

Croft House Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	316025
Inspection date	05 March 2008
Inspector	Victoria Gail Halliwell
Setting Address	Bridge Street, Horwich, Bolton, Lancashire, BL6 7BT
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Registered person	Croft House Nursery Limited
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?

Croft House Nursery is owned and managed privately. The nursery opened in 1989 and provides childcare from four main rooms, within a suitably converted semi detached property in the Horwich area of Bolton. Four outdoor play areas are available for the children's use. Parking is available in the nursery grounds for staff and parents along with an overflow car park to the side of the nursery. Ramps are available to enable easy access into the building. The local shops, library, leisure centre, church, nature walk, playing field and park are all within walking distance.

A maximum of 60 children under five years may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 08.00 until 18.00. There are currently 106 children on roll, of these, 37 children receive funding for early education. The nursery currently supports a small number of children with learning difficulties.

The manager/principal of the nursery is a qualified teacher with a B.Ed (Hons) degree and also holds the Early Years Professional status. The nursery employs 23 members of staff who have direct responsibility for the child care provision. Of these, 19 hold appropriate early years qualifications and three are working towards a qualification. In addition, two qualified staff are

working towards a degree. The setting also employs a full time office manager, a full time and two part time cooks and a cleaner. The nursery receives support from the Early Start team.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children have an exceptional knowledge and understanding of the importance of good health and how this can be achieved. During snacks times, older children talk confidently about the nutritional value of the foods they are eating. They know there is calcium in the milk they are drinking and that it is good for their teeth, bones and nails, they also know that the fruit contains vitamins. Children throughout the nursery benefit daily, from an excellent range of appetising freshly prepared meals, such as, chicken and vegetable casserole. In addition, the regular provision of fresh fruit after meals and at snack times ensures children eat several portions of fruit and vegetables during the nursery day. A daily vegetarian menu is also prepared by the cook. Every detail of babies feeds and meals is considered, for example, following consultation with parents, the nursery purchase individual bottles and formula milk for each child, to ensure freshly prepared feeds are consistent with individual needs. The nursery have also devised a developmentally appropriate tea time menu for babies, for example, serving vegetables and lentils.

Staff implement very good procedures to raise children's awareness of good hygiene practices, for example, routinely explaining to young babies that they need to wipe their hand before snacks and giving them a toothbrush following meals. Because staff introduce such good practices from a very early age, older children in the nursery have excellent awareness of the importance of good personal hygiene. They are enthusiastic about routine procedures, washing their hands thoroughly using the liquid soap after outdoor play or before meals and ensuring their brush their teeth after eating. Excellent practices are in place to help prevent the spread of infection. Exclusion policies are effectively implemented and details of the setting's hand washing policy is shared with parents as part of the settings commitment to the 'Healthy Body, Happy Me' campaign. To raise parents awareness of ways in which the nursery minimise the spread of infection through good hygiene practices.

Children have exceptional opportunities to play outdoors and be physically active. The outdoor curriculum is purposefully planned, providing children with a wealth of opportunities which enhance all area's of their learning and development. Children enthusiastically hide in make shift den's, use enormous leaves to create a camouflage effect and turn plastic crates into vehicles. They use garden tools to dig for worms and mini beasts, pause to watch the fast flowing water and make good use of the established trees and shrubs to hide, explore or develop their climbing skills. Many two and three year olds have continuous access to outdoor play throughout the year. The nursery has purchased a large quantity of all in one waterproof suits, so that children can play comfortably outside during wet weather. Such protective clothing is also used on routine walks so the children can play and splash freely in large muddy puddles. Children's fine motor skills are highly developed, children over three, skilfully use small tools, such as, scissors, knives, forks and writing materials.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

The nursery is exceptionally welcoming to all, children, parents and visitors are individually greeted on arrival and welcomed into a reassuring yet stimulating reception area. Senses are gently stimulated by the sound of bird songs, vibrant displays of children's creative work and a digital display of photographs. Children and parents demonstrate a very strong sense of belonging, they are very well informed about current projects and utilise the reception area well. Older children enjoy leaving messages on the white board, whilst parents peruse the information and children's work on display. Throughout the nursery a fascinating range of low-level and suspended displays create intriguing areas for the children to investigate and explore. A vast selection of play materials are attractively stored and well presented to encourage children's independence from an early age.

