

# Crag Bank Under Fives

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	309280
<b>Inspection date</b>	28 November 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Sandra Elizabeth Williams
<b>Setting Address</b>	Crag Bank Village Hall, Jesson Way, Crag Bank, Carnforth, LA5 9EG
<b>Telephone number</b>	07870 616 771
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	Crag Bank Under Fives
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](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?

Crag Bank Under Fives opened in 1991 and it is run by a committee. The facility is located in Crag Bank Village Hall close to the centre of Carnforth and consists of two playrooms, a kitchen and toilet facilities. All children share access to an outdoor play area. The group serves children from Carnforth and the surrounding areas.

A maximum of 26 children aged from two and a half to under five years may attend the playgroup at any one time. There are 38 children currently on roll, of whom, 17 are in receipt of funding for nursery education.

The facility provides full day care and is open from Mondays to Fridays from 09.30 until 16.00. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are no children attending with English as a second language. The facility supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities.

There are four members of staff who work with the children. Over 50% of the staff hold appropriate early years qualifications. The staff are currently working towards the 'Step into Quality' Lancashire Quality Award.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children are developing good physical skills as they engage in a range of physical activities which contribute to their good health. The children are able to enjoy continuous provision with the freedom to choose to play inside or outside throughout the session. The children can choose to play outside regardless of the weather due to a new canopy, which provides cover if it is raining. The children particularly enjoy playing on the bikes and scooters, developing their physical coordination and sense of space as they pedal around, skilfully avoiding each other. The children absolutely love their dance sessions with a professional dance teacher who regularly attends the setting and teaches the children various dance routines and physical exercises, such as doing 'rolly pollies'. The children have thoroughly enjoyed taking part in a wonderful production of the Wizard of Oz which has been recorded onto DVD. Children develop their fine motor skills as they use scissors for cutting out paper post boxes; rolling pins and cutters for making mince pies and the good range of mark making equipment.

Children begin to learn about healthy eating as the staff provide healthy snacks such as grapes, apples, raisins and bananas. Children are encouraged to develop their independence as they choose from the plate of mixed fruit and as they pour their own drinks from the small jugs. Snack times are enjoyable and social occasions and the children talk about what they like to eat for breakfast. Staff comment positively as children say they enjoy porridge for breakfast. The children relish their baking sessions and enjoy making mince pies to take home with them. Children's special dietary needs are known to the staff who work very closely with the parents to ensure children's needs are met appropriately.

Children are cared for in a warm, clean environment where staff implement good hygiene procedures and practices. Children learn the importance of washing their hands before eating their snacks, after using the toilet and after painting. They are developing good levels of independence as they attend to themselves in the bathroom, under staff supervision. The ability of the staff to attend to the children's health and medical requirements is good as their training in first aid is up to date. However, some of the contents in the first aid kit are out of date and therefore staff are not fully equipped to respond appropriately in an emergency.

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

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming and safe environment where potential hazards are regularly identified and minimised. This allows children to move around safely and play independently. Children are provided with two well set out playrooms, which provide ample space for children to easily and safely access the play equipment. This allows them to make choices and develop their independence, as they happily chose to play with the table top games and the creative equipment. Children use good quality equipment, appropriate to their age and stage of development, which complies with safety standards. Children are protected from harm as the staff regularly check the equipment for any damage or hazards. Equipment is child-sized and play equipment is organised well and at a low-level to ensure that children can access them easily and safely.

Children learn to keep themselves safe because staff explain acceptable boundaries. For example, children know that they must be careful when using scissors. The children learn about fire

safety as the staff regularly practise the emergency evacuation procedure with them. The staff are watchful and vigilant at all times, ensuring that the children are safe as they play. The thorough risk assessments help to minimise the hazards to children. The front door is always kept locked and secure and children are always supervised when playing outside.

Children's welfare is promoted as the staff recognise their responsibilities to protect young children from harm. They have a good understanding of potential signs of abuse and neglect, also of who they are to contact to report any child protection concerns. They have undertaken child protection training and do have experience in dealing with such issues.

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

The provision is good.

Children are settled, happy and enjoy their time at pre school. They enjoy positive relationships with the staff, which increases their sense of trust and helps them develop a strong sense of self. The children are excited and enthusiastic when they arrive at the setting and are greeted warmly by the staff. Children are given appropriate responsibility as they independently choose from the range of activities on offer. Children show an interest in what they do in the setting. They particularly enjoy the craft activities and baking, where they have opportunities to develop their creative skills. Children begin to distinguish between right and wrong because the staff teach them to take turns when playing games. The children learn good manners and respect for others because the staff act as positive role models. For example, when sitting at the table at snack time, the staff encourage the children to say 'please' and 'thank you' as they hand out the fruit and drinks.

#### **Nursery Education.**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children make good progress as the staff have developed a clear understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum. They plan an interesting curriculum which covers all aspects of children's learning. Planning, assessment, observation and recording in relation to the early years goals and stepping stones are thoroughly recorded. Children's individual learning needs are accurately known, which means that the staff have clear plans to enable individual children to move on to the next step in their learning. Staff set high expectations of what the children can achieve, consequently they receive sufficient challenge.

Children develop good social skills. They are interested and motivated to learn. They are also confident to suggest ideas and speak in a familiar group and also to sit quietly, when appropriate. This is particularly evident during registration and story time. They confidently play in small groups and on their own if they choose. They have formed positive relationships with staff and their peers. Children demonstrate developing self-confidence as they enthusiastically show the inspector how to make mince pies. They are developing good self-care skills as they put on their coats before going outside to play and put on their aprons before painting.

