

Croyland Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector

Jill Nugent

Setting address

Croyland Youth Centre, 1 Croyland Road, London, N9 7BA

Telephone number

0208 373 1372

Email

Type of setting

Childcare on non-domestic premises

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Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

T: 08456 404040
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

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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).

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Description of the setting

Croyland Pre-School registered in 2005. It operates from a youth centre in Edmonton in the London Borough of Enfield. Access to the centre is at ground level with entrances at the front and back of the building. Children have the use of a large hall and an outdoor play area. The pre-school is open every weekday during term-time, from 9.00 am until 12.00 pm, on Monday and Friday, and from 9.00 am until 3.00 pm on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday.

The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 26 children in the early years age group may attend the setting at any one time. Currently, there are 68 children on roll. The pre-school supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those who have English as an additional language. A total of seven staff work with the children. All members of staff, including the manager, are suitably qualified.

On the day of inspection, during the morning session, the provider was caring for more children than their conditions of registration allow. This is an offence unless the provider gives a reasonable excuse. On this occasion, the provider did so and Ofsted does not intend to take further action.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

The pre-school offers a welcoming setting where children enjoy a variety of play activities. Staff promote children's welfare effectively and are attentive to their individual needs. Children are making sound progress towards the early learning goals. There is a good working partnership with parents and they are well informed about the pre-school's provision. Staff are committed to continually developing their practice, although systems and procedures that should enable staff to further improve the outcomes for children are lacking in effectiveness.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- implement an effective system of self-evaluation in order to encourage reflective practice amongst staff and identify areas for further improvement
- organise the provision for children's learning and development more effectively to ensure a balance of adult-led and freely-chosen activities
- develop the system of observational assessment to ensure that all children's individual needs are planned for and met effectively
- ensure that children learn to behave in ways that are safe for themselves and others.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

All the required documentation is in place and the relevant paperwork is well maintained. There are good procedures in place to ensure that all children are safeguarded while at pre-school. The play environment has been risk assessed and various safety measures put in place to keep children safe. All staff are vetted and know what to do if they have any concerns about child protection. They take care that children enter and leave the building safely at the beginning and end of sessions. Any previous injuries to children, and accidents whilst on the premises, are recorded appropriately.

Staff are regularly appraised and given many opportunities to increase their knowledge and understanding of childcare through further training. However, the manager has not yet implemented a system of self-evaluation to enable staff to reflect on their practice and highlight areas requiring improvement. Although they have sought advice from the local authority about future developments, this has, at times, been conflicting and consequently, the manager has not taken the lead in implementing systems and procedures to support and promote children's learning and development.

A variety of resources is made easily accessible to children indoors and they particularly enjoy the provision of outdoor play throughout the day. Staff make some changes in resourcing during the afternoon, so that children staying for the whole day are able to choose alternative activities. Lunch times are well organised allowing children to eat their lunch in a quiet area during the transition time between sessions. Staff supervise children closely and are always on hand if children have a request. However, the lack of a clearly defined daily provision of learning experiences for children results in staff not always maximising opportunities to interact with children, and so challenge and extend them in their learning.

Staff encourage children to feel valued and included in the setting. They exchange information with parents at registration so that they can more easily meet children's individual care needs. Every child has a home/school link book so that staff are kept up to date with events at home. Parents are invited to talk with staff at any time regarding their children's progress and receive a written report when children leave pre-school. Parents express their satisfaction with the care offered to their children. Staff make an effort to involve parents in new initiatives, for example, a project to encourage children to talk and develop better communication skills.

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

Children play happily, showing interest in the activities on offer. For example, they build models using construction equipment, sort and arrange toy animals and explore simple technological toys. They especially enjoy selecting books to look at

and listening to stories. They have fun in organised music and singing sessions. They like to play imaginatively with small world settings, and have opportunities to explore mark-making or join in art and craft activities. When engaging with children in their play, staff enhance children's enjoyment by talking with them and suggesting ideas. They make good use of topics, such as Autumn or Divali to offer interesting focus activities that stimulate children's learning and promote the acquisition of new skills. However, there is a greater emphasis on free play overall leading to an imbalance of adult-led and free-choice activities available to children. Consequently, children are not sufficiently stimulated throughout the session and at times show signs of boredom.

Staff make observations on children's learning, recording these in detail and discussing children's next steps of learning when planning the weekly provision. However, observations are not carried out consistently, or effectively, so that staff can plan and organise activities that meet individual children's developmental needs. As a result, children are not always focused, or challenged, in different learning situations. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported as staff work closely with other professionals to set relevant targets for these children. Staff are also making good use of the 'talk' project to increase children's language and literacy skills, for instance through phonics, rhymes and songs. By rotating resources over time, they offer children opportunities to explore different objects and materials, for example, magnets, ice and sand. Children benefit from long periods of outdoor play, developing their control and coordination as they ride trikes or play with hoops.

Children feel safe in the setting and move freely around the hall and outdoor play area, confidently approaching staff with personal requests. Staff carry out daily safety checks to ensure that the play areas remain safe for children. They remind children of the safety rules when necessary, although these are not explained clearly to all children so that they learn to behave in ways that are safe. As a result, children do not always respond positively to staff, putting themselves and others at risk of an accident. Children enjoy snack times, with a wide choice of healthy foods including fresh fruit and vegetables. They benefit from the social aspect of sitting together with a member of staff while eating. Drinking water is made available during the sessions so that children avoid becoming dehydrated. At group times, children are generally attentive and like to participate, for example, holding up fingers as they sing. They very much enjoy the opportunities for fresh air and exercise which help to keep them fit.

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?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	3
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	3
The effectiveness of partnerships	3
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
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	3
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	3

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