Very high priority is given to keeping the children safe, detailed and comprehensive risk assessments are completed for all aspects of the provision, ensuring that careful consideration is given to identifying and taking appropriate steps to minimise any risk to the children. Excellent systems are in place to ensure babies sleeping outside on the veranda are kept safe. For example, the area is monitored via a surveillance camera, an intruder sensor sounds to alert staff to movement in the area, listening devices are used and a record of the regular inspection checks made by staff are maintained. Outings into the local community are routinely undertaken and as a result of direct experiences, explanations and meaningful role play, children are developing a very clear understanding of boundaries and how they can keep themselves safe, both within the nursery and whilst on outings. Such heightened awareness of safety further enhances, children's experiences as they are able to use effective tools and implements with the required care, for example, using garden tools to dig for worms.

Children are safeguarded because very effective procedures are in place. As a result of ongoing training and induction, staff have an excellent understanding of child protection issues. They are confident in their role and report any possible concerns to the designated child protection co-ordinators or an experienced member of the management team without delay. Established protocols are consistent with the local safeguarding children board and are effective in ensuring children are protected from any possible harm.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children of all ages have secure relationships with key staff who know them very well. Admission procedures are excellent, staff work very closely with parents. Consequently, they are exceptionally well informed of and consistently take account of individual routines, needs and preferences for their key children. Staff respond quickly to babies who show any signs of discomfort or upset, for example, giving one to one care to a baby with tummy ache, the member of staff speaks gentle words of comfort and maintains eye contact whilst massaging and soothing the baby's tummy, until they feel some relief and fall asleep. Staff naturally create a nurturing and loving environment, offering cuddles and the opportunity for children to snuggle in and feel secure. As a result, children throughout the nursery are developing a high level of self assurance.

Children of all ages are eager to attend and relish their time in an inspiring setting which puts them first. Children are extremely independent, they are encouraged to initiate and lead their own activities. For example, children as young as two, are skilfully questioned and make decisions

about how to convert junk modelling resources into a large scale airport runway. Young three year olds patiently observe staff before imitating their actions to make boxes for a baggage trolley. Children's work is valued and becomes a well used resource, as children land helicopters and aeroplanes and discuss their own airport experiences. Staff throughout the nursery are exceptionally motivated and enthusiastic. They are an inspiration to the children, who create a buzz of excitement as they explore and investigate the indoor and outdoor environment, which provide high levels of challenge and stimulation, appropriate to their age and stage of development.

Sensory experiences are exemplary, babies become totally absorbed in the exploration of different textures, such as, wood, metal and fabric. They are stimulated by the effective use of mobiles, mirrors, glitter balls and twinkling lights and delight as they squish shaving foam through their fingers. Older children are developing an appreciation of music, for example, classical music creates a calming ambiance during lunch times or times for quiet reflection.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Staff have an excellent knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum. They have effective systems in place to observe, monitor and record children's achievements, and feed this into flexible planning documents, which focus on personalised learning and embrace children's interests and spontaneous events. Consequently, children are making excellent progress towards the early learning goals. Children are exceptionally motivated, they display high levels of independence and are animated and enthusiastic about the activities they complete. Children delight in the excitement of their peers. For example, a small group of children explore the outdoor grounds in search of worms and insects. On their return they burst into the room eager to share what they have found, children spontaneously gather round, asking questions and waiting in anticipation to examine the contents using mirrors and magnifying glasses.

Children move around purposefully, exploring a fantastic range of continuous provision. They are inspired by a collection of natural items, such as, shells, pebbles, fir cones and tree branches and use them resourcefully to create an exciting environment for their wild animals to explore. Children have many meaningful opportunities to learn about the natural world, they participate enthusiastically in projects, such as, the national bird watch week and understand that chickens hatch from eggs. Planned use of the surrounding area is superb, children joyfully recall their journey over a nearby bridge, explaining how they 'trip trot' over the bridge where the 'troll' lives. They talk about their plans to participate in local traditions and roll their papier-mâché eggs down the 'pike'.

