

# The Croft Pre-School

Gutterscroft Centre, Haslington, Crewe, Cheshire, CW1 5RJ

<b>Inspection date</b>	20/11/2013
Previous inspection date	19/11/2009

<b>The quality and standards of the early years provision</b>	<b>This inspection:</b>	
	Previous inspection:	
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		3
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		3

## The quality and standards of the early years provision

### This provision requires improvement

- Children are very happy, confident and play well together. They feel safe and show high levels of independence. Children develop strong and positive relationships with the staff who care for them.
- Children have consistency and continuity of care as there are very effective partnerships between the pre-school and parents and carers. Parents and carers have a high degree of trust in the staff of the club.
- The environment and activities for children provide varied and imaginative experiences, both inside and outdoors. This helps children make steady progress across all areas of learning.

### It is not yet good because

- Children are not always sufficiently challenged or supported in their independent play, which limits their opportunities to think critically and develop good concentration skills.
- Staff roles and responsibilities, particularly during free play sessions, are not always clear. Furthermore, the organisation of the room does not always ensure that children's play and learning is sustained.

## 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 main play hall.
- The inspector had a meeting with the manager of the pre-school and undertook a joint observation with her.  
The inspector looked at children's assessment records, planning documentation, evidence of suitability of adults working in the setting and a range of other documentation, including self-evaluation records.
- The inspector took into account the views of parents and children spoken to on the day.

## Inspector

Sheila Riddall-Leech

## Full report

### Information about the setting

The Croft Pre-School was established in 1981 and is registered on the Early Years Register. It is managed by a committee and operates from the Gutterscroft Centre in Haslington, near Crewe. The pre-school serves the local area and is accessible to all children. Children use all of the open plan centre including secure areas for outdoor play.

The pre-school employs six members of childcare staff. Of these, four hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3. The pre-school opens Monday to Friday, during school term times and from 9am to 3pm. There are currently 30 children attending who are in the early years age group. The pre-school provides funded early years education for three- and four-year-old children. It receives support from the local authority and is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

### What the setting needs to do to improve further

#### To meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage the provider must:

- review the deployment of staff across the sessions and the organisation of the room, to ensure that children receive high levels of appropriate challenge and are guided in their independent play, so that they can make the most of all the learning opportunities and make good progress
- develop staff knowledge of the characteristics of effective teaching and learning, so that children are best supported to be engaged and motivated in their learning and to sustain their interest in tasks.

### Inspection judgements

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

Children are very happy, confident and are developing good levels of independence. They play well together, share and take turns. For example, children take turns to roll a ball across a circle to each other and laugh with delight when they successfully catch it. They happily and confidently engage in conversations about their activities and play with staff, visitors and each other. For example, children talk about the cold weather after playing outside and how they feel. Staff recognise children's progress, understand their needs and plan a varied range of activities to support their observed interests and next steps in their learning. Small focussed group activities in key groups offer appropriate learning opportunities. As a result, children make steady progress across all areas of learning and development. Specific sessions for children who are due to start school offer good opportunities to develop the skills that will support their future learning. For example,

children engage in a physical education session where they change clothes and dress independently and there are planned activities to develop phonic knowledge. However, overall, teaching requires improvement as not all staff extend and challenge children's thinking and learning. As a result, some children lack concentration, are easily distracted and do not engage in activities for very long periods of time. Staff do not always ask questions that can be answered in variety of ways and do not use the sort of language that will encourage children to think.

Detailed learning journey records and development profiles for all children are started as the child begins attending the pre-school. Observations carried out on a child's first day in the setting, together with information from parents, provide staff with clear indications of a child's starting points. Frequent observations of children are carried out during the sessions. These are cross referenced to the areas of learning and supported by digital photographs and examples of children's work. The learning journey provides a delightful reference to share with parents. Progress in all areas of learning is clearly tracked using the expected outcomes for development. Staff show a genuine interest in children's play and interactions and as a result, relationships between children and staff are very warm and strong.

The pre-school operates from a large community centre. This provides a good, large space for children to explore, move and develop their physical skills, independence levels and confidence, both inside and outdoors. The room is broken up by low-level storage units and dividers with the aim of providing different learning areas, such as craft, comfy corner, role play and writing table. There is a good range of quality resources, which children can access freely. Some resources are also stored in a cupboard and children can ask staff to get additional play things out, such as buggies when playing with dolls. Active and successful fundraising enables the pre-school to extend its resources and equipment. For example, sufficient funds have been raised to purchase tablet computers to develop children's awareness of technology. However, the organisation of the indoor space and lack of clear staff deployment causes several areas to be under-used. As a result, some children are easily distracted from their play, especially during key group sessions and do not fully benefit from the wide range of activities and learning opportunities offered.

