and self-selection areas. Children play a dynamic role in their learning. They offer their own ideas such as making faces with vegetables or choosing songs and respond to challenges with great enthusiasm. Staff work directly with the children. They show an excellent understanding of the individual development needs of the children. Staff help children to focus on activities such as counting and comparing numbers and building and developing good concentration skills. Children throughout the setting are motivated and become engrossed in a wide range of developmentally appropriate activities, indoor and outdoor, which provide excellent levels of challenge. They work well together; for example, younger children learn how to operate computer equipment under the guidance of the older children. Children respond well to the routine changes in the session, they follow clear guidelines and are aware of the expectations; such as, helping tidy activities away.

Children are making outstanding progress towards the early learning goals. By the time they go to school they are ready, well prepared and confident to accept the transition to their new environment. Children respond to new activities and challenge with enthusiasm. They increase their thinking skills with practical first hand experiences to explore and investigate such as making bird feeders or playing with sand. They show high levels of curiosity as they name and describe the size of the vegetables. A flexible approach to planning and an excellent balance between adult and child-led activities allows children to learn at their own pace. Staff are perceptive to children's interests particularly during group times. They confidently allow the children to extend their own learning; for example, making faces and rabbit shapes

with vegetables. Children use mathematical language exceptionally well as they count the number of how many children are present. Their knowledge of different mathematical concepts is increasing well as they play the boat game and solve simple problems such as how many boats are left at sea and learn to compare numbers. Children are skilful communicators. They interact with confidence, speak clearly and listen well to each others and staff's conversations. Children listen attentively to stories and recall parts of the story from memory. They mark make confidently and the older children demonstrate excellent handwriting skills as they make books, notices and prepare menus for the café. Children's imaginary play is varied and interesting as they draw on their own experiences pretending to prepare meals in the café and re-enact stories using puppets.

Teaching is inspiring and challenging for all age groups of children. Staff demonstrate an excellent knowledge of the Foundation Stage, providing a purposeful learning environment for the children to learn and develop as individuals. Staff develop and use varied teaching methods to engage the children's interests and develop their progress. They use questions successfully to challenge children's thinking and language skills and use good consolidation techniques through repetition, questions and revisiting topics and activities to support the children's learning. Assessments of the children are rigorous. They use highly effective systems to observe, monitor and record children's achievements and to plan experiences that help children take the next step in their learning. Staff demonstrate an excellent knowledge of tracking the children's progress and use the information effectively to guide planning. Staff promote an open door partnership with parents and carers and provide numerous ways to enable them to be become involved in their child's learning.

The activities and experiences for all children are rich and varied meeting their individual needs extremely well. Relationships are excellent with a happy buzz of children engaged in varied activities within the setting. All staff are skilled and sensitive to the management of the children and their behaviour. Staff use the accommodation and resources effectively to support the children's learning which reflects their backgrounds and the wider community. The staff work well as a team, guided by a committed and motivating manager. There is a strong commitment to improvement through regular meetings, training and development of the staff. The staff and managing committee are rigorous in their monitoring procedures enabling all staff to maintain the high standards of teaching.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Partnership with parents is outstanding. Children arrive at the setting happy and confident. They and their parents are made to feel welcome as children self-register and eagerly look forward to the days activities. Children's individual pegs, shoe stores and labelled drawers provide them with a sense of belonging as they store their pictures and personal possessions.

Children feel valued in the setting. Relationships are excellent. The play and education provision is organised and monitored exceptionally well to ensure children

have access to the full range of activities. Parents and carers are well informed by staff. Staff actively seek parents' views about their children's needs and interests before the child starts at the setting. They share relevant background information, play activities and discuss children's specific needs. A variety of clear and informative notice boards with relevant up to date information is accessible to all parents. Children benefit from the open door policy and two-way sharing of information, with opportunities for parents to speak to staff to enhance their development and learning. Parents receive excellent opportunities to contribute to the assessments made on their child and to be involved in their learning. As a result, parents and carers have a very good understanding of their child's progress.

