



The Croft Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY304910
Inspection date	05 December 2005
Inspector	Sally Wride
Setting Address	The Croft Preparatory School, Alveston Hill, Loxley Road, Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire, CV37 7RL
Telephone number	01789 293 795
E-mail	
Registered person	The Croft Preparatory School Ltd (2191072)
Type of inspection	Childcare
Type of care	Full day care

ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

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

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The Croft Nursery opened in 1981. It is part of The Croft Preparatory School, an independent day school in a rural setting close to Stratford-upon-Avon. The nursery is part of the early years care and education offered at the school and is based in a single story building with access to an enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 29 children from 2 to 3 years old on roll. This includes 8 funded children. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting has procedures to support children with special needs, and who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens five days a week during school term times. Children are able to attend all day from 08:45 until 15:30 or leave before lunch at 11:55 or after lunch at 13:30.

There are two full-time and two part-time members of staff work with the children. All staff have early years qualifications to NVQ level 2 or 3. The setting receives support from a teacher/mentor from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are developing an awareness of good hygiene practice and healthy living. They learn the importance of regular hand washing at appropriate times, such as after using the toilet, playing outside and before meals and snacks. The resources provided to children for hand washing and drying do not prevent the spread of infection.

There are good arrangements and policies in place to care for children who are ill. Staff have access to relevant information regarding infection control and are supported by a school matron who is available on site to offer support and guidance as required. If children become ill whilst at the setting, staff ensure they are made comfortable and cared for sensitively while waiting to be collected by parents. Staff are trained in administering first aid and have appropriate permissions and records in place regarding the administration of medication to children. Records are kept of all accidents in the setting and are effectively shared with parents. Tissues and wipes are readily available for the children, who learn to cover their mouths when sneezing or coughing to avoid spreading germs.

Children make good progress in their physical development because they are provided with plenty of opportunities for physical play, both indoors and outdoors. This helps children develop the confidence to enjoy moving with control and using their bodies in various ways. They climb, roll, jump and pedal ride-on toys. The children enjoy regular walks around the grounds of the school, hunting for rabbits and benefiting from being out in the fresh air. Children are well supported by staff and are delighted with the warm praise and encouragement that they receive when they achieve a new physical skill. They benefit from enthusiastic staff involvement and interaction during their physical play.

Children's health is promoted by a wholesome, nutritious and balanced diet. Meals are freshly prepared on site using fresh produce and are attractively presented to the children. Menus are produced to give parents information about meal choices and alternative options are available to cater for children's individual likes and dislikes. Children are served with drinks at snack and meal times. However, fresh drinking water is not readily available, which means that children may be thirsty in-between drinks. Effective procedures are in place to ensure that staff throughout the school are aware of children's individual dietary needs, which ensures that they are met. Mealtimes are relaxed, social occasions where children and staff sit together around

the table to enjoy their food and each other's company. Children are encouraged to explore new tastes and textures and enjoy eating fresh fruit at snack time.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming and attractive open-plan play environment. Space is organised and used effectively to enable children to play safely and move freely between activities. The environment is bright and cheerful with many pieces of children's art work displayed on the walls. The children confidently move between the different areas of the classroom to access activities of their choosing. They are interested and challenged by the resources that are available to them. Children spend time exploring their playthings and concentrate on their chosen activity. There is a wide range of toys that are in good condition and are suitable for children of all ages and stages of development. Current storage arrangements mean that staff select resources for the children, but provide a wide range to allow children to make self-selections from what is presented to them. Activities and games are inviting to children, who are absorbed in their play.

