

Holy Cross Pre School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number EY363103

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Inspector Kelly Eyre

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Registered person Holy Cross Pre School

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 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?

Holy Cross Pre School is managed by a voluntary management committee. It originally opened approximately 25 years ago and was re-registered when it located to its current premises in October 2007. It operates from a mobile classroom unit within the grounds of Goldington Green Lower School, Bedford. A maximum of 30 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. It is open each weekday during term-time and sessions are from 09:00 to 11:30 and 12:30 to 15:00, with the option of a lunch club each day. The setting also offers extended care, with sessions from 08:00 to 09:00 and 15:00 to 17:00. All children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 69 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 56 children receive funding for early education. The pre-school serves the local and neighbouring communities. It 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 setting employs eight members of staff, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications.

The setting has achieved the 'Aiming for Quality' accreditation through the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is promoted because staff have a good awareness of this area and there are appropriate daily hygiene practices in place which help prevent the spread of infection. Staff wear appropriate protective clothing when preparing and serving food, and children wash their hands before snack and meal times. Children's understanding of the relevance of these practices is consistently promoted because they are given explanations by staff and have also participated in associated topic work. For example, they are able to explain the importance of washing germs away before eating.

Children's health in an emergency situation is well promoted because the vast majority of staff hold appropriate first aid qualifications. All records and policies are in place to further support children's health. These include clear procedures for the administration of medication and guidance regarding children's illnesses and the exclusion of children who are unwell.

Children's special requirements with regard to health and diet are clearly documented and observed. The setting has achieved a 'Healthy Eating Award' and children's growth and development are well promoted because they are offered healthy and nutritious snacks. Menus are displayed for parents to see and these demonstrate that children are offered a balanced range of food types, including daily portions of fresh fruit and vegetables. Children learn valuable social skills as they sit in small groups to eat their snacks, helping to serve these and to clear away after themselves. Their understanding of the importance of a healthy diet is promoted as they discuss this with staff and have participated in topic work, making their own wall displays.

Children's health and development are promoted because they enjoy a wide variety of physical activities. They develop control of their bodies and improve their physical skills as they participate in structured activities such as parachute games and music and movement sessions. They also enjoy using the outdoor play area, where they balance on scooters and balance beams, dig in the sand, climb, kick footballs and throw and catch bean bags. They are also offered a wide range of opportunities to develop smaller physical skills and movements. For example, they hold pencils correctly, use scissors, manipulate construction pieces and complete puzzles.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming environment where there are colourful displays of their work and photographs of their activities. Their safety is given a high priority and staff carry out daily checks to identify potential hazards, taking appropriate steps to minimise or remove these. This helps to ensure that children are able to move around the setting safely and independently. However, children's safety is affected as they are able to access a trailing electrical lead from the decorative lights.

The consistent daily implementation of policies and procedures ensures that staff are aware of safety practices and are able to promote children's safety. For example, there is a clear procedure

regarding emergency evacuation and this is practised each half term. This area is further supported as there are additional safety procedures which further promote children's safety in a range of situations, for example, clear procedures for the collection of children ensure that they are only handed over to the correct person at the end of the session.

Children are gaining a good understanding about keeping themselves and others safe. They are given clear explanations by staff to reinforce their understanding, for example, children are able to explain why it is important not to run inside. This area is further promoted through the use of role play resources and scenarios. For example, children use toy telephones to pretend to call the emergency services, clearly explaining which service they need.

Children have access to a wide range of toys and play resources. These are clearly labelled and generally accessible in low storage containers so that children are able to make choices about their play and choose additional resources to extend this. Children's welfare is well promoted because staff have attended training and have a thorough understanding of issues relating to safeguarding children. They have up-to-date information regarding current procedures and are able to identify, report and follow up any concerns.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children separate well from their parents and carers and are happy and settled. They feel welcome and valued because staff are genuinely enthusiastic about their work and show children that they enjoy their company, joining in with their play and conversations and taking time to get to know individual children. This creates a positive environment where children receive appropriate support in their chosen activities. They are confident and have high self-esteem because they are offered praise and encouragement from staff, for both their efforts and their achievements. Children are offered a range of familiar toys and play resources that boost their confidence in their play and help them gain the confidence to move on to other new activities and challenges. For example, children play confidently in the home corner and with the construction blocks, but are also happy to explore more complicated activities such as using the Chinese writing implements.

