

Crockenhill Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	127132
Inspection date	25 September 2007
Inspector	Sarah Morfett
Setting Address	Crockenhill Village Hall, Stones Cross Road, Swanley, Kent, BR8 8LT
Telephone number	01322 669102
E-mail	
Registered person	Iris Waterton
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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Crockenhill Pre-school opened in 1982. The pre-school is privately run and operates from a large hall and one other room in Crockenhill Village Hall near Swanley. A maximum of 36 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday from 09:15 to 11:45 for 38 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 22 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 12 children receive funding for early education. Children come from a local catchment area. The pre-school currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs five members of staff. All of them hold appropriate early years qualifications and four are working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children play in clean and hygienic facilities. Staff ensure that during the session the toilets are monitored and tables are wiped with anti-bacterial wipes before snack time. Children learn about sound personal hygiene routines. They wash their hands before snack time and have access to a suitable range of resources such as, liquid soap and paper towels. This is further promoted as they brush their teeth each session learning about good dental hygiene. Children are protected from infectious illness because they do not attend when they are sick, parents are provided with recommended exclusion periods from the Health Protection Agency and staff have current qualification in first aid for babies and young children. Therefore, the risk of cross infection is minimised.

Suitable systems to record accidents and medication are in place. Clear health agreements are made. For example, details of children's medical needs, dietary requirements and written permission to administer medication are gained when the children first start. However, written permission to seek emergency medical advice and treatment has not been obtained from parents. Therefore, there is a potential risk to children's safety in an emergency.

Children's physical development is positively promoted. Each day there are activities which help them learn how to control their bodies. For example, as they manoeuvre the wheeled toys around. They develop dexterity and coordination as they use a range of tools when playing with the play dough. Children benefit from healthy food at snack time. For example, raisins, apple, orange and a biscuit are placed in a bowl and they can choose from sugar free squash, milk and water to drink. Fresh drinking water is readily available. Therefore, children begin to develop an understanding of healthy eating.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children play in a welcoming environment where staff set out toys and activities which are bright and inviting to encourage them to play. There is a wide range of well maintained furniture and equipment suitable for the age of the children attending. Resources are checked regularly and broken toys are put to one side to be mended or thrown away. Regular cleaning routines are followed. Therefore, children benefit from the good condition of the resources.

Children's safety is suitably promoted. Each session a risk assessment is carried out to ensure the play areas are safe and secure. Potential safety issues are highlighted and immediate action is taken to minimise these. An appropriate fire evacuation procedure is in place and practised regularly. Therefore, the children learn to keep themselves safe. Children's safety when away from the group is considered well, For example, the staff carry out risk assessment of the attraction they are going to visit and take steps to ensure children's safety whilst there.

Children's welfare is protected. The group have developed a statement which details steps taken to ensure that children are protected during their time in the group. However, there is no written procedure to indicate the process followed if an allegation of abuse were to be made against a member of staff, visitor or volunteer. There is a sufficient range of paperwork which informs staff of child protection procedures including local and national contact numbers. Therefore, children are safeguarded.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are welcomed warmly into the pre-school each morning. They all sit for circle time where they are greeted by name therefore; they gain a sense of belonging. They make choices about what they become involved in as they flow freely through the variety of activities on offer. The range of activities available includes role play, construction toys, book corner, cars and train sets, V-Tech toys, maths activities and art and craft activities. Children are comfortable with the familiar routines that are established. Good relationships are developed. Staff offer support to children who are new and settling in, giving lots of cuddles and reassurance. All children feel comfortable and valued because staff obviously know them and their families well, chatting about home and familiar things. Children enjoy coming to the pre-school.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff have a satisfactory understanding of the Foundation Stage. This is being developed through training opportunities as several staff are working towards the next level of qualification. Staff provide some good activities with sound learning intentions behind them. However, these are not being fully extended as there is a limited use of open ended questions to challenge children sufficiently or make them think. Other teaching methods used are sound, for example, staff answer children's questions and enter into discussions with them. Written planning is in place. However, it does not clearly identify how the early learning goals are covered or indicates how it is linked to the needs of the children and their next steps in learning. Staff make observations and assessments to chart children's progress, although a starting point of children's achievements prior to entering the pre-school is not recorded. Therefore, staff do not have a base to move them forward from. Staff work well together as a team communicating effectively, therefore, meeting children needs.

Children are encouraged to be independent. They manage their own personal hygiene as they take themselves to the toilet and pour their own drinks at snack time. They work well together learning to negotiate as they build in the construction area and act out familiar situations in the role play area. Children enjoy songs and rhymes joining in confidently with the actions and enjoying the repetition of the chorus. They make the most of the comfortable book corner handling books appropriately and recognising familiar stories from the pictures. A writing area is provided for the children although not always utilised well. Children develop an understanding of maths as they play with a range of resources, for example, an abacus and counting game which help to promote their understanding of numbers. They explore shape and size as they build construction from bricks.

