

Crocus Early Years Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector

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Type of setting

Childcare on non-domestic premises

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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 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).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

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Description of the setting

The Crocus Early Years Centre was opened in 2002. It operates from purpose-built single storey premises situated in the grounds of the County High School in Saffron Walden. There are three playrooms for the different ages of children whom attend. There is a fully enclosed outside play area consisting of a soft play area, grass and tarmac. The premises is fully accessible.

The Centre is registered to care for a maximum of 85 children from three months to under five years at any one time. There are currently 117 children attending who are within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) age group. This provider is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The centre supports a small number of children who have special needs and who speak English as an additional language.

The centre opens five days a week all year round. Sessions are from 8.00am until 6.00pm. They offer a variety of session form 8.00am to 1.00pm and afternoons from 1.00pm to 6.00pm. A special 7.00am early bird session is available if required.

The Centre employs 22 staff who work directly with the children. Of these the majority hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from qualified teachers within the staff team and also from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP).

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children's welfare, learning and development are effectively promoted in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) as the staff have an excellent understanding of their individual needs. All children are fully supported through the close working relationships between staff, parents, and carers. The centre has clear systems in place to exchange information with parents on their learning and development to benefit children. The provision has fully established, systems in place to gain feedback from parents and all staff are included in evaluating practice to ensure the outcomes for children remain positive.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- review the systems for observing children's learning and development to ensure staff are able to make the most effective use of these to support children.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's welfare is effectively promoted because staff have a good knowledge and understanding of the centres policies and procedures with regard to safeguarding children. There is a clear written policy to follow which includes procedures in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff with local contact details included. There are clear, effective procedures for the emergency evacuation in place which is practised on a regular basis ensuring children's safety is a high priority. A daily checklist is completed before children arrive to ensure that there are no hazards accessible inside or outside. Children's safety is promoted well by the documentation and policies regarding the daily checks of equipment and annual risk assessments. All resources and equipment are kept clean to ensure children's health and safety is maintained.

The centre has a comprehensive range of policies and procedures in place which are shared with parents and regularly updated in line with changes to practice and legislation. All policies are available within the centre and they are freely accessible to parents. Parents are invited to come in on a regular basis to discuss their child's learning and development with their child's key person. This ensures that they are kept fully informed of their child's progress. Parents are kept fully informed on all topics, activities and events within the setting that their children participate in through regular newsletters, displays and the notice boards.

Children benefit from staff who are experienced, appropriately qualified and who have a good understanding of the needs of children. This ensures that each child's individual needs are supported by staff, ensuring they make good progress in their learning. Staff are fully supported in their development and further training to enhance their knowledge and to promote outcomes for children. The centre involves all staff in the evaluation process to ensure that children are fully supported and make excellent progress in their learning and development. Feedback from parents and children is sought through annual questionnaires. This ensures that their views are also sought for further development and improvements. As a result this feedback is used to enhance resources and the children's experiences within the centre. This shows the centres commitment to monitoring, maintaining and improving their good practice.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

Children enjoy a variety of foods at snack and meal times to promote their health. This enables them to experience different tastes and learn about what foods keep them healthy. Children are encouraged to serve themselves and prepare their own sandwiches at tea time. This promotes their self care skills and their independence. Children are able to help themselves to drinks throughout the day to ensure they are not thirsty. Staff have a good understanding of the centres procedures around health to support children's individual needs and their well-being. Staff are supported in maintaining current first aid certificates to ensure children's health

and welfare is effectively maintained. Daily access to large play resources in the outside play areas helps to ensure that children's physical development is well supported.

Staff undertake a minimum of one observation on each child every week, to record their progress and interests. This is then linked to the six areas of learning and includes the children's next step, proposed resources and activities to support their learning. However these good systems are not currently being used to their full potential as staff are finding them time-consuming to complete. Children have a positive attitude to learning, they are happy, settled and purposefully engaged. All staff have a good knowledge of the EYFS and all work together to plan a range of activities, as a result children are making good progress. Staff offer appropriate support when needed which enhances children's learning and development. Staff are excellent role models for children, they encourage good manners, give clear explanations on expected codes of behaviour to help develop children's understanding of how to behave well. Children are developing their understanding of the wider world through a range of topics, themes and activities. Staff ask parents for key words in their home language to support and enable children with English as a second language to participate fully. Children enjoy looking at books and staff read them stories to develop their interest in literacy.

Staff work well as a team and provide a calm, relaxed atmosphere to benefit children. Staff have regular discussions on children's progress and include their interests when planning for their learning. There is a balance of adult and child-led activities which enables children to learn at their own pace. Children are provided with a variety of resources for mark making and to develop their early writing skills. For example, they colour, draw and paint in their play. There is good interaction and questioning by staff which helps to promote children's language and thinking skills. Children enjoy joining in with singing familiar songs and action rhymes from memory. They experiment with sounds through playing a variety of musical instruments. Children have access to a range of craft materials and media. For example, they use a range of collage materials to create tigers for the topic on Chinese New Year, the year of the Tiger. They use glue and glitter to represent snow and frost as they explore the outside area in the winter weather.

Babies are provided with space to crawl around, they are able to pull themselves up on furniture to help them develop their balance and strength ready for walking. Staff follow their home routines for sleeping and eating to ensure that their individual needs can be met well. All children are given cuddles and reassurance to help them to feel secure and settled when away from their parents. All children are taken on regular outings within the school grounds to develop their understanding on the environment. They enjoy looking at the different animals in the farm which the school maintains and they collect sticks and leaves on their walks. This promotes their understanding of the natural environment, to respect and care for living things. They have free access to role play resources, where they can act out scenarios and develop their friendships. Children are able to access the outside when ever they wish. This helps to meet their own interests and develops their knowledge on maintaining healthy through regular exercise.

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

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met