

Craven Arms Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	224082
Inspection date	21/10/2008
Inspector	Jane Muriel Laraman / Kathryn Mary Harding
Setting address	Craven Arms Community Centre, Shrewsbury Road, Craven Arms, Shropshire, SY7 9PN
Telephone number	07891 106339
Email	
Type of setting	Childcare on non-domestic premises

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration whichever is the later, which require Ofsted or the provider to take action in Annex C.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

Description of the setting

Craven Arms Pre-School is a committee run group that was registered in 2001. It operates from the Community Centre in Craven Arms, a small town in South Shropshire. Children have access to a designated playroom with associated facilities and there is a fully enclosed area available for outdoor play. The building has ease of access, with all facilities used by the children on the ground floor. The group serves the town and surrounding rural communities.

The group opens Monday to Friday during school term times. Sessions are from 09:15 until 11:45 each morning, with afternoon sessions available on Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from 12:15 until 14:45. Children are able to attend for a variety of sessions and a lunch club is offered every day. A maximum of 20 children may attend the setting at any one time. There are currently 31 children attending who are within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). Of these, 13 children receive funding for early years provision. The provision is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register.

The setting supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports children who speak English as an additional language. The committee employs five members of staff. Of these, four hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the local authority and is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

All children are warmly welcomed into the setting by friendly, approachable staff who demonstrate a genuine commitment to inclusion. Children are happy, settled and relaxed, as the staff respect and value them as unique individuals and have a very good understanding of how to meet their diverse needs. The well-established key person system and effective partnerships with parents ensure that activities are tailored to children's preferences, which means that they are interested, motivated and consequently making good progress in their learning and development. The manager and her staff team regularly reflect on their practice to identify strengths and areas for development in their provision. Effective use of their self-evaluation helps them to make continuous improvements with regard to children's welfare, learning and development, which has a positive impact on outcomes for children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- develop the procedures for incorporating information from parents into their children's assessment records
- develop the existing assessment systems and match observations to the expectations of the early learning goals.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The manager and staff work well together as a team to promote children's welfare, learning and development and a child-friendly atmosphere is prevalent throughout the setting. Robust recruitment, vetting and induction procedures are in place to ensure the suitability of staff to work with children. The staff are appropriately qualified, experienced and highly motivated to develop their professional childcare practice through regular training. Staff are well deployed and children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are able to fully participate in activities through the provision of additional adult support when necessary. Good systems are in place to monitor quality and foster improvement. For example, staff performance is individually appraised in supervision sessions and these opportunities identify their training needs. Weekly staff meetings focus on the effectiveness of the key person system, planning, assessment and the self-evaluation processes. Recommendations made at the last inspection have been addressed, demonstrating the setting's capacity for improvement.

A comprehensive range of policies and procedures, required for the safe and efficient management of the setting, are consistently implemented by staff to promote children's health, welfare and safety. Children's individual records are frequently reviewed to ensure their care needs continue to be met and their personal information is stored securely, reflecting the emphasis placed on confidentiality. Written risk assessments are in place for the premises, toys, equipment and activities and these help to ensure children's safety both in and out of the premises and whilst on outings. Children are further safeguarded because the staff have a good understanding of child protection issues, have accessed relevant training and know the procedures to follow should they have concerns.

All relevant information required to meet children's individual needs is gathered prior to them starting at the setting. Effective settling-in procedures promote confidence and emotional security in the children, which enables parents to feel reassured. Parents are provided with good information about the setting through access to policies and procedures, newsletters and display boards. Regular parental questionnaires, a suggestion and comments box allow parents to express their views on the provision. Through being made very welcome, parents and carers develop a good rapport with staff and they regularly exchange verbal information about their children. However, the arrangements for incorporating parental information into children's assessment records are at an early stage and not yet fully effective. The setting has suitable procedures in place to liaise with the local school and other agencies and this helps to promote continuity of care for the children.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children are provided with stimulating indoor and outdoor play opportunities in a well-presented learning environment. The staff have a sound understanding of how to implement the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) requirements and plan exciting, purposeful activities based upon children's interests and ideas. This

encourages their participation and inspires curiosity and as a result, children are making good progress in all six areas of learning and development. A good balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities ensure that children are appropriately challenged and have some independence and control over their learning. This helps to excite and sustain the children's interest, motivates them to become active learners and consequently, they have a positive attitude towards learning. Attractive displays of their work also helps to promote the children's self-esteem and confidence. Good quality toys, equipment and resources are stored accessibly so that the children can exercise independent choice and decision-making throughout the day. Effective use is made of observations to inform activity planning. However, observational assessment of children's developing skills and achievements is not consistently recorded and matched to the expectations of the early learning goals.

Children's language and communication skills are appropriately nurtured during 'circle time' and they eagerly join in with cheerful songs and rhymes. They have opportunities to look at books independently and their imaginations are captivated as they listen to the story, 'We're going on a bear hunt.' Staff extend children's knowledge and understanding of the world when discussing the habitat of bears and the children enjoy creating a 'bear's den'. They recreate the bear's journey through the woodland in an engaging activity using 'compare bears,' leaves, mud and grass in an individual play tray. Properties of natural, manufactured and creative art materials are keenly explored and children learn to use a variety of simple tools during their play activities. Information technology skills are being acquired by the children through using various programmable toys and computers. Spontaneous and everyday activities are used well to help the children develop good counting and problem-solving skills. Mathematical resources are readily available and children use weighing scales when baking, complete number jigsaws and develop their number recognition ability as they see numbers in the environment. The provision of good quality role play equipment encourages children's imaginative play. Resources that promote diversity are used well to extend their understanding of different cultures and beliefs in the wider world. There is a strong emphasis on caring and sharing, with staff using a positive, consistent approach to managing behaviour, taking into account children's understanding and maturity. As they learn to cooperate, show concern and play together harmoniously, due to staff guidance and good levels of care, children are developing social and personal skills to support their future economic well-being.

Good measures are in place to promote children's health and they are adopting suitable hygiene practices. Regular access to indoor and outdoor physical play activities provides them with good opportunities to exercise their bodies. They are developing further awareness of healthy lifestyles through topical discussions about healthy foods and by eating nourishing snacks. Children are actively encouraged to develop an understanding of how to stay safe. For example, they are taught how to use equipment safely, to pick up toys when they have finished playing with them and how to evacuate the building sensibly, should an emergency arise.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

Overall effectiveness

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	2

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	2
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	2
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	2
How well are children safeguarded?	2

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	2
How well are children helped to stay safe?	2
How well are children helped to be healthy?	2
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	2
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	2
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	2

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

Annex C: complaint/s made to Ofsted

This section of the report includes details of any complaint/s made to Ofsted when:

- we took action for the provider to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- we asked the provider to take action in order to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- the provider had already taken any necessary action to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register.

We will not report on any complaint where the provider met the requirements of the Early Years Register or did not require any action by Ofsted or the registered provider.

Detail of the complaint/s

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

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.