Children develop good speaking and listening skills as staff regularly engage them in conversations. They enjoy 'show and tell' time when they bring an object from home and tell their friend about it. They are encouraged to recognise their own and their peers' names as they self register. Children relish the opportunities to practise their phonic knowledge, skilfully linking sounds to letters and naming and sounding letters of the alphabet. They have fun with rhyming words such as 'Jane went to Spain on a plane'. Children are able to select books from the book corner and are able to handle them carefully and turn the pages in the correct order.

They enjoy sitting with the staff reading the books and learning to follow the text from left to right. Children have plenty of opportunities to develop their writing skills as they attempt to write their names or make their marks on their art work. They also attempt writing for a variety of purposes using different forms. For example, one child decides that the role play corner is a Chinese take away restaurant and uses the pad of paper and pencil to take peoples orders. Others enjoy the opportunities to make marks on the chalk board.

Children have opportunities to count in everyday activities, such as counting how many children are making mince pies and how many pieces of pastry are required. Children can confidently count up to 10. They are also able to recognise shapes, such as circle when using the pastry cutters. They are learning about size and positional language as they listen to stories about 'Big nut brown hare'. They also learn about size as they build tall towers with bricks and use the tape measure to measure how tall they are and who has built the tallest one.

Children in the pre school afternoon sessions use information technology with enthusiasm. They learn to control the mouse and move around the screen to follow the programme. Children who only attend the morning playgroup sessions, however, do not currently have continuous access to a computer and therefore are unable to develop their skills in mouse control and general computer skills. They do, however, have access to programmable toys. Children learn about the wider world, however, there are currently not many dressing up costumes that represent diversity. This means that not all of the children's backgrounds and cultures are reflected in the resources.

Children have opportunities to express themselves creatively in various different ways. They really enjoy the messy play and craft activities, such as making Christmas cards and book marks. They also enjoy music and practising singing songs for their Christmas concert. They explore different textures and use their imaginations, for example they play with gloop and toy cars and compare the gloop with snow. They have great fun making a house out of cardboard boxes and a tool box.

Overall, children make good progress towards the early learning goals given their capacity and starting points.

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

The provision is good.

Children make a positive contribution and play a full part in the setting as they are warmly welcomed by staff who value and respect their individuality. Children are encouraged to develop positive attitudes about a diverse society through the resources and activities provided by the staff. Resources include multicultural books, dolls and posters but not many multicultural dressing up costumes. The children celebrate festivals such as Chinese New Year and Diwali by undertaking craft activities and tasting different types of food. They also learn about their own community as the staff take them on outings to the village and the library. The children particularly enjoy meeting the local firemen when they bring their engine to the setting and let the children explore the engine and play with the hoses.

Positive behaviour is constantly encouraged by the staff by use of praise and encouragement. With support and guidance children are happy to share, take turns during their play, learn to play cooperatively and develop skills in negotiations. These positive approaches foster children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Children with learning difficulties and disabilities are extremely well supported in the setting and there is a good support system set up. Staff

have attended appropriate training courses to support children with difficulties and work very closely with parents and other agencies in order to fully support the children's needs.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents find the staff approachable and friendly and children benefit from the positive partnership the staff have with the parents. Parents are given good information about the Foundation Stage and become involved in their children's learning by bringing items in for certain activities. Some parents also attend the nursery and share their expertise with the children, for example, those that are firemen, nurses and teachers. Staff communicate with parents on a regular basis about children's welfare and care. This is done verbally and in the form of newsletters and open evenings. Staff also keep parents informed by using a white board to display current themes and activities being undertaken.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children are relaxed and confident in the environment due to the organisation of their care and learning. Children's play opportunities are good as the staff organise the premises very well, thus allowing children to move about easily from one activity to another. Documentation which contributes to children's health, safety and well-being is well organised and thorough. Staff are familiar with the operational plan, policies and procedures and these are also shared with the parents.

The organisation of the care is good because staff are well qualified and attend a wide range of training courses to enable them to keep up to date with current childcare practices. The staff group are extremely committed to working with children and devote considerable time and effort to ensuring that they deliver very good quality care and education to the children. A rigorous procedure is in place in relation to the recruitment of staff. This means that staff employed in this setting are suitable to meet the needs of children.

Leadership and management is good. Children's educational needs are well met through the strong leadership and management of the two supervisors who have a constructive partnership with the management committee. Staff have developed a good understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum. The staff have established links with the Sure Start development workers who assist them in their teaching methods and systems for assessing children.

Children are provided with a very varied educational programme. Staff meet regularly to evaluate and monitor the quality of teaching and learning. This means that the staff have an understanding of the setting's strengths and weaknesses. They experiment with different methods of recording children's progress and are very open to trying new ideas and methods.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection it was requested that the provider obtain written permission from all parents before administering medication to children or seeking medical treatment in an emergency. This has been undertaken, thus improving the level of safety for children. An operational plan was also asked for which would be available to parents. A thorough operational plan has been compiled and is available to parents at all times, thus improving the level of information shared with parents.

The provider was also asked to record information about children's special dietary requirements. This is undertaken and is recorded on the children's individual records and all staff are aware of this information. The child protection policy was to be reviewed to include the procedures to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff or volunteer. The child protection policy now contains all of the required information, which improves the level of safety for children. It was also requested that the complaints procedure would be updated to include the address and telephone number of the regulator, which it now does, which enables parents to contact the regulator if required.

### **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 records 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):

- ensure that all of the contents in the first aid kit are in date.

#### **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):

- ensure that children have continuous access to resources such as multicultural dressing up costumes and computers at all times.

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)