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

Children's personal, social and emotional development is effectively supported within the pre-school. This enables children to form very strong relationships with their peers and the staff. A good key person system is in place, but all of the staff know the children very well. As a result, children show a real sense of belonging; they feel safe and have developed a strong sense of trust. Parents comment that their children really enjoy their time at the pre-school and are very well cared for. Behaviour is good overall; occasions when children become over-excited or too boisterous are quickly checked. Staff deal with situations sensitively and calmly and as a result, children respond to instructions and directions well. Boundaries are caringly reinforced which ensures that children are safe and well-cared for. Staff are positive role models for the children. They treat them with respect and care. Children's understanding of safety issues is demonstrated well through their play. For example, one child tells another to sit down when she is eating her lunch in case she falls

over.

Staff ensure a clean and hygienic environment through very regularly checking toilet and hand washing areas, wiping down tables and sweeping up spilt sand. They support children well to develop good hygiene practices to prevent the spread of infection. For example children know how to stay healthy by washing their hands before snack, lunch and after using the toilet. Children are provided with snacks, which are prepared on site and these are healthy, balanced and nutritious. Parents of children who stay for lunch are encouraged to bring packed lunches that follow healthy eating guidelines. Drinking water is freely available. All of the older children are fully independent in their personal hygiene routines and staff respect younger children's privacy when changing nappies. The indoor play environment gives children abundant space to move around freely and develop physical skills. Children benefit well from outdoor play in all weathers, where they can spontaneously run around, exercise and benefit from fresh air.

Staff work well as a team and share information about children's care needs and interests. There is consistency and continuity of care between the pre-school and parents, through daily informal exchanges of information and regular parents' meetings. As a result, parents are very well informed about their child's needs. Good settling in procedures effectively support children's emotional development. As a result, children who have recently started the pre-school are very happy, content and play well with other children. Good links with the feeder schools ensure that children's transitions are smooth and they are emotionally well prepared for the next stage in their learning.

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

Safeguarding meets requirements and there are no concerns. There are rigorous and clearly written policies and procedures in place to ensure the safeguarding and welfare of children. These are implemented effectively to ensure children's safety and welfare. All staff know and understand their roles and responsibilities in relation to safeguarding children. There are effective and appropriate recruitment, vetting and induction procedures in place to ensure that adults caring for children are suitable to do so. All the required policies and procedures, including risk assessments and emergency evacuation practices, are in place. These have been reviewed recently.

The majority of staff have relevant and appropriate early years qualifications and can access training opportunities through the local authority. However, in the past, training has not been given a high priority and the new manager is very keen to access as many opportunities for herself and the staff as possible in order to develop knowledge and skills, particularly in relation to how children learn. She has identified that increased training opportunities will positively impact on the learning and development of the children and help staff to develop a consistent approach to supporting learning. All of the staff show strong commitment to the care and well-being of all children. Staff performance is monitored well through an appraisal system, frequent staff meetings and one-to-one discussions with the manager. The staff have a working overview of the educational programme, but do not always implement highly effective teaching strategies. As a result,

although children's achievements are tracked against the early learning goals, next steps clearly identified and their progress is monitored, children are not always challenged or provided with opportunities to develop their thinking skills. Staff roles and responsibilities are not clear and as a result, some children are not as effectively supported in their play as others. This also results in missed learning opportunities. The manager has developed clear and achievable improvement plans which are realistic and challenging. These are developed through discussions with staff and children and parents' questionnaires. All actions and recommendations from the last inspection have been met in full. This demonstrates a sound capacity for further improvement.

Parent and carer discussions with available parents on the day of the inspection indicate that they are highly satisfied with the service provided by the pre-school. They feel that their children are safe, well-cared for and taught skills to help them in their future learning. For, example, one parent was very pleased that her child had good phonic skills before starting school and could also write her name. Parents are well informed about the activities of the pre-school through exchanges of information with the approachable and friendly staff. Newsletters and frequent discussions with staff enable information to be shared about children's activities, needs and care. There is also a parents' notice board with photographs of staff, the names of their key children and other useful information. Partnerships with the feeder school are strong and effective. As a result, children develop confidence and are well supported as they prepare for the next stage in their learning.

## 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	Requires improvement	The provision is not giving children a good standard of early years education and/or there are minor breaches of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected within twelve months of the date of this inspection.
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 monitored and inspected again within six 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	305366
<b>Local authority</b>	Cheshire East
<b>Inspection number</b>	818745
<b>Type of provision</b>	
<b>Registration category</b>	Childcare - Non-Domestic
<b>Age range of children</b>	2 - 5
<b>Total number of places</b>	24
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	30
<b>Name of provider</b>	The Croft Pre-School Haslington Committee
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	19/11/2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	07790 793353

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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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