Staff take positive steps to ensure that children are safe within their indoor and outdoor environment. Written risk assessments have been produced and are continuously reviewed and updated. Visual safety checks throughout the day effectively minimise risks to children. There is a designated health and safety officer on site, who staff report any identified hazards to. Children are aware of safety issues because staff talk to them about how to play safely. They benefit from regular fire drill practice, learn about road safety awareness and also the hazards of water when walking through the school grounds and visiting the pond. Children are protected from harm and neglect because all staff understand their role in child protection and are able to put the appropriate procedures into practice when necessary. Children are cared for by staff who are vetted appropriately and good policies and effective procedures ensure that unvetted persons are supervised appropriately.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy, settled and enjoy coming to the nursery. They are confident and self-assured to work and play independently or in groups. Children are interested and consistently involved in a wide range of imaginative and worthwhile play opportunities both inside and outside, which promote their emotional, physical, social and intellectual development. There is a good range of resources within the play areas covering all areas of development. Activities provided are challenging and stimulating. Children are interested and absorbed in their play. Staff consistently and positively interact with the children to encourage their interest, involvement and learning.

Children are forming positive relationships with each other. They have excellent relationships with the staff who help them to develop their confidence through

sensitive and tactile interactions and regular encouragement. Children understand their own needs and the needs of others and behave very well. They are willing to take turns and share with little or no prompting. Their care is promoted well by efficient organisation which is further enhanced by the effective implementation of the 'Birth to three matters' framework. Staff know the likely learning outcomes from different activities and make good use of planned and spontaneous assessment opportunities to record children's progress and inform future planning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are made welcome and are valued and respected as individuals. Their needs are well met and their individual likes and dislikes are well catered for. The children have the opportunity to learn about the needs of others and are encouraged to acknowledge differences in an open and honest environment. Children have access to a range of resources that promote positive images of diversity. However, opportunities to develop their awareness of other cultures and religions through activities is more limited and means that children do not develop a sense of the diverse world in which they live. There are clear procedures in place to ensure that children with special or additional needs are included at the nursery and have their needs well met. Staff liaise closely with parent's and are aware of the support available from outside agencies and health professionals.

The setting's environment is a positive one. There is a written behaviour policy which is shared with parent's in order to secure a shared and understood approach. Children's behaviour is excellent as they respond positively to the clear and consistent expectations and calm manner of all the staff. They learn to share and to take turns and to consider the effect of their behaviour on other children in the nursery. Children benefit from warm praise and encouragement from the staff. Good relationships have been formed between the children and their peers and also the staff. Children are tactile and loving and enjoy each others company.

Close relationships with parents and effective verbal and written systems for gathering and sharing information about children's needs, contribute positively to these being met. Parent's are kept well informed about what their children do and are warmly welcomed into the setting. Trusting partnerships have been established with parent's to help promote children's well-being, development and progress. Parent's knowledge of their child's needs and interests is actively sought prior to a placement commencing and information continues to be shared throughout the child's time at the nursery. Parent's are provided with an attractively presented prospectus and benefit from a formal written report on the child's care and development each year. Both the children and their parent's benefit from a carer and toddler group that runs two afternoons each week. These sessions present the opportunity for parent's and the children to develop relationships with the staff and become familiar with their surroundings.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The nursery offers a warm and welcoming childcare experience where children are happy and settled. Their care is further enhanced by the good quality organisation, leadership and management of the nursery. The premises are well organised, safe, secure and suitable for their purpose. Indoor and outdoor space is laid out to maximise play opportunities for children. The space available is effectively divided to allow children opportunities to be active, enjoy art and craft activities and quiet play. Enthusiastic and motivated staff work very well together as a team and understand their roles and responsibilities. They are highly committed to the aims of the nursery to care for children and help them make progress. There are clear recruitment and induction procedures in place. Children's development is further enhanced through the ongoing commitment of staff to continue to develop their knowledge through training. All staff are committed to ensuring that the needs of all children are addressed and that all children feel included within the setting.

Well organised records, policies and procedures, which contain pertinent information, are shared with parent's and are reviewed regularly to ensure that the information remains up-to-date and accurate. This contributes to the continuing welfare and safety of the children attending the setting. Staff are proactive in regularly refreshing their knowledge of the settings policies and procedures and are well supported by management of the school. Overall the provision meets the needs of the children who attend.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since 1 April 2004.

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.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure drinks are available for children at all times
- improve procedures to prevent cross infection with regard to hand washing and drying
- develop activities that promote children's understanding of our diverse society.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk