

The Croft at Total Fitness

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector	Parm Sansoyer

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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

The Croft at Total Fitness opened in 2001. It operates from four children's group rooms in a self-contained unit at the Total Fitness Health Club's premises at the Parklands in Newcastle. They provide full day care and provide a creche facility for the gym members. The setting serves the local area and surrounding areas. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

A maximum of 59 children up to the age of eight years may attend, of who no more than 27 may be under two years, at any one time. There are currently 58 children on roll in the early years age group. The setting is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary part of the Childcare Register. The setting is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early years education to children aged three and four-years-old. The setting supports children with learning difficulties and /or disabilities. The setting is open five day a week all year round, except bank holidays and one week at Christmas. Sessions are from 7.30am to 6pm.

There are 18 staff employed to work with the children. Of these, four hold an early years degree and of these one is working towards an Early Year Professional Status, twelve hold a qualification a level 3 in early years and two hold a qualification at level 2 in early years, of whom one is working towards a qualification a level 3 in early years. The setting receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

All children are valued and fully included in this warm and caring environment and make good progress in their learning and development. Children are kept safe and secure and the environment and resources are mostly managed well and suitable. The extent to which children develop healthy lifestyles is outstanding. Well established relationships with parents and carers and effective links with other professionals, agencies and settings means children's individual needs are met well. Effective systems to ensure rigorous monitoring and self-evaluation help improve outcomes for children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- monitor and maintain more effectively the temperature and ventilation of the rooms to ensure the comfort of the children
- increase the range of activities and resources available for children aged 12 months to two years to further support choice and extend opportunities for

children to explore and investigate, at their own leisure and extend the role play area to further support children's play and learning.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

There are clearly written policies, strategies and procedures in place to ensure the safeguarding and welfare of children. All staff have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities in relation to safeguarding children. There are effective procedures in place to ensure adults caring for children are suitably vetted, inducted and qualified. Staff are vigilant about the children safety at all times, for example, any visitors to the setting are accompanied by a member of staff at all times and security systems are robust. All records, policies, procedures and written risk assessments required for the safe and efficient management of the service and to meet the needs of all children are in place. Children are cared for in rooms according to their age and ability and furniture, equipment and toys suitable for their purpose. However, the temperature and ventilation of the rooms is not effectively enough monitored at all times to ensure children's comfort.

Staff deliver a rich and stimulating curriculum to all the children. Children in the pre-school room and baby room in particular enjoy and achieve very well. They benefit from an environment which is very well resourced and offers a good balance of adult- led and child-initiated play for them to freely choose, explore and discover with curiosity. Children from twelve months to two years also benefit from a good range of experiences. However, activities and resources are not consistently made available throughout the session to offer children choice and explore and investigate, at their own leisure. Each child has an assigned key worker and systematic observation and assessment systems means staff have a good knowledge of each child's background and needs and plan well for the next steps in learning. Children with learning difficulties and /or disabilities are included, valued and supported well.

Effective partnerships between staff, parents and their children means parents are kept well informed about the provision and about all aspects of their children's achievements and progress. For example, the 'Tree of Achievement' is used well by many of the parents to contribute what they know about their children's learning and development. Partnerships with the local schools are effectively established to help support transition and continuity of their education and care. There are effective systems in place to share information and records with other professionals, agencies and parents to ensure appropriate support is sought for children with learning difficulties and /or disabilities.

The leader and manager of setting communicate ambition and drive and secure improvement well. Processes for managing the performance of staff and raising qualification and skills are used well to support further development. All staff are involved in the self-evaluation process and encouraged to test new ideas, question practice and evaluate and monitor any changes implemented. Parents views are actively sought and acted upon to help shape the service and improve the care and

education for all children attending.

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

Children's personal, social and emotional development is fostered extremely well. Warm and positive relationships with staff, contribute to the children being well settled and their sense of belonging. Babies feel safe and secure within healthy relationships with key staff and develop a sense of trust. Children show independence in selecting activities and persist for extended periods of time in their chosen activity. Older children especially are often inspired, interested, excited and motivated to learn. Children are developing their confidence well as they busily move around their environment both indoors and outdoors. Children are well behaved and learn about sharing and taking turns and increase their self-help skills well.

Children's communication, language and literacy is supported well. Children build good foundations for early literacy through having good opportunities to make marks, make sense of visual signs and symbols and to recognise their own and others names. More able children have good opportunities to link sounds and letters during circle time and in their play, to further extend learning. Children begin to develop a keen interest in books because staff are skilled in encouraging children to enjoy daily story sessions, which capture the children's interest. In addition books are made freely available in all rooms and outdoors and therefore children develop a fondness for them.

Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is supported well to help them make sense of the world. Children engage in a variety of good first hand experiences in which they learn about their natural environment. For example, they have been growing potatoes, tomatoes, herbs and strawberries and learn how to care for them. Children explore and find out about insects and learn about changes in the weather. They begin to develop a sense of place as they visit the local shops, parks and post office. Children begin to learn about their own and other cultures and customs through themed activities such as tasting food from around the world and accessing a varied range of resources depicting positive images of diversity.

Children's problem-solving, reasoning and numeracy is building well. They seek pattern, count, sort and match. Children learn about early calculation as they participate in singing number rhymes. Children have good opportunities to problem solve as they build with a wide variety of construction toys and complete puzzles. Older and more able children begin to recognise and work with numbers during their play. Children show an interest in the computer which is used well to support their mathematical development. Babies and younger children have good opportunities to explore and find out how things work as they use a varied range of programmable toys and resources with knobs, flaps, keys and shutters.

Children's creative development is supported very well. Many children have good opportunities to use their imagination and adopt roles through an extended range of role play resources and small world toys, which they enjoy. Although, the role play area for children from two to three years does not offer a broad enough range of resources and toys to help children further extend their play and learning. Children respond well to what they hear, see, smell and touch. For example, children use the sand, water, dough, paints, collage, compost and various foods to explore, investigate and be creative.

Children learn how to stay safe through gentle reminders from the staff and through themed activities. For example, children know how to play safely as they run around the shed outdoors and not to touch the serving plates at lunch time. The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles is outstanding. Children benefit from the access to fresh air and the outdoor environment throughout the session, which contributes significantly to their health and wellbeing. For example babies who are crawling wear waterproof trousers so they can enjoy the outside environment. Children build their confidence well as they competently use large and small physical play apparatus. Staff skilfully encourage children to learn to develop a positive attitude to exercise and physical activity both indoors and outdoors through making it interesting and fun. Children become avid recyclers as they sort plastic and paper and help to put fruit peel into the compost bin. Children benefit from freshly prepared meals which are healthy, balanced and nutritious. Children show a comprehensive understanding of making healthy choices and an understanding of the benefits of fresh produce. They are extremely aware about the importance of adopting positive personal hygiene practices and staff adopt effective hygienic practices to prevent the spread of infection. They successfully develop skills that contribute to their future economic well-being through becoming active and inquisitive learners, which contributes well to helping children develop good skills for 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

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

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

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

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

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
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	2

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