Staff are pro-active in ensuring the needs of all children are being met. They demonstrate an excellent knowledge of the individual needs of the children in their care. The special educational needs coordinator (SENCO) demonstrates sound knowledge of the fundamental principles of the code of practise. As a result, staff work together with parents, carers and other professional bodies to organise the environment and plan appropriate activities to ensure the children take part at a level appropriate to their needs. Children develop a positive attitude to others through varied positive images displayed around the setting. They receive extensive opportunities to learn about themselves, each other and the world around them through planned activities, visitors to the pre-school and outings to local places of interest. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.

Children benefit exceptionally well from staff who adopt a consistent and positive approach to the management of their behaviour. Staff support the younger children in sharing and turn-taking. The high expectations and consistent boundaries for the 3 to 5 year olds, helps them learn to negotiate with others and take responsibility for their own behaviour. Children are encouraged to make informed choices and make decisions in their play and learning. They become aware of the routines and procedures and know what to expect in response to the routine changes in the session. Children know right from wrong, they are sensitive to the needs of others, readily share toys and resources and co-operate with each other. Staff increase children's understanding of right and wrong, they respond to gentle reminders to care for their environment, the pre-school resources and each other. As a result children's behaviour is exemplary.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

The provision for the quality of leadership and management is outstanding. Children's care is significantly enhanced by the setting's effective and efficient organisation. Staff working with the children are enthusiastic, knowledgeable and consistently promote the children's wellbeing in line with the comprehensive and robust policies and procedures. They demonstrate an excellent knowledge and understanding of the Standards for Full Day Care and the Foundation Stage to help children achieve well. As a result the setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

The manager and the staff team are enthusiastic, and well informed about Early Years. Staff demonstrate an excellent understanding of their roles and responsibilities with relevant induction procedures and clear, effective staff rotas in place. All staff are committed to continuous improvement and development for themselves and the pre-school. They update their child care skills and knowledge by undertaking training and promoting their personal development. The staff team and management committee work well together. They regularly reflect, monitor and improve the quality of their care and education. These robust procedures are used to help develop their skills in organising a provision that meets the children's needs, keeps them healthy and safeguards their welfare. This results in a happy and focussed team who work effectively meeting the personal development and achievements of all the children.

Improvements since the last inspection

The previous care inspection recommended that the pre-school make sure parents are made aware of the child protection procedures and to update the medication and accident forms to ensure they are dated and signed by parents. A recommendation was also made for staff to review the policies and procedures.

The pre-school have made significant improvements which promote the children staying healthy and safe. Clear and robust procedures for notifying parents of child protection are in place. The staff and committee regularly review and update the policies and procedures to ensure staff recognise their responsibilities and roles towards the children's care. All accident and medication records are accurately recorded and countersigned by parents and carers. As a result children's safety, health and wellbeing are protected well because staff are able to put appropriate procedures into practice when necessary.

The last nursery education inspection highlighted the need for staff to plan activities to support mathematical learning including early subtraction. To provide opportunities and sufficient challenge for children to self-select materials and use small tools, to make and design their own work at art and craft based activities and extend the use of the curriculum evaluation, to record the effects of activities on children's learning.

Maths is integrated into daily practical activities and children demonstrate excellent counting skills. Children receive excellent opportunities to develop varied mathematical concepts through practical activities and games. Their knowledge of different mathematical concepts is increasing well as they play the boat game and solve simple problems such as how many boats left at sea and learn to compare numbers. Children play an active part in the setting. They show immense enthusiasm as they make independent choices and select their own activities from good well presented play equipment and self-selection areas. They are very confident, interested and able to work on their own in activities such as drawing, sticking and designing their own menu cards for the home corner café. Staff complete clear, open and honest evaluations of the activities the children have been involved in. This provides staff with a clear reflection and helps them to understand the effects the activities have on children's learning.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

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 outstanding. 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

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

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 *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk