

Cradley Play Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Patricia Webb

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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*.

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Description of the setting

Cradley Play Nursery opened under private ownership in 1972. It operates from purpose-built single storey premises in Halesowen. There are two main care bases with a fully enclosed outside play area. The nursery is open each weekday from 7.45am to 6.00pm for 51 weeks of the year.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and a maximum of 36 children may attend at any one time. There are currently 70 children on roll aged from four months to under five years, some in part-time places. The setting supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

There are 16 members of staff employed, holding appropriate early years qualifications and an number of staff are working towards further graduate qualifications. The owner/manager has recently achieved Early Years Professional Status (EYPS). The setting receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Cradley Play Nursery offers exceptional opportunities for children to thrive and blossom in an exciting and highly stimulating environment. The uniqueness of each child is acknowledged by the enthusiastic owner and her staff team who are wholly committed to enabling every child to develop to their full potential mindful of the varying levels of individual ability and attainment. The welcoming environment is fully inclusive, reflecting the children's backgrounds, communities and family lifestyles. The effective practice is driven by the owner who demonstrates a complete commitment to continuous improvement, a concept that inspires the staff in constantly evaluating the impact of their practice on enhancing outcomes for children and their families.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- building on staff's knowledge and skills in further developing the outdoor environment to extend the risk-rich and challenging opportunities available for children in the natural world

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Dynamic and passionate leadership and management is the driving force behind this highly effective provision. The owner has gathered an inspired team of staff whose individual skills and interests are harnessed and utilised to deliver a rich and

stimulating programme of activities and experiences. As a result, there is a wholly collaborative approach to evaluating the quality of the provision and striving for further improvement. This is demonstrated in the self-evaluation that has been submitted, using rigorous and extensive processes for monitoring, analysis and applying a constructive self-challenging approach to identifying areas of success in the practice, reflecting on how this can be improved even more. One area staff are keen to develop is the more organic and natural use of the outdoor play area through practices such as the Forest Schools Initiative, thereby providing children with even more risk-rich and challenging experiences.

The welfare, safety and well-being of the children is at the heart of the provision's practice. The comprehensive and effective safeguarding procedures are stringently implemented by staff who know their roles and responsibilities regarding child protection issues. Staff recruitment procedures are robust and consistently applied. The owner employs only qualified staff and actively encourages them to access further training for their professional development, enhancing the care and education opportunities for the children. Staff undergo full vetting procedures to ensure they are cleared to work with children. Detailed risk assessments are in place and updated as necessary, reinforced by the well-honed health and safety practices and routines carried out diligently by the staff. Partnerships with other agencies and professionals are exceptionally well-developed and openly evident. Staff link with the area special needs co-ordinator, teachers at schools children will be moving on to and the local authority's early years team to promote a cohesive and consistent approach to meeting children's individual needs.

The deployment of staff and resources is a key strength in the setting. Staff training is reflected in their practice as, for example, they share linguistic skills, implement theories gained during degree studies and are intuitive in assessing when to interject in children's activities to extend learning or stand back and allow children to take their learning off in their own directions. Staff consider the layout of the areas indoors and outside and there is exceptional thought given to offering a range of natural and commercial resources as well as recycled or 'found' equipment such as car tyres, a rowing dinghy and the inside strings and frame from a discarded piano. Exceptional use is made of the outdoor area which is specifically planned and designed to be utilised as an additional learning base regardless of weather. Using a range of strategies, staff ensure that the provision is as inclusive as possible. Non-verbal communication is utilised throughout the nursery from baby-signing to the use of pictures to explain the routines and activities on offer. This enables all children to participate and enjoy their time in the nursery.

The partnerships with parents and carers are exemplary and mutually respectful. Parents speak very highly and with great appreciation for the progress their children make and the love and nurturing they receive from the key workers. They have access to a wealth of information about the organisation, through newsletters, open evenings displays and when browsing through their children's developmental records as and when they wish. They become actively involved in their children's development and learning as staff work closely to promote developmental milestones and reassure parents that certain phases of behaviour are usual stages of development that they will manage together. Parents

themselves feel wholly supported in this particularly for aspects such as toileting, self-feeding and times when younger children's frustrations come to the fore in their social interaction with others.

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

'Why are bubbles round?' The inquisitiveness of a young child is seized upon by the intuitive staff as together, the children and adults research such 'problems'. Having used the usual round blower, additional resources are made forming a square, rectangle and a triangle -shaped blower as children use them to explore and test out possible theories. Such practice evolves as result of the excellent knowledge that staff have of the Early Years Foundation Stage and an innate understanding of how children learn effectively. There is a system in place that is highly effective in this setting for observing and assessing each child and using this information to inform future individualised planning. The key worker system supports each child in making significant progress that is tailored to their specific abilities and builds upon what children already know and can do when they enter each care base helping to plot their next steps.

Every opportunity is maximised to promote children's learning and development of knowledge and skills. Babies beam with delight as they watch the bubbles being blown and marvel with wide-eyed wonderment as they burst when they get near to the ceiling fans. A baby shows developing speech, echoing 'round and round' as the practitioner points out the movement of the fan. Close and caring relationships are evident for babies and young toddlers, exploring their environment and choosing to settle for sleep and naps at their own pace. They can relax in the monochrome rest area or clamber into the wicker low level cot as they wish, developing independence from an early age. Older children instigate their own activity as staff prepare the environment exceptionally well. For example, all areas of learning are covered when a group of children become engrossed in caring for the plants and crops they have sown and tendered over the past months. They access the water to fill their cans and show developing sense of responsibility in carrying out their tasks. Much delight is shared when a child discovers the ripening strawberry on the plant and reminds others to be careful.

They develop an innate sense of problem solving through their play as a group of children mark up the stepping logs numerically and work out where one of them went wrong with the chalk during the task. They can also learn about pattern shapes in their numeracy as they sort and arrange sparkly and glittery items in plastic cartons that are provided to show children how numbers can be identified through pattern rather than the number such as the arrangements of the dots on dice. Genuine creativity is fostered as children use the household items dangling from the pergolas and the piano strings to make their own music. They organise and act out their own plays, even if a budding diva does attempt to take the major roles in 'Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs at Church'. Once again, intuitive staff use this situation to encourage an awareness of the needs of others and explain that each child has a contribution to make. This empathy is further developed as older children assist younger children as they begin the transition from the baby

unit to the preschool base. They hold their hands and ensure that they manage the steps to outside with care and become aware of the different routines. Such involvement engenders a strong sense of responsibility as they prepare for becoming citizens of the future.

Children feel safe and gain an understanding of keeping themselves safe as they are encouraged to develop risk-taking and assessment for themselves. For instance they recently contributed to the planning of the sorting area where small shiny and attractive items are used. Older children realised that some of these items might be a hazard for the younger children who access the main room and so they designed their own poster to remind them that children accessing this area must be three years old. They take this seriously as they point out to staff when a younger child approaches. Children's behaviour is exceptional as they take the lead from the extremely positive role models they have in the staff. Children in each base enjoy the social interaction provided at meal times. Babies delight in the close cuddles during their bottle feeds with their key worker and are well-supported when solids are introduced in consultation with parents and carers. Meals are freshly cooked on site and children greet the cook warmly as she presents the healthy and nutritious options taking note of any specific dietary requirements or preferences to ensure children's on-going good health. Children's overall health is promoted through well practised routines that become good habits. Their medical needs and minor accidents are managed swiftly and calmly by staff who hold first aid qualifications and maintain full records to keep parents fully informed.

Children in this nursery cannot fail to make significant progress in their development and learning. The owner's passion is infectious and results in a team of staff that not only enables each child to gain skills and knowledge, but to also develop a strong disposition to want to continue learning as they explore, investigate and discover the wonders their world has to offer.

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?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
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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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	1

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