

Crowle Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique reference number | 205215 |
| Inspection date | 02/02/2010 |
| Inspector | Donna Stevens |

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| Setting address | Crowle Parish Hall, Crowle, Worcester, Worcestershire, WR7 4AZ |
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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

Crowle Pre-School is a committee run group that registered in 1967. It operates from the main hall, the committee room and associated facilities at Crowle Parish Hall. The setting serves the local area and has strong links with local schools. The pre-school is accessible to all children and there is a fully enclosed area available for outdoor play.

The group opens on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday from 09:00 until 15:45 and on Wednesday and Friday from 09:00 until 12:00, during school term times. Children are able to attend for a variety of sessions.

A maximum of 36 children may attend the setting at any one time. There are currently 50 children attending who are within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The setting may offer care to children aged over five years. The provision is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. The setting provides funded early education for three and four-year-olds. It supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The setting employs 15 members of child care staff. Of these 10 hold appropriate early years qualifications. The manager has achieved her Early Years Professional Status. The setting receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children benefit from an enthusiastic committee, management and staff team who work well together to create a stimulating environment where children are secure and happy. They have effective systems in place to monitor their practice and assess the impact of improvements on the children. A good range of activities provide interesting and creative opportunities for the children and are designed to support and include children's interests and individual needs. The setting has excellent partnerships with parents, carers and, other early years settings and professionals that may be involved in the children's care. This ensures continuity in children's care and learning.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- ensure staff provide appropriate support to enable children to maintain attention, concentrate and reinforce the groups code of behaviour, particularly at circle and story times
- develop further children's independence at snack times.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Arrangements for safeguarding children are robust, regularly reviewed, carefully managed and understood by those who work with the children. Appropriate, up to date procedures are in place for identifying children at risk from harm and liaising with other agencies. Clear vetting procedures ensure that all staff, committee members and parents helping in the pre-school are suitable to do so. Children are cared for in a safe environment where effective risk assessments are used to identify and address risks to children.

The group benefits from a strong committee that supports management in identifying training and development needs for staff through an effective appraisal system. In-house training days are organised each term and staff are encouraged to attend other training and workshops. As well as the manager achieving her Early Years Professional Status, two staff members are completing Early Years Degrees. On the whole, staff work well together as a team and provide children with a high level of support. However, there are some occasions, for example, story and circle times when some staff do not fully engage all the children or use the groups positive behaviour management systems to full effect. Regular staff and management meetings allow good practice to be shared, policies and procedures to be updated and discussion time for planning activities that incorporate each child's individual needs. The group has completed the Ofsted Self-evaluation and the Pre-school Learning Alliance Quality Assurance Scheme. These processes are used as an opportunity to identify areas for improvement and change. For example, while reviewing the use of the climbing frame they identified that new members of staff and children may not be clear on the safety rules. Information with regards to safety for specific equipment is now included in the induction pack for new staff. Pictures showing the safety rules are displayed on the climbing frame to enhance children's understanding of safety. As part of the evaluation process they have used parent questionnaires to obtain valuable feedback.

Staff and management have established excellent relationships with parents and carers. Parents have an active role in the day-to-day running of the setting, some as members of the thriving committee and others as rota parents. Regular support from rota parents provides valuable additional support for children and releases staff from domestic duties such as preparing snacks. Parents are kept well informed about their children's development and learning through termly written reports and meetings with their child's key person during the spring term. Staff are available at the beginning and end of each session to discuss any immediate issues and to share information about children's welfare and activities that day. Strong links have been established with other providers that may care for the children and the pre-school actively encourages the involvement of other professionals. This is particularly the case for children with disabilities and/or learning difficulties. These outstanding partnerships allow staff to get to know children and their families extremely well and ensure that all children have their individual needs met.

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

Children make good progress towards the early learning goals and in all areas of their development because the staff and management have a clear understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children are cared for in the main hall which is laid out to provide areas for child-initiated play and structured activities such as painting and arts and crafts. 'Plus' sessions are offered to children in the year before they go to school and are based in the committee room. These sessions are designed to prepare children for school and include a more structured routine with specific times for activities such as circle time and P.E. sessions. Children are challenged and encouraged to think for themselves, share ideas and solve problems. They enjoyed a 'spot the difference' activity where a pair of photographs had subtle differences and through skilled questioning by a member of staff they soon understood the concept and were delighted when they found the differences. At circle time they proudly showed articles they had brought from sheds and garages for the interest table. They were encouraged to explain the use of objects such as tape measures, paintbrushes and garden tools and did so articulately. Staff questioned them and praised their knowledge. These opportunities help develop children's skills of investigating, problem solving and reasoning.

Children are happy in the setting and loving, caring relationships with both the staff and their peers are evident. Staff provide children with plenty of support in their play and the group is particularly sensitive to children with additional needs. The special educational needs coordinator (SENCO) is passionate about her role and has been given additional working hours by the committee and management to enable her to work 1:1 with them, supporting key tasks in areas of their development. The setting has a policy of early identification of any additional needs so that children requiring extra support can be identified, discussions can take place with parents and early intervention can be initiated.

A good range of interesting and enjoyable activities help to develop children's skills for the future. They become independent as they use the toilet and take responsibility for their personal needs. The introduction of a café style snack time has allowed children to self-register and pour their own drinks. However, staff hand out snacks missing an opportunity for them to become fully independent. Children in the 'plus' sessions take on responsibilities such as completing the calendar or running the warm up session for P.E. boosting their confidence and self-esteem. Children join in enthusiastically with familiar activities such as playing with dough - they are creative as they use it with plastic eyes, legs and wings to make bugs and manipulate scissors and knives well to cut and shape it. A writing area provides open storage where children can use a selection of materials to draw, cut out and practice emergent writing skills. The preschool has actively embraced the ethos of child-led learning and meeting individual needs. This is done by observing children at play, assessing their development and discussing children's next steps at staff meetings. Activities can then be planned to target particular children and support their next steps in learning.

Children are very secure and confident. They understand that simple rules are in

place to keep themselves and others safe, for example a limited number of children on the climbing frame or steering bikes carefully in the garden. New children are well supported in the setting and staff are sensitive to the needs for comforters or quiet time with a member of staff. Children are generally provided with clear and consistent boundaries. Distraction techniques are used effectively, for example, when a group of children began to disagree about how to play with some animals, staff suggested that they work together to make a zoo and the situation was quickly diffused. Strategies to support challenging behaviour encourage positive reinforcement for all the children rather than singling some out. Children in the 'plus' sessions were delighted when they received a shiny paper leaf to add to the friendship tree for being kind and sharing.

Children have excellent opportunities to adopt healthy lifestyles. They are able to free flow between the outdoor and indoor play areas and are all encouraged to have some fresh air at each session. The group has an allotment adjacent to the hall where the children have planted, tended and harvested vegetables. They are very proud of their crops and have won awards for them at local shows. They have used the produce to make vegetable soup and have enjoyed trying new foods. Healthy eating is encouraged as staff talk to the children about the contents of their lunchboxes and children know to eat healthy food first. They know to wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet or playing outside. They use paper tissues to wipe their noses and put them in the bin and know to cover their face if they cough or sneeze. During P.E. sessions children learn the importance of warming up to stretch muscles before exercise and to rest afterwards.

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

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| 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

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| 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 | 1 |
| The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers | 1 |

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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| The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 2 |
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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| 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 | 1 |
| 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

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