

# Crowhurst Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	109407
<b>Inspection date</b>	17 December 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Liz Margaret Caluori
<b>Setting Address</b>	The Village Hall, Forewood Lane, Crowhurst, Battle, East Sussex, TN33 9AJ
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<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	The Trustees of Crowhurst Playgroup
<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?

Crowhurst Playgroup opened in 1973. It operates from the village hall in Crowhurst, East Sussex. The group use two rooms, and have sole use of the premises during opening hours. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

The group is registered to care for a maximum of 24 children at any one time. There are currently 14 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 12 children receive funding for nursery education. The setting welcomes children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities as well as those who speak English as an additional language. It is open every Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 09:00 to 12:55, during term time.

The playgroup employs five staff of whom two hold recognised early years qualifications and one is working towards a qualification. The setting receives support from the local authority early years advisors.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

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

The provision is good.

Children enjoy the sociable mid-morning snack times. They are provided with a selection of fruit which is prepared to meet their individual dietary requirements. They are encouraged to pour themselves a drink of milk or water. A jug of water is also accessible for children to help themselves during the rest of the session.

Children play in a clean environment and effective procedures are in place to protect them from the risk of infection. Children are also well supported to develop good personal hygiene practices. They wash their hands after using the toilet and before they sit down to eat or take part in cooking activities.

Staff with first aid training are present at all times. This ensures that children can be effectively treated in case of a minor accident. The setting also has appropriate procedures regarding the care of sick children and the administration of medicines. The setting has arrangements to maintain the required written accident and medication records.

Children benefit from the commitment of the staff team to providing them with very regular opportunities to take part in physical play. A piece of apparatus, such as a trampet or low level balance beams, is set up indoors each day. Children use these with great confidence and show pride in their own achievements. Children play outside for part of the session and use the wide range of equipment provided. This includes bikes, cars, low stilts, balls and buggies. Many simply spend their time running around and having fun with their friends.

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

The provision is good.

The toys and equipment set out for children to play with are well maintained and attractively presented. They are easily accessible to the children and are entirely appropriate for their ages and stages of development.

Children are protected by a range of precautions including the use of socket covers and radiator guards. There is a gate to restrict children's access to the kitchen. Other than this they are able to move freely around the hall as staff are vigilant in their supervision and undertake regular risk assessments. As a result children are well supported to develop independence; for example, older children visit the toilets unaided.

The setting has clear and well thought out arrangements in place regarding fire safety. There is a fire blanket in the kitchen and extinguishers around the hall. Evacuation routes are clearly identified and free from obstruction. Emergency drills are practised regularly and written records maintained.

Children receive a good level of support to help them learn to keep themselves safe. Staff lead group discussions and activities to cover issues such as road safety. Children also benefit from meeting a range of visitors such as fire and police officers.

A member of staff takes lead responsibility in relation to child protection. Both she and the manager have attended advanced child protection training and the remainder of the team have attended the basic course. The setting has clear arrangements in place to identify and monitor

concerns and maintains the contact details of the local child protection team should it be necessary to make a referral.

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

The provision is good.

All children have fun whilst at the group. They separate easily from their carers and happily greet their friends. They form very warm, positive relationships with staff and approach them readily for praise and support.

During the first half of the session children are mostly free to explore the wide range of activities on offer. Most children receive funding for their nursery education and are working towards the Foundation Stage of the National Curriculum. Activities are set up each day to cover each area of learning. However, staff competently ensure that these are also suitable for the younger children. As a result all children are enthusiastic and engaged in their play.

The second half of the session is largely given over to outdoor physical play. During this time all children are encouraged to go outside. Staff set out a range of resources, such as paints and an easel, alongside the physical games. Alternative indoor activities are not generally offered during this time. However, staff act promptly to provide resources and support for any child who expresses a wish to come inside.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff work very effectively together and demonstrate a good understanding of the Foundation Stage. They employ an impressive range of strategies to engage children's interest and support their learning; an example of this being an activity focussing on initial sounds and letters. Children worked with staff to produce a book of letters. The children selected pictures of objects beginning with the letter written on each page. They cut these out and stuck them under a paper flap. The end result demonstrated a high level of ability. The manager and staff team have identified that the children enjoy these 'home-made' books. They have put together a range of books with photographs of outings and events in the pre-school along with captions thought up by the children. This helps to re-enforce children's learning. It also fosters their self-esteem as they see pictures of themselves as part of the group with their friends. The setting has clear and effective systems in place to observe and monitor children's individual progress. Planning is clear and staff demonstrate a good awareness of the next steps for each child.

