



Crank Nursery Ltd

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	315416
Inspection date	16 May 2006
Inspector	Chris Scully
Setting Address	Crank Hill, Crank, St Helens, Merseyside, WA11 7SD
Telephone number	01744 886166
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Registered person	Crank Nursery Ltd
Type of inspection	Integrated
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 AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Crank Nursery Ltd opened in 1990. The nursery is a registered charity managed by a board of trustees. The nursery operates from a converted school in Crank, a semi-rural area of St Helens. A maximum of 84 children may attend at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 08.00 till 18.00 all year round. All children share access to the enclosed outdoor play areas and community field.

There are currently 99 children from birth to five years on roll. Of these, 29 children

receive funding for nursery education. Children come from a wide catchment area. The nursery supports children with specific needs and for whom English is an additional language.

The nursery employs 25 staff. Of these, 23 staff including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications. There is one member staff working towards a qualification. The setting receives support from the local authority. .

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for within a healthy environment. Staff use effective routines and procedures to ensure all areas used by the children are clean and appropriate for use. This ensures children are kept healthy at all times. Children are beginning to understand the need for good hygiene practices. They are encouraged to wash their hands before meals, after going to the toilet and after messy activities. Older children confidently see to their own personal needs.

A detailed sick children policy and procedure ensures parents are aware of the setting's responsibilities. This is effectively implemented by staff who act in the child's best interests when they become unwell at the setting. All staff are trained in first aid, which means they are able to respond quickly to children's accidents or incidents. Children's medication is appropriately stored and administered by staff.

Babies have ample opportunities to develop and explore their physical skills. They are confident to crawl and practice their walking skills in a safe environment and are effectively supported by staff. Babies particularly enjoy using the bouncers and giggle in delight as they bounce and watch themselves in the mirrors. Toddlers gain confidence when using wheeled resources and the slide outdoors. They enjoy the opportunities to play football with the staff and smile happily when they score a goal.

Older children have daily opportunities to play outdoors. They are confident to use a range of wheeled resources and enjoy taking part in group games and activities. However, there are no formal plans for outdoor play. This means children have insufficient opportunities to test and explore their larger skills, such as climbing and balancing, and are not sufficiently challenged outdoors. Children are becoming skilled at using small resources and tools, for example scissors and chopsticks in pasta play. Staff ensure children have regular opportunities to play outdoors. They have purchased splash suits and Wellingtons to enable children to go outside in damp conditions. These are greatly received by the children who enjoy wading in puddles and painting using decorating rollers dipped in water.

Children enjoy a range of healthy and nutritious home cooked meals and snacks. Children's individual needs and preferences are known and catered for by staff. Children are encouraged to try different foods in order to expand their enjoyment of food and to have a healthier lifestyle. For example, by taking part in food tasting activities and looking at different fruits and foods from around the world. Babies

needs are met well. Staff are very aware of their individual needs and update their records accordingly when their needs change, such as the consistency of their meals. Babies are held whilst having their bottle. All children have access to fresh drinking water in order to keep themselves refreshed.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a bright, welcoming and clean environment, which means they can play and explore their surroundings in safety and comfort. This is supported by the effective maintenance and cleaning systems in place to maintain the building. Children have access to a range of resources that promote their development. Children are confident to self-select their resources from low-level storage systems, which promotes their independence and self-esteem. Staff place items within the reach of less mobile babies. This means they are able to access their desired toy easily and successfully fosters their choice and independence. Babies particularly enjoy exploring real resources, such as the wooden spoons and brushes. Appropriate systems are in place to maintain the resources and equipment to ensure children's safety and well-being. All children have access to a wide and varied range of good quality resources, which actively contribute to their learning, play experiences and activities. Good use is made of natural materials to enhance children's learning opportunities, such as the use of plants in the garden shop and treasure baskets for younger children.

Children's risk of accidental injury is generally minimised in the organised environment. However, children's safety is compromised with regards to staff having hot drinks in the rooms and some maintenance resources in areas used by children. Detailed risk assessments are carried out on a regular basis by the health and safety officer. These are updated to include new resources or equipment, such as the soft surface in the outdoor area. Effective systems are in place regarding fire safety. The appointed fire warden ensures monthly checks are carried out on the premises and fire detection equipment to ensure they remain in good order. Regular fire drills ensure children know and understand the need to evacuate quickly and safely in an emergency. Children learn to keep themselves safe through regular discussions and gentle reminders from staff. This enables the children to understand the consequences of their actions, such as climbing on a chair or not using equipment safely.

Staff have a sound understanding of child protection issues. A number of staff have attended child protection training courses and have disseminated this information to other staff members. Staff use information from the Safeguarding children flow chart to inform their practice. They are fully aware of the action to take if they had concerns regarding a child. However, there is insufficient information available regarding the action to take if an allegation is made against a member of staff.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

All children are very happy and settled, they enter their rooms eagerly and are quickly off to play. This is effectively supported by the very good relationships staff build with the children. Staff provide a wide range of interesting and stimulating activities to all children. They are skilled at adapting activities to meet the individual needs of the children to ensure all children can participate. Staff have successfully adopted the Birth to three matters framework for younger children, who enjoy an extensive range of activities and learning experiences. As a result of this, children's all round development is good. Staff spend significant amounts of time talking, listening and interacting with the children, which enhances the children's confidence and self-esteem.

Younger children enjoy their time at the nursery. They have made firm friends and enjoy the company of the staff. They are becoming confident learners who are eager to explore their surroundings. Children enjoy many opportunities to be creative and to use a range of materials such as painting, dough and exploring different textures with gloop. Children enjoy listening to music and will often dance excitedly to their favourite tunes, such as Bob the builder. They enjoy outdoor play and use larger resources with increasing control. For example, children confidently use the slide and enjoy games of football with the staff, shouting 'goal' gleefully when they score.

Care of babies is good as staff consistently meet the individual needs of all the babies. This is effectively supported by the staff's considerable knowledge about the babies in their care. Babies engage in a range of interesting and stimulating activities, which effectively encourage their all round development. For example, they thoroughly enjoy playing in the sand. They watch in awe as the sand trickles through their hands and are keen to experience this again and again. Older babies play excitedly in the water, they giggle and smile broadly as they splash and pour the water over themselves.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff work very well together and are positive role models to children. Staff have a secure knowledge and understanding of the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage and how children learn. They use their skills effectively to provide an extensive range of interesting and stimulating activities. Activities are well planned and provide sufficient challenge to children in most areas. However, planning for outdoor activities is not formalised and does not include extension activities to further challenge more able children's physical skills. All plans are evaluated weekly and discussed promptly, effectively highlighting children's progress and achievements. Staff record their observations of children's achievements and use these well to complete their assessment records. This enables the staff to quickly identify any gaps in the children's progress and to use this information to plan the next steps in their learning.

Staff consistently pitch questions at the right level for each child. The effective use of questions enable children to think, communicate and to move forward in their learning. For example, when discussing the still life activity using various fruits, staff discussed where they came from, their colour and texture. Children eagerly engage in conversation with staff and talk animatedly about the fruit trees in their garden and laugh as staff explain that a bunch of bananas is called a hand. Children are

interested, enthusiastic learners who embrace new learning opportunities, such as the garden shop. They are confident as a result of the positive staff interaction and support, which encourages their self confidence and esteem. Children develop good relationships with the staff and one another. They understand the need for rules and confidently tell one another 'there are too many in here we only need four'.

All children are able to make marks with a number of children able to write their own name. Children have good opportunities to develop writing and mark making skills as they are actively encouraged to mark their own work, and have access to appropriate writing materials throughout the setting. Children are competent when matching sounds and letters. For example, one child writes the letter 'J' in the air and tells the inspector this is at the beginning of their name. Another sounds out the letters that make up their name. Children are developing an understanding of number and mathematical concepts, such as more and less than. They use mathematical language in their every day language, for example, when talking about the various fruits they talk about weight, heavy and light. Most children can count to 10 with more able children to beyond 20. They are developing an understanding of shape and are becoming skilled at re-creating patterns using mosaics.

Children are developing a good understanding of their own environment and the wider world through well planned themes encompassing food tasting, 'the skin I'm in' and as they celebrate festivals, such as Diwali. They are able to enjoy simple scientific experiments, such as growing beans, carrot tops, seeds and bulbs. Children are keen to tell the inspector about how they grew the beans and their 'hairy hedgehogs'. They are skilled at using the computer and are developing an understanding of other every day technology and programmable resources. Children's imagination is developing well as they access various roles play areas, which encourage their imagination. These include the garden shop and hairdressers. Here children enthusiastically carried out their roles, one child took responsibility as 'the colour girl' presenting the client with the colour chart and helping them to choose their new style. Children build complex three dimensional models and describe in detail what they are, such as the 'three headed boat'. They take part in many varied creative activities and their work is displayed with pride by the staff. This successfully fosters their self-esteem and sense of belonging.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are included in all the activities provided, their individual needs and circumstances are well known and provided for by staff. Staff build warm, caring relationships with the children that enable them to feel safe and secure. Effective systems, including the use of transition forms means children settle quickly into their new rooms as they progress through the nursery.

The children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children are developing a good understanding of the world in which we live through well planned activities, such as festivals. This enables the children to explore different cultures and beliefs and how others live. All children have access to resources

depicting diversity. This means children are developing positive attitudes to others. Children are well behaved, they share resources, and take turns well. They show respect for one another as they listen to each other at circle times. Children are developing a clear understanding of the nursery's rules as they advise others there are too many children in specific areas. Children have a strong sense of belonging, they are familiar with the daily routines and have significant friendships with their peers. This is further supported by their self portraits on the windows of the nursery, which welcome them in each day.

The partnership with parents is good. The nursery works closely with the parents to support children's learning in all areas. Effective communication systems, newsletters and parents evenings keep parents fully informed of their child's progress and achievements. Parents are keen to provide items from home to enhance the children's learning experiences, such as the chestnut tree they have grown from a conker. This enables the children look at the growth from the seed to small tree and explore the roots systems in line with their growing theme. All consents are in place, which means children are cared for in line with their parents' wishes and preferences. Staff effectively address any concerns from parents, however, they do not currently hold a written record of these. Parents have commented upon the staff's professionalism, and willingness to discuss issues with them. They state they are very happy with the care and education their children receive. This successful partnership with parents enhances the care, learning and play opportunities provided to all children.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are settled in the well organised environment, which is set up in many welcoming work areas. Consequently, children enter happily and are quickly off to play in the self-chosen activities. Qualified and experienced staff support children's learning and development well. Daily routines provide opportunities for children to rest, play and sleep according to their individual needs. This is supported by the successful key worker systems that are in place, which means staff are effectively organised in order to meet the needs of the children.

Policies and procedures are in place, although there are some omissions within the child protection policy and complaints records. All legally required documentation, which contributes to the health, safety and well-being of the children is in place and is generally well maintained. However, the accident and medication records are not always signed by the parents to acknowledge the entry, and the organisation of the records does not promote confidentiality. Regular staff meetings, appraisals and induction systems ensure staff are fully aware of their roles and responsibilities and the roles of key staff. For example, the fire warden and child protection coordinator. Staff are highly committed to, and are offered, ongoing training to further improve upon and extend their skills and knowledge. This have a very positive impact upon children's leaning and enjoyment at the setting.

The leadership and management is good. Children benefit from the committed

leadership of the setting. Clear systems are in place for the management structure to liaise with staff and discuss future learning objectives. In conjunction with the early years advisory teacher, staff are evaluating the current planning systems and opportunities available to children. Staff work well together as a team and ensure all children receive a good quality educative programme of activities. Comprehensive systems ensure the programme of activities is effectively evaluated and meets the needs of the children in receipt of funding for nursery education. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Following the last inspection seven recommendations were made with regards to care and three recommendations for the nursery education. Of these, five related to policies and procedures, all of which have been addressed. However, the child protection policy requires additional revision to ensure it conforms with current good practice guidance. All toys and resources are subjected to regular cleaning rotas to ensure children's well-being. Staff induction systems have been revised to include child protection within the first week of employment.

Staff have reviewed the organisation of the book area within the pre-school room. Children happily enter this area to look at books. Opportunities have been increased for children to learn about height and weight and to become familiar with more complex mathematical language. Children look at height, as they measure their sunflowers and themselves in topics, such as 'all about me'. Children enthusiastically explore their local community through planned activities. This includes visiting the local post office to post letters in line with thematic work. Children learn about the wider world through planned activities encompassing festivals, food tasting and discussions with staff. For example, discussing where the fruit originally came from for their still life pictures. In addressing these recommendations the setting has improved upon the children's health, safety, well-being and learning opportunities.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report. 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

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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):

- revise the systems with regards to staff having hot drinks in the children's rooms to minimise potential risks to children
- revise the systems for the recording children's accidents and the administration of medication to ensure confidentiality is maintained and parents sign each entry
- revise the child protection policy based on the procedures laid out in the booklet 'What To Do If You Are Worried A Child Is Being Abused - Summary' and ensure staff are aware of the action to be taken should an allegation be made against them

The quality and standards of the nursery education

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

- enhance the opportunities for children to test and explore their larger physical skills outdoors and provide sufficient challenge for more able children.

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