

THE CROFT (HERTFORD) LTD

Wheatcroft Jmi School, Stanstead Road, HERTFORD, SG13 7HQ

Inspection date	13/02/2013
Previous inspection date	02/07/2010

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	
	Previous inspection:	
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		2
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		2
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		2

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is good

- Children make good progress in their learning and development because they are provided with a range of stimulating and challenging activities.
- The indoor and outdoor child-focused learning environments provide interesting and stimulating activities that build on children's interests.
- Children display good levels of confidence and self-esteem as their choices and ideas are valued.
- The daily communication between the school and the setting effectively supports consistency in children's welfare for children attending the after school club. Links with the school also support pre-school children well when they move on to school.

It is not yet outstanding because

- The daily communication between the school and the after school club does not fully promote consistency in learning for this group of children.

Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are scheduled:

- at least once in every inspection cycle. The current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged as inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage; or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised for inspection where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The provision is also registered on the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

Inspection activities

- The inspector spoke to and observed staff and children during the after school session and the pre-school session.
- The inspector observed the resources and equipment on offer and how effectively they are organised to support children's play and learning.
- The inspector sampled documents, including children's observations and learning journey's.
- The inspector had ongoing discussions with the owner regarding the sound practice.

Inspector

Susan Parker

Full Report

Information about the setting

The Croft Breakfast and After School Club was registered in 2010. It later opened a pre-school. The setting is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is situated in a classroom within Wheatcroft School, Hertford, Hertfordshire. The setting serves the local area, and the after school and breakfast clubs serve the families of Wheatcroft School. Children have access

to the school field and playground as well as a small, fully enclosed area available for outdoor play.

The after school club setting employs eight members of childcare staff. Of these, three hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3. The pre-school employs three members of staff and has two unqualified volunteers. Of the pre-school staff, one holds a qualification at level 3 and two hold a qualification at level 2.

The setting opens Monday to Friday during the school term. Sessions for the breakfast club are 7.45am until 9am, pre-school operates from 9.15am until 12.15pm with a lunch club operating until 1pm, and the afterschool club runs from 3.15pm until 6pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently four children attending the afterschool club who are in the early years age group. The pre-school has 12 children on roll in the early years age range. The setting provides funded early education for three- and four-year-old children.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To further improve the quality of the early years provision the provider should:

- improve links between the school and the out-of-school club to enhance continuity of learning for early years children who attend the club.

Inspection judgements

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

Children in the pre-school make good progress and are motivated to learn in this good quality setting. Staff have good skills and knowledge of the learning and development requirements and a clear understanding of how children learn. The exciting, stimulating and generally well organised environment, both indoors and outdoors, ensures that most children make rapid progress towards the early learning goals. Children in the after school club make suitable progress because staff provide activities that meet their needs at this time of day. Children consistently demonstrate the characteristics of effective learning. For example, children maintain their focus of their activity, showing good levels of concentration and show pride in their accomplishments. For example, in the pre-school, children show their Chinese lanterns to the staff and are praised for their cutting and art skills. In the after school club, early years children mix with older children and are learning from the older children how to play games and stick to rules.

Staff have a sharp focus on helping children to acquire communication and language skills and supporting physical, personal, social and emotional development. As a result, children are very well prepared for school and their next stage of learning. For example, children develop their social skills as they play cooperatively with each other, take turns, share resources and negotiate and problem solve when carrying out activities.

The outdoor environment is used daily to promote physical skills and to enable children to understand the benefits of exercise and fresh air. Staff encourage and support the children to use the equipment safely, gently encouraging the smaller children as they gain confidence and skill on the equipment. Children have daily opportunities to develop their large muscle control and coordination, their small muscle skills are developing well through activities such as threading, making marks and making masks and lanterns for Chinese New Year celebrations. Children regularly initiate their own learning through exploration and investigation and staff use their skills and knowledge to challenge their thinking further. For example, they particularly enjoy exploring and investigating the soapy water, describing the temperature and popping the biggest bubbles, pouring water into different shape and size containers.