Children explore the natural world through the available resources around them for example, through nature walks in the local community. They learn early IT skills as they use simple programmable toys. Children show competence to manoeuvre objects by remote control as they guide a dinosaur across the room. Children enjoy playing with malleable materials. For example, as they squeeze and mould the play dough into the shapes they wish to make. They have little opportunities to express themselves freely through art and craft as most activities are adult directed.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's understanding of the world around them is promoted through the range of resources they play with. For example, they learn about people's differences as they dress up, look at

books and play with small play figures. They take part in festivals and celebrations from their own and other cultures. Therefore, they begin to accept diversity. Staff cater for their individual needs because parents provide sufficient details about their children's medical and dietary requirements as well as their likes and dislikes. The group have a positive attitude towards caring for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and have developed good relationships with outside agencies to support them.

Children behave well. Frequent praise and encouragement helps them to build confidence and self esteem and appropriate strategies to manage unwanted behaviour are employed. Staff get down to children's level and speak quietly to them talking through the problem. Parents are provided with a range of written information about the group when they first start. They receive a newsletter each term, the staff provided verbal feedback at the end of the session and parents are invited to make comments via suggestion box situated in at the entrance. Therefore, effective communication is established.

The partnership with parents is satisfactory. Details of the early learning goals are displayed for them to read and they are informed of the theme for each term through the newsletter. Parents are aware that the staff keep records of their children's development. Parents say they are pleased with the care their children receive and state that they find written feedback, such as, the records of transfer a useful way to gauge what progress their children are making.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered through the range of activities provided. Children are given satisfactory opportunities to make a positive contribution.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a suitably organised environment. Appropriate staff deployment ensures that the children receive sufficient support. They have access to an appropriate range of learning experiences which meet their age and stage of development. All staff working with the children hold an appropriate childcare qualification. All adults who work with the children are checked through the Criminal Records Bureau and systems are in place to protect children from people who are not checked.

Required documentation and paperwork are in place and maintained to a suitable standard. For example, the registration certificate is displayed for the parents to see and the attendance record is in place. This meets the requirements, although, it is not always completed securely. The range of policies informs the staff of the procedures for the group. However, there is no procedure to be followed in the absence of a manager. The provider recognises the group's responsibilities for investigating any complaints parent and carers may have about the care she provides under the National Standards and takes positive steps to provide the parents with the contact details of Ofsted.

The leadership and management is satisfactory. The manager has clear aims for the pre-school and endeavours to communicate these to all staff at regular meetings. Staff are involved in discussions for long term planning, deciding what themes will be covered throughout the year and to evaluate the curriculum ensuring it is effective and covers all the areas of learning for the children. The manager reports that they work well together with the local primary school. A change of school intake this year as had an impact on the pre-schools routine. Consequently, this impacts on experiences for children. However, the management team present a positive attitude to reviewing their practice. Staff are supported well. Training is positively encouraged

through team meetings and yearly appraisals. Therefore, staff are appropriately monitored and moved forward professionally. Overall, the setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last Nursery Education inspection the group were asked to develop their assessment records to show a clear link with the stepping stones and the early learning goals and improve the information shared with parents on the Foundation Stage. They have introduced an assessment record based on the early learning goals and display information on the foundation stage curriculum for parents to read. They were also asked to improve the use of resources to promote children's understanding of weight and capacity. There is a suitable range of resources provided which help children to learn about maths concepts.

At the last Children Act inspection the group were asked to develop the lost and uncollected children policy and to reassess arrangements at snack time to allow children more choice, to become more independent and less waiting time. They have developed the lost and uncollected children policy including more detail about the process and they have completely rearranged the way children access snack time, enabling them to be more independent, make choices and decide when they have their snack. Therefore, they are no longer interrupted in what they are doing and can complete a task before they eat.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection Ofsted received one complaint relating to National Standard:- 2 Organisation, National Standard 6:- Safety, and National Standard 11:- Behaviour. A concern was raised regarding the management of children's behaviour and safety issues within the premises. An unannounced visit was carried out to investigate. From the information gathered at the visit five actions were raised under these standards. The provider took the necessary steps to meet the actions and responded appropriately. Therefore, the provider remains qualified for registration.

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):

- obtain written permission from parents to seek emergency medical advice and treatment

- ensure that the child protection policy includes a procedure to be followed should an allegation of abuse be made against a member of staff
- review the procedure followed in the absence of the person in charge including the way attendance is recorded to ensure systems are secure and all staff are confident in their role

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):

- develop the use of questioning during all activities to extend learning experiences for children
- develop the systems used to record children's progress; which clearly identifies children's starting points and the next steps in their learning.
- review the system used for planning to ensure that it clearly identifies how the early learning goals are covered and that these are linked to the needs of the children and their next steps

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