

# Crofton Early Learners

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Inspection date** 18/01/2012  
**Inspector** Gillian Cubitt

**Setting address** Crofton Baptist Church, 100 Crofton Lane, ORPINGTON,  
Kent, BR5 1HD

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**Type of setting** Childcare - Non-Domestic

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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*.

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## Description of the setting

Crofton Early Learners registered in 1977 and is run by the board of Trustees. It operates from Crofton Baptist Church, Crofton Lane, Orpington, and serves the local urban area of Petts Wood and Orpington, Kent. Children access the setting via a level entrance and there are parking facilities in the car park. The children have use of a large sports hall and smaller side room, and occasional use of the Oak Hall. There are two secure outside areas used by the children. The children's toilets are off the main hall. Staff have the use of a secure kitchen area which is sometimes shared with other users of the church premises. Opening times are 9.15am to 12.30pm Monday to Friday during term time.

The group is registered on the Early Years Register to care for a maximum of 40 children under five years; of these, none may be under two years. There are currently 44 children on roll, who attend a variety of sessions during the week. There are 35 three and four year olds receiving funding for early education. The group currently supports several children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and there are two children attending for whom English is an additional language.

There are 16 members of staff, of whom 13 work directly with the children. There are a minimum of five staff working directly with children each session. All permanent staff hold a range of childcare qualifications. Support and cover staff also hold a range of qualifications up to Bachelor of Education level.

The group has links with local schools, in particular Crofton Infant School. They also receive support from the local Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

## The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

An extremely dedicated, caring, competent staff team consistently meet children's individual needs very well, as they have an excellent understanding of child development. One of their particular strengths is supporting children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, making the environment stimulating and inclusive. In most cases, equality and diversity is fostered extremely well, however the resources reflecting diversity are not consistently available to children. Children's safety is paramount and their well-being is secured by the attention to fostering outstanding partnerships with parents, local schools and health care professionals. The pre-school practice is underpinned by a thorough self-evaluation, which includes views from staff, parents and children. As a result, they provide a high standard of service that meets all user needs.

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

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- improving children's consistent access to resources that reflect the ethnic, cultural and social diversity in society.

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

A strong leadership and committed staff team work well together to safeguard children. All staff and regular volunteers are thoroughly checked for suitability, and there are rigorous procedures in place to supervise visitors. Well-embedded induction and support systems ensure staff are appraised and monitored to keep them up-to-date on safeguarding procedures. This includes risk-assessment of areas where children play, as well as accurate recording of accidents, and the meticulous storage and administration of medication. Furthermore, the high standard of staff's qualifications, coupled with their experience, enables them to provide children with a warm, secure environment where professionalism is apparent.

The pre-school is extremely welcoming to all children and parents, and equality and diversity are promoted very well. A particular feature is the attention to inclusion and supporting children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. All staff are sensitive to specific difficulties and fully embrace the needs of the family to help children make progress. This includes making home visits where appropriate. Children play in a rich play environment where resources are generally deployed very well. The ratio of staff to children is high, which enables staff to give children one-to-one attention at all times. The toys and equipment are of high quality and planned according to a theme that focuses on specific areas of learning. Children enjoy accessing the range of toys available, but planning does not consistently give children access to resources that enable them to independently absorb and explore the diversity of cultures.

Ongoing self-evaluation is carried out by all users, staff, trustees and parents, and responded to as the need arises. The group leaders successfully inspire the staff team through the process of meetings and appraisals, which evaluate staff training needs and support their professional development. Staff also strive to improve the environment for children. They have worked with parents and outside agencies to resurface the outdoor play areas, which has improved safety.

The outstanding partnerships the pre-school staff have established with parents and outside professionals mean that children's care and learning is extremely well met. Parents enthusiastically express their delight that their children are part of the group, and comment on their significant progress. The dedicated coordinator for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities follows through all plans

and targets so that children meet their goals. There are well-established links with local schools. School teachers and pre-school staff meet regularly, which aids transition. As a result, the children's next step in their learning journey is an extremely positive experience for which they are well prepared.

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

Children arrive early and wait with their friends in eager anticipation for the doors to open for the start of their pre-school session. The warm welcome from staff immediately makes children feel at home. They start their day with a brief registration session where children enjoy saying and clapping the syllables of their names. This helps younger children to feel secure and learn simple tasks while watching the competency of their older friends. Children then select a friend and happily skip to the main hall where they have access to a wide selection of resources.

Many children, especially boys, are drawn towards the play house and 'building site' area. They learn safety by putting on hard hats, and use construction tools to help them engage in role play. One child expertly shows how to measure the walls, while another child displays skill in handling a variety of construction tools. Children's concentration is extended as they become engrossed in their task. Children challenge their physical skills on climbing apparatus, while other children thrive in the fresh air showing their skills with bats and balls. Younger children having fun kicking large, soft balls, and laugh with delight in their success when they see how far they can make the ball roll.

Children learn about equality and diversity through planned, focused activities. For example, at certain times of the year children find out about countries of the world. Children and staff also share their experiences when they return from holidays. However, other resources reflecting diverse cultures are not consistently available, which hampers children's independent learning. Children see welcoming posters in different languages and some books are available. All children play exceptionally well together; their behaviour is exemplary and their social skills are strong due to the ethos of helping each other in a sharing and caring environment.

Children make excellent progress because staff take their responsibility for key-working very seriously. Each member of staff closely monitors their allocated children, making observations of their progress and planning effectively. As a result, challenging tasks help children move forward in their comprehension and learning. For example, focused activities make children aware of shapes, asking 'What is a rectangle? How many sides are there?' Children cut rectangular shapes and make collages while staff observe their level of competence. Children are encouraged to look at similar shapes in their environment and have fun icing rectangular biscuits. Occasionally children are divided into two groups; very young children are introduced to movement with pre-school rhymes, while older children are encouraged to enact well-known stories. This significantly develops their confidence in communication and expressing themselves. Children show their

independence as they help themselves to paper and crayons, create their individual pictures, and competently sign their work.

Children play in a very bright, inviting environment that is exceptionally well-maintained by staff. Children adopt healthy lifestyles through daily routines which include healthy foods at snack times and plenty of liquid. Children learn how their bodies work through activities, and know to wrap up warm before going outside in winter and to wear sun hats in the summer. All of which contributes to their continuous health awareness. Children's well-being is a strong feature, as the setting is particularly sensitive to support children and families where there are health concerns. This helps children to settle very well, and all children show they are very happy and secure and have a very warm relationship with staff.

Children are extremely confident and competent in communicating their thoughts. Older children show a mature response to taking responsibility for their own and others' safety. For example, children display care when climbing apparatus, and awareness of others when swinging bats to hit balls outside. Visits from the police and fire officers also introduce children to safety awareness. Through continuous planning, staff heighten children's knowledge of 'stranger danger'. Similarly, when older children go on short excursions to local shops such as the post office, they learn to manage the hazards of traffic and crossing roads.

## 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>	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

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

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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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