

Crocus Early Years Centre

Saffron Walden County High School, Audley End Road, Saffron Walden, ESSEX, CB11 4UH

Inspection date	22/10/2013
Previous inspection date	17/12/2012

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	2
	Previous inspection:	2
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

- Practitioners have a good knowledge of the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage and are well supported by managers. They accurately track children's development and consistently offer tailored support so that children make good progress in their learning.
- Children make good progress in their learning and development because practitioners provide many opportunities for child-led learning and support them to repeating and consolidating their skills.
- Children form very secure attachments, which promotes their emotional well-being because practitioners recognise them as individuals and work closely with parents to ensure their needs are met.
- Practitioners are well motivated to bring about improvements in the setting that benefit the children and their families. Effective reflection and evaluation of practice enables the team to bring about rapid improvements to already good quality provision.

It is not yet outstanding because

- There is scope to improve the procedures for hand washing before snack for the youngest children to ensure they adopt good hygiene routines that fully promote their good health.
- Occasionally, opportunities to support children in making independent choices at snack times are not consistently exploited.

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
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged 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 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
- scheduled at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities in the Daisy, Rose and Poppy base rooms, the garden areas and conducted a joint observation with the deputy manager.
- The inspector, practitioners and children had wide ranging discussions at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector looked at documentation related to the management of the setting, children's progress and self-evaluation.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents through short discussions.

Inspector

Alison Reeves

Full Report

Information about the setting

Crocus Early Years Centre opened in January 2002 and was acquired by Bright Horizons Family Solutions in July 2007. The setting is a purpose-built single-storey building situated in the grounds of the Saffron Walden County High School serving the local community. There are three playrooms, all of which have direct access cloakrooms and to outdoor play areas.

The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and is open 51 weeks of the year, only closing between Christmas and New Year and bank holidays. Opening times are Mondays to Fridays, 7am to 6pm. The setting offers various sessions. Mornings from 8am until 1pm, afternoons 1pm until 6pm, and school days 9am until 4pm. The setting provides funded early years education for three- and four-year-old children and supports children who speak English as an additional language and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. There are currently 90 children on roll.

There are a total of 21 full-time and part-time practitioners working at the setting. The manager has a Foundation Degree in Early Years and the deputy is qualified at level 4. Ten practitioners hold a level 3 qualification. Other practitioners are working towards a level 3 qualification and one is part of an apprenticeship scheme. The team are supported by the setting administrator and there is an on-site chef. The setting is supported by the Bright Horizons Improvement manager who holds Early Years Professional Status, as well as area and regional managers.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- consistently implement effective hygiene practices so children adopt good hygiene routines at the earliest opportunity
- improve the interaction between children and practitioners at all snack times so that opportunities to promote children's choices and decision making are maximised.

Inspection judgements

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

Practitioner use their well-developed knowledge and clear understanding of the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage to provide effectively for children.

Consequently, all children are making good progress from their individual starting points. Practitioners understand how individual children learn and their particular preferences for different types of play. Practitioners use a mix of continuous provision and specifically planned activities to provide a varied programme of educational play. Practitioners use effective techniques to support and engage children. For example, they routinely sit at children's level. This means there is lots of eye contact and active listening that support learning. Practitioners are skilled in using questioning to extend children's knowledge and thinking. They understand the need to give children time to consider information and make a response.

Children enjoy interacting with practitioners; they seek them out for support. Children have strong explorative instincts. They engage well and concentrate because they are interested in the activities and have practitioners on hand who help them to make links and develop their ideas. The youngest children explore the sand and oats, using small scoops to lift and pour. They are successful builders, using plastic blocks to make tall towers. Practitioners frequently seize opportunities to introduce counting, shape and colour recognition. Older children are very observant. In the garden, a child is looking at a sunflower, although the plant is not tall the child sees the four flowers are different. The child compares the sizes, correctly identifying the smallest and largest, explaining why this is, 'It's big at the top, where it gets sun'.

Children's communication and language skills are developing well due to interactions with practitioners. Consideration for the needs of children who speak English as an additional language, means practitioners make an effort to learn words from children's home language and incorporate these in the learning environment. This helps children to feel valued and aids communication. Books play an important role in the setting and practitioners are skilled storytellers. As a result, children are eager to look at and share books in all of the rooms. A scheme to promote books as part of children's everyday experience is being used well to support them in the setting and at home with their families. The oldest children are quickly developing their knowledge of letters and sounds with many recognising their names and initial letters from the names of friends and family. This is because practitioners use print in the environment effectively to support learning and to maintain children's interest.