Staff provide many opportunities for children to communicate their thoughts and ideas as they explore new and interesting resources and experiences that promote their curiosity and thinking skills. For example, older children help choose the snack menu and know what is healthy and what is not.

Observations and assessments of children attending the pre-school are clear, precise and sharply focused and include contributions from parents. Children benefit from a robust system for tracking and analysing their learning and progress. As a result, they receive targeted support and appropriate intervention if necessary. Assessments clearly demonstrate that any gaps in children's learning are closing rapidly. Staff clearly display each child's next steps in their planning which enables all staff members, not just the key worker, to know and support each child's individually tailored progress.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children

Children clearly understand how to keep themselves safe and healthy in both the pre-school and the after school club. Staff teach children about health and safety as they discuss not running indoors and how to use scissors safely. Children learn to manage their own risks because staff encourage and support them to be independent, confident learners. For example, when choosing to play outdoors, staff discuss warm clothes to wear and encourage children to dress themselves and put on their own shoes. Staff are skilled and sensitive and fully support children to form strong, secure, emotional attachments which provide a solid foundation for their personal, social and emotional development. For example, children are encouraged to be independent as they select their own resources from the good range of activities and resources on offer. Children learn about the need for healthy food and fresh air and the effects of exercise on their bodies as they participate in physical activities indoors and in the outside play area. The main room has a cosy area where children can rest and relax if they are tired or want to explore the books. Children

develop independence and social skills as they help each other with tasks. For example, they help each other tidy away toys and access and help each other solve problems like fitting the train track together.

Children learn about expected levels of behaviour from the positive role modelling of staff and from each other. Children's behaviour is good because staff provide clear boundaries and implement the behaviour management policy consistently throughout the setting.

Effective procedures ensure that children are very well prepared for their next stage in learning. Tailored settling-in procedures enable children and staff to get to know each other and key workers find out about the children from their parents and build positive relationships with children and their families. Pre-school staff also have close links with the Reception teacher to inform them of children's stage of development and learning needs to support children's transition to school.

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

The manager and staff have a good understanding of their responsibilities in meeting the learning and development requirements. In the pre-school, staff effectively monitor the planning and delivery of the educational programmes. In the after school club staff ensure that activities meet the needs of children at that time of day. Assessment and monitoring of the children who attend the pre-school are good. The process is effective in identifying any gaps in children's learning and gives them extra support. Staff in both settings have a secure understanding of their responsibilities in meeting the welfare and safeguarding requirements. Clear procedures are in place to keep children safe at all times. Staff have a secure understanding of child protection. Recruitment procedures are robust and ensure staff are suitable to work with young children.

Staff are suitably qualified and are supported in developing their knowledge and qualifications. For example, two members of staff are working towards a level 3 qualification, and one member of the after school club staff is working towards a degree in play work. Regular staff meetings and annual appraisals enable the owner and manager to adequately monitor performance and support professional development. This enhances the provision for children.

Partnerships with parents and carers and other providers are well established in the pre-school. Parents are involved in the learning journeys of pre-school children and there are good links with other settings that children attend. Staff work in partnership with the school to discuss the care needs of children attending the after school club. However, the links to include discussions about children's current learning needs to enhance children's continuity of learning are not fully developed.

Self-evaluation is effective, taking into account the views of all users. Recommendations acted upon from the last inspection have secured children's safety and developed an appropriate drive for continued improvement.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are	Met
The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are	Met

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
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Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	Satisfactory provision is performing less well than expectations in one or more of the key areas. It requires improvement in order to be good.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be inspected again within 12 months of the date of this inspection.
Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children’s learning, development and care, known as the Early

Years Foundation Stage.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY406193
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	879543
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	2 - 11
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	16
Name of provider	THE CROFT (HERTFORD) LTD
Date of previous inspection	02/07/2010
Telephone number	07909103124

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Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises that are usually their own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

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