Children are making good progress in their communication, language and literacy. They make good use of the mark making materials set out each day to practise their writing. Children chat constantly and are developing broad vocabularies. They confidently use language to share stories, offer their opinion and negotiate. Children enjoy listening to stories read by staff and are developing an interest in the books displayed in the room. Staff have nurtured their interest and display photographs of each child holding their favourite book.

Children count confidently and practise mathematical concepts in their free play; for example they enjoy playing with the money and counting out the vegetables in the toy market. Children are also well supported to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world. They go on regular walks and outings, for example to local farms, woods and shops. They also take part in a range of activities and topics aimed at teaching them about specific subjects such as

transport, animals and celebrations. Children have access to computers and also play with calculators.

Staff plan cooking activities for each week although, at times, the learning experience is affected by a high level of adult direction. Despite this children take part enthusiastically and respond to the praise and encouragement they receive. They demonstrate a very good understanding of appropriate food hygiene practices.

The opportunities for children to express themselves creatively are very good. They make good use of the role play area and join in extremely imaginative and humorous games. They also enjoy making models and taking part in art and craft activities. They demonstrate very good levels of concentration and produce very individual and expressive pieces of art.

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

The provision is good.

Children are developing extremely good self-esteem as a result of the attention given to identifying and meeting their individual needs. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. They are provided with a range of activities and resources aimed at promoting positive images of people from throughout the community and wider world, including those with disabilities. Whenever possible staff organise visits from people from different countries and those of varied religions. In addition, children learn about a range of different cultural dishes during their cooking activities.

The behaviour of children in the pre-school is extremely good. They are considerate and very polite. Adults act as very good role models; they are good humoured, calm and consistent when dealing with the children and this helps children to relax and feel at ease when they play.

There are very good arrangements in place to care for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. A member of staff takes responsibilities for co-ordinating the support for children and is very effective in this role. Appropriate arrangements are also in place to care for children who speak English as an additional language.

Partnership with parents is good. Those whose children receive funding for their nursery education are given very good support to help them understand the Foundation Stage of the National Curriculum. They are given detailed written information and also attend meetings with staff to discuss their child's progress. The setting also encourages parents to share information of their child's achievements at home and these are used to help staff identify the next steps. All parents are greeted warmly by staff and are familiar with the procedures and routines of the setting. They have access to a good range of written policies and procedures. Children benefit from these very positive relationships as they provide a strong link between their home and the pre-school. The setting also has a clear procedure in place should a parent wish to make a complaint.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

There are a comprehensive range of written policies and procedures in place and these are reviewed regularly. All required records and documentation is maintained and these are generally well maintained and easily accessible to authorised staff members. Staff ratios are high and this ensures that each child receives a good amount of attention.

The leadership and management of the setting are good. A very positive relationship exists between the whole staff team and this creates a harmonious environment for the children. The group are working through the Eye for Excellence quality assurance framework. As part of this they are assessing the strengths and weaknesses of the service provided and devising development plans to address these.

Space is well organised to allow a wide range of activities to take place at the same time. Similarly, time is generally effectively managed to ensure that children are provided with a range of restful as well as more strenuous activities.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

Following the last inspection two recommendations were made and these have both been successfully addressed. It was recommended that drinking water be made freely available to children and a jug is now set out for them to access at any time. This ensure that they are fully hydrated and also encourages their independence. The group has also updated all policies and written procedures and these now fully reflect current guidance and legislation. This contributes to the effective management of the setting.

### **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**

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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):

- offer children greater freedom to choose if they wish to play outside by providing a selection of alternative indoor activities

#### **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):

- increase the encouragement for children to take part in the planning and preparation of cooking activities

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)