Children are creative and imaginative. They enjoy using different materials to make pictures of their own creation and design. Outside, the chalkboard is used by many of the children keen to draw and make marks. Inside, children make interesting patterns with their fingers in paint; prints are taken to preserve the patterns. Practitioners are skilled in making the most of children's interests to develop learning opportunities. This means, regardless of the activity, practitioner engagement and interest, along with skilful questioning, helps children to learn and explore their ideas.

Practitioners know the children very well. Key persons talk in detail about children's individual strengths and next steps. Each child has a 'my learning story book' where parents and practitioners record achievements and summaries of progress. This information is used effectively to plan worthwhile experiences in the setting and to support learning at home. As a result, children are making good progress towards the early

learning goals and are well prepared for a school learning environment.

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

Key person arrangements across the setting are effective. Practitioners regularly talk to parents and gather useful information about children's care. The flexible, individually planned settling-in routines help children form secure attachments to their key person. Consequently, children begin to form lasting bonds that make them feel secure. These effective relationships contribute to children's confidence in moving to new base rooms within the setting and help to prepare them for further moves to pre-school and school. Practitioners and parents spend time getting to know one another. This means practitioners have secure knowledge and a strong basis for developing ongoing effective partnership working.

Children behave extremely well. They listen attentively and respond to simple instructions. Practitioners are good role models and this supports children in learning what is expected of them. Opportunities for children to explore their environment provide them with managed risks and helps them to develop their understanding of safety. For example, when joining in with an active singing session, children find a friend and get into a space, making sure they have plenty of room around them to move safely. Base rooms are well organised to help children make choices about their play. This means the youngest children can move safely and use the robust furniture to support early standing and walking. Older children are confident about choosing their resources, collecting what they need for their chosen project. Children happily help with small tasks, such as, setting tables for lunch and tidying away toys they are no longer using. Practitioners are well deployed to support learning and good use is made of outdoor areas so children have plenty of fresh air and exercise. Improved tracking of children using the outdoors has increased children's safety at the setting.

Most aspects of children's health are promoted effectively. Plenty of fresh air and energetic play helps children to remain active. Good use is made of outdoor areas, on and offsite, to promote children's learning. Nutritional and well-balanced meals that meet individual dietary requirements help to promote children's well-being. Child-height sinks mean children are independent and, generally, learn about the importance of good hygiene. Although, this is not consistently reinforced across the setting, which means they do not always adopt good hygiene routines as quickly as possible. Practitioners use meal times to help the oldest children to develop their independence skills by encouraging them to serve the food and pour their own drinks. At some snack times, practitioners do not always consistently engage children or provide the chance for them to choose food and drink. This means children's opportunities to make choices and decisions are less well supported.

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

Managers and practitioners working with the children have a good understanding of the safeguarding and welfare requirements. The inspection took place following the notification of an incident where a child remained unsupervised for a short period of time in an enclosed outdoor area. The manager promptly carried out a full review of the procedures for ensuring all children are accounted for when moving between indoors and outdoors. All practitioners in the setting follow the revised procedure to ensure children are closely supervised at all times. The manager routinely reviews practice across the team to make sure an incident does not recur. Procedures for safeguarding children are good because practitioners clearly understand their responsibilities and are fully aware of the action to take should they have a child protection concern. Robust recruitment and vetting checks ensure practitioners' suitability to work with children. Thorough induction procedures support practitioners in understanding their specific role; and the setting's policies. Where there are concerns about practice, managers implement support and monitoring procedures to ensure the quality of the provision for children. Individual practitioners take responsibility for specific aspects of health and safety but all practitioners share responsibility for providing a safe play environment for all children. Regular checks on the environment and resources promote children's welfare.

Parents are included fully in all aspects of their child's life at the setting. Partnerships are valued and play an important role in providing effectively for all children. Parents are full of praise for practitioners. They are extremely positive about the setting. They value the quality of the provision for children, feel included in their child's learning and trust the key persons working with children. The setting makes every effort to communicate with parents. As a result, the two-way flow of information means parents views and opinions are included in planning for improvements and meeting children's needs. Practitioners work effectively with other professionals to meet the needs of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. This actively contributes to children making good progress and supports practitioners in narrowing any gaps in learning.

Managers monitor the provision for children. They ensure all practitioners deliver the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. All practitioners demonstrate their commitment to improving the provision. They reflect on their practice as individuals, through regular meetings with managers and as a team. This helps practitioners to achieve the goals they set for themselves, such as working for higher level qualifications and to secure improvements in the provision for all children. Prompt action is taken to address concerns and improve practice. Therefore, the team is well placed to continue its identification of aspects for development and to devise effective plans that bring about rapid improvements.

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
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 action. 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	EY219409
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	916616
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	85
Number of children on roll	90
Name of provider	Bright Horizon Family Solutions Ltd
Date of previous inspection	17/12/2012
Telephone number	01799 522522

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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, which are usually the childminder's 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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