



**Office for Standards  
in Education**

## **NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT**

**URN** 218503

**DfES Number:** 512647

### **INSPECTION DETAILS**

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|-----------------|----------------|
| Inspection Date | 09/07/2004     |
| Inspector Name  | Valerie Thomas |

### **SETTING DETAILS**

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| Day Care Type   | Full Day Care  |
| Setting Name    | The Croft Nursery (Newcastle)  |
| Setting Address | The Croft, 102 Lancaster Road<br>Newcastle<br>Staffordshire<br>ST5 1DS |

### **REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS**

|      |                                     |
|------|-------------------------------------|
| Name | Mrs Mary Ryan & Mr Christopher Ryan |
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## ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public that the nursery education for funded three and four year old children is of an acceptable quality. Inspection of nursery education also identifies strengths and weaknesses so that providers can improve the quality of educational provision and help children to achieve the early learning goals (elgs) by the end of the Foundation Stage. This inspection report must be made available to all parents.

If the setting has been inspected previously, an action plan will have been drawn up to tackle issues identified. This inspection, therefore, must also assess what progress has been made in the implementation of this plan.

### Information about the setting

The Croft Day Nursery opened in 1990. It operates from a detached house within its own grounds on the outskirts of Newcastle town centre. The nursery has access to four playrooms, kitchen, toilets and an enclosed outdoor area. It serves the local and surrounding community.

There are currently 68 children under 5 years on roll. This includes 13 funded 3-year-olds and 7 funded 4-year-olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting supports a number of children with special needs and who speak English as an additional language.

The setting opens five days a week all year round except Bank Holidays and a week at Christmas. Sessions are from 08:00 until 17:30. Full and part time places are available.

All staff have early years qualifications to NVQ level 2 or 3. There are two staff currently working towards an NVQ 3 early years qualification. The setting receives support from teachers and staff from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP).

## INSPECTION OF THE NURSERY EDUCATION PROVISION FOR FUNDED THREE AND FOUR YEAR OLDS.

### How effective is the nursery education?

The Croft Nursery offers good quality provision overall which helps children to make generally good progress towards the early learning goals. They make very good progress in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy and knowledge and understanding of the world.

Teaching is generally good. Staff have a suitable knowledge of the foundation stage. They plan an interesting range of practical activities which helps children to learn. Staff management of behaviour is very good. They have high expectations and set clear boundaries. Activities are well managed and staff engage in children's play and conversations. There is a good range of equipment to support children's learning in all areas, although it is not fully utilised to develop all areas of physical development.

Staff use assessment records to identify the progress children are making towards the early learning goals, however they do not identify individual learning targets for children. Although there are currently no children with special educational needs attending, there is an effective system in place to provide good support. The challenges set for children are generally good. However, they do not always challenge children in areas of maths and during story time.

Leadership and management is generally good. The nursery benefits from a clear management structure and a committed staff group. They work well together and constantly evaluate their practice through appraisals, monitoring, staff meetings and parental questionnaires. The nursery have achieved an Investors in People award.

The partnership with parents is very good. Parents are well informed of the nursery ethos and the educational programme provided. Procedures to involve parents in their child's learning are good and staff encourage parents to identify the stage of learning their children are at on entry. They are well informed of their child's progress through open evenings and ongoing discussions.

### What is being done well?

- The children are very confident, interested in activities and are able to work on their own and with each other. They demonstrate very good concentration when listening to stories and playing on the computer.
- The development of children's language is progressing very well. They speak clearly and fluently and join in well with familiar songs. They show very good understanding during their French lesson and are able to communicate well with the teacher in response to her questions.
- There are good opportunities for children to learn about change. They plant sunflower and cress seeds and can recall and explain the stages of change they went through. They learn how the incubator helps the eggs to hatch into

chicks and make scrambled eggs to find out how the properties of eggs can change.

- Opportunities for children to explore colour and texture are good. They explore dough, 'gloop', jelly and spaghetti and use appropriate words to describe them. They name a wide range of colours confidently.
- The use of ICT within the setting is good. Children know how to use the computer well. They can move the mouse to activate the programme and know they need to click the mouse to reveal a picture.
- Behaviour is managed very well. Staff have high expectations and set clear boundaries for children. They encourage children to share, take turns and use their manners. As a result children have very positive relationships with their peers and adults and behave very well.

