

Creche 'n' Co Limited

Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique Reference Number | 316317 |
| Inspection date | 26 September 2007 |
| Inspector | Susan Elaine Heap |
| Setting Address | Hopwood Hall College, Rochdale Campus, St. Marys Gate, Rochdale, Lancashire, OL12 6RY |
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| Registered person | Creche 'n' Co Ltd |
| Type of inspection | Integrated |
| Type of care | Full day care, Out of School 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 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?

Crèche 'n' Co is one of six nurseries run by Crèche 'n' Co Limited. It opened in 1990 and operates from three rooms on the ground floor of Hopwood Hall College in Rochdale town centre. A maximum of 60 children may attend at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 08.30 to 17.30 for 37 weeks of the year. School's Out operates from 08.00 to 18.00 during school holidays except for two weeks at Christmas and three weeks in the summer. All children have access to an enclosed play area.

There are currently 53 children aged from seven weeks to four years on roll in the nursery. Of these, four children receive funding for early education. There are 15 children aged from four years to under eight years in the holiday club. The nursery currently supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 13 members of staff. Of these, nine hold appropriate early years qualifications and four are working towards a National Vocational Qualification in early years at level 2 or level 3.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are learning to understand simple good health and hygiene practices through the daily routines and their activities and discussions with the staff. Photographs showing children washing their hands are displayed above the wash hand basins and encourage younger children to carry out the task independently. Positive steps are taken to prevent the spread of infection because the staff successfully follow the setting's written health and hygiene policies, such as wearing disposable gloves and aprons when changing nappies and when handling food.

Younger children rest and sleep according to their individual needs. However, the current sleeping arrangements for very young babies do not always promote the development of good posture as they often sleep in reclining chairs. Arrangements to care for children when they are ill actively promote children's welfare; seven of the staff have current first aid certificates and all the required documentation for the safe recording of accidents or medication is in place.

Meals are provided by parents and the staff have effective procedures in place to ensure packed lunches are safely stored. The setting provides a wealth of up to date information for parents on the importance of healthy eating and the setting has achieved the 'Golden Grin' gold award. The staff work very closely with parents to ensure that children's individual development needs are met regarding food and drink; for example, there is a display about weaning in the baby room. Staff respond to the needs of young babies well, they cradle them in their arms and make good eye contact with them while bottle feeding. Younger children are beginning to gain independence as staff provide appropriate finger foods to enable them to learn to feed themselves. Older children are learning about the benefits of a healthy diet through activities and discussions, such as making a 'healthy' and 'unhealthy' tree or making healthy foods during visits from the nutritionist. They are provided with healthy snacks and drinks during the day of fresh fruit, breadsticks, organic vegetable sticks and dips, milk or water. Children relish eating their fruit and it soon all disappears.

Children regularly engage in a varied range of physical activities, both indoors and outdoors, as these are effectively planned into the daily routine; for example, pre-school children enjoy joining in parachute games, balancing on the stepping stones or kicking footballs. During the school holidays older children enjoy more challenging activities, such as going swimming, visiting the rock climbing wall or limbo dancing competitions. All these are enjoyable and contribute to their health and emotional well-being.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for by staff who strive to provide a welcoming, secure and safe environment both indoors and out. Their artwork and photographs of them engaged in their play and learning are attractively displayed. The use of brightly coloured rugs, play mats and floor cushions generate a homely, comfortable feel for very young children. Children have access to a wide variety of good quality toys and activities. Furniture and equipment are safe, clean and well maintained.

Effective safety policies and procedures are in place which include daily room checks and monthly risk assessments. These are recorded and action is taken if any hazards are noted. In

addition, individual risk assessments are completed for specific activities which take place off site. The children are learning how to keep themselves safe through their daily activities or topic work, such as 'People who help us'. They are given explanations why they need to be careful when kicking footballs as they may accidentally hurt themselves or others if they do not play safely.

Staff have a good understanding of child protection issues. They have all completed child protection training and, as a result, demonstrate a good understanding of the procedures to follow and what their responsibilities are within them. This information is available for parents and clearly displayed on the notice board.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy, confident and generally settle well in the nursery. There are developing good relationships with the staff and each other. The staff are caring and sensitive, in particular towards the very young children and those who speak English as an additional language. They provide good opportunities for children to experience sensory play, such as exploring sand, water and spaghetti as well as natural objects made out of metal, fabrics or wood in treasure baskets. Staff spend time playing with children, interacting well and creating opportunities for children to have fun and enjoy the time they spend in the setting. For example, toddlers enjoy playing peek-a-boo with a member of staff or finding animals hidden in a sand tray full of shredded paper. Staff have effectively put the 'Birth to three matters' framework into practice and use it well to plan activities to promote children's all-round development. They use their observations to monitor and record children's progress. As a result, staff know children well, however, planning for the next steps in their learning is not always clearly identified. This also applies to nursery education.

Children who attend the holiday club have access to a good variety of play activities and are actively involved in planning how they spend their free time. They enjoy trips out, such as going swimming or visits to the science museum. They have many opportunities to be creative and imaginative; they make face masks out of mod roc or decorate plant pots for the outside area, choreograph and plan their own fashion show, print T-shirts or paint patterns on glass.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a strong knowledge and understanding of the early learning goals and, as a result, plan a wide range of stimulating and interesting play experiences. However, sometimes focussed activities are not always planned or recorded. This means that these are not monitored effectively to ensure there are no gaps in children's learning. Due to the unique nature of the setting children often come and go at frequent intervals throughout the day which often means that children's play and learning is interrupted. However, staff strive to ensure that all children have opportunities to access the wide range of activities provided. This is achieved through careful observation and monitoring of children's progress to ensure staff know what their abilities are. Children have comprehensive progress files containing written observations, photographs and examples of their work which are linked to the stepping stones.

