

# Higher Croft Children's Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number**

EY268694

**Inspection date**

16/05/2011

**Inspector**

Judith Kerr

**Setting address**

Fishmoor Drive, Blackburn, Lancashire, BB2 3UY

**Telephone number**

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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*.

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).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

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## Description of the setting

Higher Croft Children's Centre was registered in 2004. It is operated by a management board and is one of 13 children's centres run by the local authority. Children have access to five rooms on the ground floor of converted premises in the Higher Croft area of Blackburn. There is lift access available to the first floor. There are three fully enclosed outdoor play areas.

A maximum of 87 children may attend at any one time. There are currently 100 children attending who are within the early years age range. Of these, 64 receive funding for early years provision. The nursery is also registered by Ofsted on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

The nursery currently supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery is open each weekday from 8am to 6pm for 49 weeks of the year. Children are able to attend for a variety of sessions.

The nursery employs 20 members of staff who work with the children. All of these hold appropriate early years qualifications. The nursery receives support from the local authority and an advisory teacher.

## The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Staff have a highly effective knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage and purposeful understanding of each child, which ensures inclusion is well promoted. They are kind and caring and provide a safe and welcoming environment for all children where documentation is exemplary. Activities provided are inspiring and challenging; this ensures children are extremely interested, confident and busy. A wonderful emphasis is placed on highly effective relationships with parents and others involved in children's lives. The staff team demonstrate a positive attitude to the continuous improvement of their service and recognise where most of the key areas for further development within their practice lie.

## What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- increase children's awareness of languages other than English and provide opportunities to see signs and labels that take into account children's different home backgrounds and cultures.

## **The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision**

Throughout the nursery, staff have a superb knowledge and understanding of safeguarding procedures. They have an excellent awareness of the possible signs of abuse and knowledge of how to report any concerns appropriately. Meticulous risk assessments are completed for the premises and all outings to monitor children's safety. Robust systems ensure staff are suitably checked and qualified for their role, and a detailed record is maintained of all visitors to the premises. All the required documentation relating to the welfare of the children is meticulously maintained to respect confidentiality.

Significant improvements have been made to the premises and documentation since the last inspection to enhance information provided for parents, improve heating systems and children's opportunities for early mark making. The highly skilled staff team are committed to ongoing training in order to keep up-to-date and continually enhance their practice. Regular supervision and appraisals highlight areas for future development and additional training needs. Future priorities and targets are generally well identified within the self-evaluation form, which demonstrates a positive attitude towards reflective practice.

Staff place the utmost priority on positive partnerships with parents and others to provide seamless opportunities for children which will enhance their care, learning and development. As a result, this is a key strength of the setting. Parents receive high levels of information about their child and are actively encouraged to be involved in their ongoing learning. Parents express superb levels of satisfaction with the service provided. Their views and opinions are sought and incorporated into the routine and planning so that the individual needs of children are met. Excellent links with local schools ensure the sharing of quality information to promote consistency for children's welfare, learning and development.

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

The staff have developed expert knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage. First-class teaching ensures children make excellent progress towards the early learning goals given their capability. Superior observational records are detailed, evaluative and clearly plan for the next stages of children's individual learning. Assessments are rigorous and a well-developed tracking system is in place to monitor children's progress towards the early learning goals. Days are organised to provide an optimal balance of rest, learning and play which involve child-led activities and adult-directed play. Activities are adapted to ensure that all children can participate. Resources are extremely well organised, enabling all children to make their own choices and develop their independence. However, although the environment is rich with print, there are few signs and labels which acknowledge the ethnicity of the children who attend.

Mathematical skills are exceptionally well supported as staff use every

opportunities to consolidate and extend children's ability to sort, match, recognise shape and count. Baking cakes and biscuits and measuring themselves against a chart provide wonderful opportunities for children to weigh and measure ingredients and calculate more and less and tall and short. Children develop superb communication skills as staff continually engage with them, ask open-ended questions and listen intently to what they have to say. Babies and younger children have lots of eye contact with staff, who respond to their gurgles and early attempts to form words. Books are vibrantly arranged for children to help themselves. The children mix together extremely well and offer one another support, which contributes to them learning about themselves and others.

The children spend lots of time outdoors where they balance, climb, slide and manoeuvre the wheeled toys around the road track. They plant and grow sunflowers and strawberries, which helps them to seriously consider the needs of other living things. Resources and activities which promote children's awareness of the wider world are actively used to help them appreciate diversity. Celebrations throughout the year, including Chinese New Year, Onam and Diwali, enhance their understanding of different cultures. Children relish developing their artistic talents using a variety of media including paint, glue, glitter, cereals, pasta and shiny paper. They print with leaves and make their own dragon for Chinese New Year using recycled materials, which demonstrates the setting's commitment to sustainability.

Children learn about health and hygiene because staff are very skilled in promoting this most effectively through daily routines. For example, children enthusiastically follow the hand washing procedures displayed on brightly coloured posters in the bathroom and delight in demonstrating they know where to put their used paper towels. Such routines help to minimise the risks of cross-infection. Highly effective visits from the police, fire and road safety services, supported by staff, help children understand how to keep themselves safe. Gentle reminders about not climbing on furniture as they may fall and regularly practising the fire evacuation drill help to ensure they have a first-class knowledge of the procedures to follow in the event of an emergency. As a result of the exceptional care offered by staff, they learn independence skills which will support and promote their learning in the future.

## 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

<b>How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

### The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
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

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	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	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	1

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## **Annex B: the Childcare Register**

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met