#### **What needs to be improved?**

- the use of daily activities and routines to encourage children to develop their problem solving skills
- the challenge for children during stories to develop their thinking and imaginative skills
- the provision of increased opportunities for children to develop their climbing skills
- the assessment system to identify individual learning targets for children and the use of this information to inform future planning.

#### **What has improved since the last inspection?**

The nursery has made very good progress since the last inspection. There was one area for improvement identified which was to improve the planning of educational provision by making fuller reference to the early learning goals and making the process more manageable.

The nursery has worked with the teacher/mentor from the Early years Development and Childcare Partnership with regard to planning. The learning outcome for each activity now reflects the stepping stones within the early learning goals and staff find the system more manageable. This helps to show how activities help children to work towards the early learning goals.

## SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

### PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

|            |           |
|------------|-----------|
| Judgement: | Very Good |
|------------|-----------|

Children are actively involved in their learning. They are very confident, work well independently and show good levels of concentration. They have good relationships with their peers and adults and regularly share their experiences with each other. They cooperate well as they pull each other along on the bikes and help each other to tidy away. Children behave very well. Children manage their self care well and learn how to care for animals when they take the hamster home.

### COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

|            |           |
|------------|-----------|
| Judgement: | Very Good |
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Children are confident and fluent speakers in English and are learning how to speak French, which they do well. They engage easily in conversations and confidently express their needs. Children demonstrate good book handling skills and are able to tell each other the story from the pictures. Most children recognise their name at registration time. Older children show very good writing skills when labelling their pictures and all children practise their skills in their topic books.

### MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

|            |                |
|------------|----------------|
| Judgement: | Generally Good |
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Children use and understand numbers for counting well. They count up to 10 confidently and match number to object, counting the legs on the spider. They are learning to recognise numbers when finding the date. Children demonstrate well that they understand shape and size well. They are able to find the square and circle easily and know that adults are big and children are small. They do not often develop their problem solving skills during practical activities and routines.

### KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

|            |           |
|------------|-----------|
| Judgement: | Very Good |
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There are good opportunities for children to learn about the world in which they live. They visit the local town and library and have had visits from the 'animal man' and an ambulance. Children have good opportunities to learn about different cultures through celebration of festivals, watching how to do Irish dancing and learning how to speak French. They learn about living things, helping to care for a hamster and handling chicks which hatched in the incubator.

### PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

|            |                |
|------------|----------------|
| Judgement: | Generally Good |
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Children move confidently and safely. They run and jump well when playing outside and taking part in action songs. They ride bikes proficiently and are able to stop and start safely. Children balance well on scooters and when walking along the beam. They are learning how to catch and throw the balls and some are able to kick the ball well. Children use one handed tools competently. They cut well with scissors and write with good control. They do not develop climbing skills regularly.

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| <b>CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT</b>  |                |
| Judgement:   | Generally Good |
| Children express their ideas freely and develop their imagination through a range of activities such as role-play, painting and singing. However, they do not always develop their imagination and thinking during stories. They develop their senses as they taste foods and know that the butter is smooth and the dough is soft. Children explore the paint with their fingers and use sponges and straws to create different effects. They create facial expressions to show how they are feeling. |                |
| <b>Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately.</b>  |                |

### **OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION**

The provision is acceptable and is of good quality overall. Children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals. The next inspection will take place in three to four years time.

### **WHAT THE SETTING NEEDS TO DO NEXT: THE KEY ISSUES**

- plan more effectively to use activities and daily routines to develop and consolidate children's understanding of mathematics
- provide sufficient challenge in stories to encourage children to develop their thinking and imaginative skills
- make better use of resources to provide increased opportunities for children to develop their climbing skills
- extend the assessment system to identify individual learning targets for children and use these to inform future planning.

*The provider must draw up an action plan within 40 working days of receipt of this report showing how the key issues detailed above will be addressed. The action plan must be made available to all parents and to the Local Authority if required. An evaluation of the action taken will form part of the next inspection of funded nursery education.*