Children are truly interested in the written word, they confidently form recognisable letters to write complex messages in greeting cards and utilise alternative media, for example, rolling play dough into narrow strips to write their name. Staff are skilful story tellers and children listen intently to their favourite stories. Children play with imagination, they spontaneously use available resources to act out their own stories, dressing up as princesses and using cushions to create a barrier between them and the dragon. Children use mathematical concepts in meaningful everyday situations as they calculate how many more plates or spaces they need when sitting the table for lunch. They have continuous access to mathematical resources, which provides excellent opportunities for them to consolidate what they have learnt. Children have an exceptional knowledge of shapes, when making representational drawings children know the chick's head is round in their two dimensional picture and know that if it was three dimensional, then it would be a sphere.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children are truly valued as individuals, every effort is made to ensure the setting are aware of all children's needs, open ended questions are asked and parents are encouraged to embellish their child's individual books with photographs and provide details of family traditions or customs. The nursery actively promotes inclusion and values all families and visitors to the setting. Children are developing a keen interest in the cultures and beliefs of others, for example, older children know the 'Chinese dragon brings good luck' and that during Divali, Indian people 'light diva's and put them in their houses'. Excellent systems are in place to ensure the early identification of children with learning difficulties or disabilities. Staff work very closely with parents and external agencies to devise individual targets which are continually reviewed to help children achieve their full potential.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. The behaviour of pre-school children is exemplary. Children have a mature respect for the feelings of others and consider the consequences of their word and actions. They work harmoniously as part of a group, taking turns and sharing resources fairly. Staff are positive role models, they lead by example and treat all children with respect. They provide clear and consistent guidance for younger children, who are developing a strong awareness of right and wrong.

The partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. Relationships on all levels throughout the nursery are excellent. Parents are truly valued as their child's first educator and are continuously encouraged to share what they know about their child and become involved in their child's learning. The reception area is very well used to share details of children's activities. Photographs are displayed on a daily basis, so that parents can see how their child has spent their time and prompt discussions at home. Families are actively encouraged to participate in projects, such as, the national bird watch, world book day and join nursery staff on a charity 'crocus walk' at the weekend. A welcoming parents room makes parents feel valued and is particularly reassuring for new parents who have somewhere to sit in comfort whilst their child begins to make independent visits into the nursery.

Parents receive a wealth of valuable information about the nursery, including policies, procedures and operational practices. In addition informative noticeboards are prominently located, newsletters are provided, daily dairies are completed for the youngest children and great importance is placed on verbal communication. To this end key staff feedback daily to parents and encourage them to exchange information about their child. In addition, formal meeting are held with parents of children in receipt of funded nursery education, to ensure they are well informed about the Foundation Stage Curriculum, to discuss their child's progress and to plan future targets for their child.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

The setting is managed by a very experienced and committed practitioner who has a clear vision for the future and leads the staff team by example. Excellent management structures are in place to ensure staff are very well supported, a total of five supernumerary staff are employed and have specific management responsibilities for monitoring and developing practices within the setting. Established systems include, regular supervision sessions, appraisal, weekly meetings for heads of rooms and the management team, in house training and detailed observations of staff practices. All staff also benefit from planned time out sessions when they can focus on

the individual planning for their key children. Staff are continually encouraged to reflect on their own practice and personal development. Interesting articles relating to child care practices are circulated prior to short reflection sessions when staff share are encouraged to share their thoughts and feelings.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is outstanding, the manager is fully committed to ensuring that all children receive the highest quality of care and education. Robust systems are in place to monitor and evaluate the provision for nursery education.

Children are cared for in individual base rooms, which are extremely well equipped according to individual children's ages and stages of development. Attention to detail is excellent, ensuring domestic style furniture is well placed to promote mobility for babies and provide a relaxing and homely environment for older children. All rooms and outdoor area's are beautifully presented with high quality equipment and resources, which enhance all aspects of children's play learning and enjoyment.

All required documentation is well organised and maintained in accordance with the national Standards. Policies and procedures are individual to the setting, are robust and fully support the expert practice of knowledgeable and highly skilled practitioners. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection, the setting have continued to develop the provision for outdoor play, which has further enhanced the provision for physical activity and the children's good health.

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 any 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

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The quality and standards of the care are outstanding. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

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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 *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