Staff are vigilant and continuously assess the children and their play, ensuring that they are always offered a wide range of appropriate and stimulating activities. This is further supported because staff record children's requests for additional play resources and activities, feeding this information into the activity plans so that children's individual interests are accommodated. Children's individual development is promoted because activity plans are adjusted weekly to reflect their current developmental stages and needs. Children enjoy group stories and discussions and learn valuable social skills as they sit quietly and listen to others. However, their consistent enjoyment of these sessions is not fully promoted as some sessions are not organised to facilitate the involvement of all children.

Children's daily experiences are enhanced and their learning is extended because staff are skilled in joining in with their play, making gentle suggestions and offering support. For example, children playing with rice and dried pulses are encouraged to weigh these and compare the varying amounts in each container. Children's learning is further extended because staff make good use of incidental learning opportunities. For example, children playing with large wooden blocks are encouraged to look at a picture of the Great Wall of China and to build a reconstruction of this; they become engrossed in choosing the right pieces and replicating the direction of the wall.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making good progress in all areas of learning and their overall development is promoted because staff have a thorough knowledge of the Foundation Stage, enabling them to provide appropriate activities and play opportunities. Children make balanced progress in all areas because staff use comprehensive methods for assessing them and for evaluating daily activities. All individual assessments are clearly supported with a wide range of evidence gathered from a variety of sources. All information gained from these assessments is actively used to inform future planning and to adapt the weekly plans to promote children's individual development and to reflect their current learning needs and interests.

Children are consistently offered a wide range of stimulating activities. Staff are skilled and allow them time to explore these, intervening appropriately to offer support and additional guidance. However, children's individual development is not consistently promoted as plans do not show sufficient detail regarding issues such as the grouping of children, adaptations and learning intentions.

The setting offers children the opportunities and support they need in order to develop the attitudes and dispositions that will enable them to achieve in their later learning. Their confidence and self-esteem are reinforced, ensuring that they have the confidence to explore, question and state their views. For example, children confidently choose their activities throughout the sessions and talk with staff about what they are doing. They are gaining a good understanding of right and wrong, thus promoting positive behaviour and creating an appropriate environment in which to learn and develop.

Children interact well with others and are confident in using language to organise and explain their thoughts and activities and to speak in a group. For example, during registration, children take turns to discuss recent events. Children show a keen interest in books and use them for a range of purposes, for example, using reference books to research other countries. They enjoy group stories and join in to anticipate outcomes and endings. However, their enjoyment and understanding of these are not fully promoted as some story times are not organised to facilitate the involvement of all children. Children are beginning to use writing as a means of recording and communication, for example, they write messages and take orders in the 'Chinese Restaurant' role play area and write their names on their completed work.

Children are beginning to use numbers in a meaningful context and understand that numbers represent sets of objects. For example, children playing in the role play area count the number of places at the table and put out the correct number of plates. They are beginning to recognise written numbers, for example, naming these whilst playing hopscotch. Children are gaining a good understanding of mathematical language and concepts and use these in their daily play, for example, comparing and describing the varying volumes of containers whilst playing with rice and dried pulses.

Children have opportunities to observe, explore and question in a wide range of activities that form the foundation of their later learning in subjects such as history, geography and science. They use equipment such as weighing scales and binoculars to experiment and explore, and grow herbs and flowers, noting the conditions needed for these to thrive. They are becoming confident in the use of information and communication technology equipment. They regularly use the computer, competently choosing and completing programmes.