Children are becoming confident in the nursery environment. They access a wide range of resources which contribute to their all-round development. They are developing good self-help skills as they put their own coats on before going outside to play and attend to their personal

hygiene needs well. Children are keen to explore activities and make independent choices in their play; for example, they show great interest in a sand tray activity and practise making patterns using chopsticks or blowing through straws. Children are beginning to see that print carries meaning as they see the models they have made displayed with their names on. They access the mark making area and use a good variety of writing tools, such as pens, pencils, crayons and stencils and have opportunities to practise writing for a purpose. Most children enjoy listening to stories and enthusiastically join in the repetitive parts both in words and actions, however, sometimes the behaviour of younger children distracts them.

Children have good opportunities to develop concepts in maths through focused activities and the daily routines. They count the number of children present at circle time, match the number shape to the card with the same number of objects and are introduced to the concept of more or less when they help the staff hand out cups at snack time. A member of staff asks, 'Have we got enough now or do we need more?' They are learning about nature and growth as they plant bulbs in the outdoor containers and water them. Children are becoming familiar with technology as they use a good range of resources, such as programmable toys, computers, digital cameras and magnets. They find out and observe about where they live through topics such as 'All about me' and they have built their own model houses. These are included in a display which shows different types of housing throughout the world.

Children are making good progress in physical development. They move with confidence around the playroom to negotiate furniture and have good opportunities to develop coordination and control as they climb on the climbing frame or negotiate the stepping stones. They use a wide range of tools to develop dexterity, such as pastry cutters, rolling pins and paintbrushes. Interesting creative opportunities are offered, such as watching patterns change shape as they make pictures with the twirl and paint machine. They also experiment and explore shape, colour and texture in a variety of media, such as sand, water, play dough and gluing activities.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Partnership with parents is good. Children's transition from home to nursery is successfully supported through an open day and the completion of an 'All about me' booklet. These help the staff gather a wealth of information about children's individual needs. There are good systems in place for effective communication between parents and staff; for example, through informal conversations, daily diaries, termly meetings between the parent and key worker to look at and discuss children's progress files and end of year meetings. Parents have access to a wide range of other information which includes snack menus, policies and procedures. However, ways of involving parents in children's learning are limited.

All children are welcomed and valued as individuals. A high number of children speak English as an additional language and the staff work closely with parents to ensure children's family circumstances, interests and abilities are taken into account. Children are learning about similarities and differences in themselves and others and developing respect for other cultures and traditions due to the rich cultural mix in the setting. Visits to the local supermarket and the local park help children learn about their local community appropriately through the daily routine. Children attending the holiday club have opportunities to venture further, such as visits to museums. The staff successfully promote an inclusive provision for all; for example, the daily routine planner and song cards are displayed in photographs. These enable children, with little language or those with English as an additional language, to see what happens next and to communicate which songs they would like to sing. Staff are trained to meet more specific

medical needs when required. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

Staff manage children's behaviour well. They use appropriate strategies to discourage inappropriate behaviour and equally they praise and acknowledge children's good behaviour. Children receive consistent praise and encouragement for their efforts which promotes their sense of achievement. Each day a child is chosen as a helper in the pre-school room and they help the staff hand out plates and cups at snack time which develops their self-esteem and gives them responsibility.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is good. Children's well-being is maintained because the setting has effective recruitment and induction procedures in place. They are cared for by a skilled staff team, the majority of whom have early years qualifications at National Vocational level 3 or equivalent or are working towards them. Weekly planning meetings, staff meetings and peer observations are used to support staff and to monitor and improve the service. In addition, the proprietors and the company training manager visit regularly to offer support. This actively contributes to children's good health, safety, enjoyment and achievement and ability to take an active part in the setting.

Policies and procedures are of a good standard and used by the staff team to effectively promote the welfare and safety of children. All the legally required documentation by the National Standards is in place and is well organised. Children are grouped with a key worker which enables them to get to know children well and helps children settle and feel secure. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the setting was asked to develop the outdoor area to make it more interesting and stimulating for children. Children have been involved in planting tubs of flowers to make the area more attractive. More challenging outdoor equipment has been purchased, such as stepping stones and a wet day and windy day box have been put together. This has improved children's play and learning opportunities. Animal murals and floor paint have also been purchased, however, the setting is waiting permission from the maintenance department of the college before these can be fitted or play activities and games can be painted onto the ground.

At the last nursery education inspection the setting was asked to develop the planning of short-term focussed activities, provide opportunities for children to develop their imaginative and creative skills and to implement effective assessment procedures. These have all been completed and have improved the quality of the delivery of the nursery education curriculum, children's independence and the monitoring and evaluation of children's progress.

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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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):

- improve sleeping arrangements for young babies
- continue to develop systems to plan the next steps for each child's play, learning and development (also applies to nursery education).

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 planning is consistently in place for daily focussed activities
- improve partnership with parents by continuing to develop systems for involving parents in children's learning.

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