Children enjoy a wide range of physical activities that help them to develop their confidence and skills. They play parachute games, use ride-on toys, walk to local parks and woods and use static climbing equipment. They are developing a positive attitude towards physical exercise and good daily health practices and have covered topic work relating to these areas. Children enjoy numerous opportunities to explore colour, texture, shape and form. Examples of this include the construction of three-dimensional models of the Taj Mahal and Ayers Rock. They also enjoy opportunities to explore music and learn how sounds can be changed. They have regular music sessions where they sing, explore rhythm and move in time to the music.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are developing a positive self-image because they are respected as individuals and their contributions are valued. They are encouraged to express their views and to respect the views of others. For example, when sitting together for the register, children discuss their news and recent activities, taking turns in the conversation and listening to their peers.

Children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities have their individual requirements recognised and consistently met. Staff are skilled and experienced and therefore work consistently and sensitively with children, parents and other professionals. Children are set realistic targets within their individual plans and these are reviewed regularly, helping to ensure the balanced promotion of their development. One-to-one work and good levels of staff support ensure that children are able to participate meaningfully in all activities and the daily routines of the setting.

Children are gaining a good awareness of other cultures and ways of life through activities, discussions and daily access to a range of resources which promotes positive images. Activities are skilfully presented so that they are meaningful to children. For example, children participate in the 'Around the World' topic, where they 'visit' a different country each week, looking at key concepts for each, such as the national flag, language, dress, food and well-known monuments or features. Their awareness of their closer community is enhanced through the use of local facilities such as shops, parks and walks.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Their behaviour is good and they are gaining a clear understanding of right and wrong. They are also gaining a thorough understanding about taking responsibility for their own actions because staff give them clear explanations, enabling them to understand their behaviour and make decisions about this. Staff act as good role models, demonstrating equal care and concern for all. Children mirror this behaviour and show genuine care and concern for each other. For example, a child gently guides another child through the procedure at snack time.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents are given practical information about the setting's policies and practice, ensuring that they are aware of daily procedures and routines. The good use of regular newsletters and notice boards ensures that parents receive relevant information about current activity plans, themes and events. Parents are kept well informed of their children's progress and activities through daily discussions with staff, regular consultation evenings and written reports. Parents' views are actively sought through the use of regular questionnaires.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Overall, children's needs are met. They benefit from the care provided by experienced, well-supervised staff. This is enhanced as staff attend further training, helping them to keep up-to-date with legislation and practice and provide appropriate care for each child. Children's ongoing welfare and safety are promoted because there are robust procedures in place for checking that all staff are suitable to work with children. This is further supported by a clear procedure regarding the recruitment and employment of staff and the deployment of students.

A comprehensive staff induction process, regular supervision, annual appraisals and daily monitoring of the setting ensure that policies and procedures are understood by all and are implemented consistently. All paperwork and records are organised so that they are easily accessible but are stored confidentially, ensuring that children's needs are documented and staff can work appropriately to promote their welfare and safety. This area is further supported by the good deployment of staff, ensuring that all are aware of their responsibilities during each session.

Children's daily activities and play opportunities are enhanced by the good organisation of space within the setting. Designated areas for different types of play ensure that children are able to move safely between these and are able to concentrate on their chosen activities. For example, children are able to read quietly, undisturbed by other children participating in construction activities.

Leadership and management is good. Children make good progress and their overall development and welfare are promoted because the manager has a thorough understanding of her roles and responsibilities. The positive approach to continuous evaluation of all areas of the setting ensures that policies and procedures reflect and support daily practice and are reviewed regularly to ensure that regulations are consistently met. Children benefit from the positive input of the voluntary management committee, who ensure that staff are supported and that all practical matters are dealt with efficiently. Staff are well supported in identifying training needs and attending further training. There is also a positive attitude to obtaining feedback and using this to further improve the quality of care offered. The manager acts as a good role model, demonstrating her genuine enthusiasm and enjoyment of her daily work with children. This creates a positive environment, in which children are valued and are able to play and learn confidently.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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

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):

- improve children's safety by ensuring that they are not able to access trailing electrical leads
- continue to review and develop the procedures for group times to ensure that all children are supported and are able to participate meaningfully (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):

- continue to develop the planning procedures so that these show relevant detail to enable all to work appropriately to promote children's individual development.

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