

The Croft Nursery (Newcastle)

The Croft Nursery School, The Croft, 102 Lancaster Road, NEWCASTLE, Staffordshire, ST5 1DS

Inspection date

28/08/2014

Previous inspection date

19/09/2011

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	1
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's emotional well-being is given high priority by all staff, who take time to get to know each child and their unique ways. This results in them being happy, settled and extremely confident to learn and explore their environment, preparing them well for the next stages in their learning.
- Staff are fully aware of their responsibilities to fulfil the safeguarding and welfare requirements. Consequently, children remain safe and secure when attending the nursery.
- Partnerships with parents are valued by the setting. As a result, opportunities for parents to share information about their children and to become actively involved within the setting are promoted.
- Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive good care. Staff work closely with parents and other professionals to ensure these groups of children receive good levels of well-targeted support.
- The nursery is led by a strong management team. All staff benefit from regular training and mentoring. Consequently, children are cared for by staff who are knowledgeable, confident and enthusiastic about their role.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Staff, occasionally, are less effective at always giving children more time to respond to questioning in order to best support their creative thinking.

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.

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 checked evidence of suitability and qualifications of staff working with the children, the provider's self-evaluation form and improvement plan.
- The inspector observed play and learning activities in four rooms and spoke to staff and children in the indoor and outdoor environment.
- The inspector looked at a selection of children's assessment files and progress tracking information and spoke to the children's key persons.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to on the day.
- The inspector held a meeting with management of the nursery and conducted a discussion regarding policies and procedures.
- The inspector conducted joint observations with the manager.

Inspector

Janet Weston

Full report

Information about the setting

The nursery was registered in 1990 and is privately owned. It operates from Newcastle-under-Lyme in Staffordshire. The nursery serves the immediate locality and also the surrounding areas. The nursery opens five days a week from 7am until 6pm all year round, except bank holidays and a week at Christmas. Children attend for a variety of sessions. Children are cared for across four rooms and have access to an enclosed outdoor play area. There are currently 46 children in the early years age range. The nursery receives funding for the provision of free early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language. There are currently 11 staff, 10 of whom work directly with the children. One of the staff has the appropriate qualification at level 6, one at level 5, seven at level 3 and one at level 2. The nursery receives support from the local authority. It is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- enrich the opportunities for children's creative thinking and listening, for example, by providing more time for children to fully answer questions and make suggestions.

Inspection judgements

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

Staff have an excellent understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage, which enables them to plan activities that are enjoyable and enrich children's learning. Staff understand the need to focus on the prime areas of learning for young children, and to introduce the specific areas of learning when children are ready, to assist in the rounded development of all, especially pre-school children. Staff engage with children, talking and listening as they develop children's thinking skills and language. However, on occasions, staff are quick to respond with the answer rather than allowing more time for children to respond to questions about their own learning. Children are supported well because staff are highly qualified, experienced and attentive to their needs. Children are provided with the freedom to explore their learning environment and are confident to do so. Children's language development is a priority and staff work closely with individual children and families to promote this. For example, children discuss colours, shapes, countries, travel and herbs while making pizza. They ask staff what factories are and if lavender is a herb. Staff discuss these topics in more depth, which provides children with an interesting and challenging learning experience as well as information concerning the world around them. Babies develop good mobility skills as they pull themselves up to a standing position, and

are encouraged to crawl and explore. Skilled and attentive staff encourage younger children to discover sensory sensations through touch, for example, encouraging children to feel the cream as it turns from foam to liquid.

Staff complete regular progress reports for children, including the progress check completed between the ages of two and three years. These are detailed and provide parents with an informative summary of their children's progress. The summary reports include ideas for parents so they are able to continue the learning at home. The clear system for observations, assessments and planning supports all children to make good progress. Children are confident to talk to visitors and discuss with them how they like coming to nursery saying 'I like it here'. Staff praise children's efforts which helps to promote their emotional well-being. Staff compile a personal file for each child which contains observations and photographs of children participating in a variety of activities. Assessments of children are compiled each term and are shared with parents so they are consistently informed of their child's progress and attainment in a timely manner. Observations are carried out regularly and used to identify children's next steps in learning. Staff encourage children to actively tidy away toys and this is made easier by the designated areas and labelled storage containers. Children enjoy a good balance of child-initiated and adult-led activities. Staff are skilful in involving all children and ensure children are interested and fully engaged in the activity. For example, during snack, staff play a counting game and guess the fruit game. This continues with a discussion about colour, textures and smell. Consequently, children make good progress in their learning and development and are developing relevant skills to prepare them for school.

Children's independence is actively encouraged, as staff reassure them to do things for themselves. They tidy away toys and resources after activities, and children help set the table at lunchtimes. The older children also enjoy carrying out their monitor duties. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language, are well supported within the nursery to ensure their needs are met. Parent partnerships are good. Parents share information regarding initial starting points and complete observations of children's learning and development at home. They are kept informed about their child's progress through regular feedback and parents evenings. Parents are provided with information about the nursery policies and procedures. For example, there are noticeboards in each room and reception displaying policies and extracts on a wide range of health and educational issues to support parents.

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

An exceptionally well-established key-person system and the highly effective deployment of staff enable children to form strong, secure emotional attachments. Staff's knowledge of their key children and their commitment to nurturing the well-being of every child in their care is exemplary. The utmost priority is given to make sure children's moves from home to the nursery, and within the nursery, are highly effective. Attachments are strong because the highly motivated staff have an excellent understanding of how to listen closely to parents and children needs. Staff gain an excellent insight of children's interests and starting points and use this information to provide experiences that allow children to excel in their learning. The key-person system is extremely effective. Each child is

assigned a key person and this is shown on a display to inform parents so they know who to speak with if they have a concern. Staff respect and value children as individuals and key persons immediately respond to their physical and emotional needs to ensure they remain content and comfortable. For example, they ask permission to check and change babies' nappies. Babies and children actively seek out their key person for comfort and cuddles when they need reassurance. Babies and children settle very well into the nursery because staff gather detailed knowledge from parents about their likes, dislikes, comforters and daily routines. Children are confident and self-assured around visitors, knowing staff are readily available for reassurance if needed. Children speak to visitors in the nursery and ask them various questions, for example, 'do you have animals?' and 'have you got children?' demonstrating their curiosity, confidence and strong emotional well-being. Effective arrangements are in place when children move into another room in the nursery. Staff support them emotionally by sharing learning and development information and taking them on regular visits. Therefore, children are confident to move to their new surroundings. Staff and parents share the care needs of children through daily conversations at the beginning and end of each day. This ensures children's individual needs are catered for and a consistent approach is created.

Staff are exceptional role models, children are encouraged to share resources and use good manners when asking for things. Children are extremely well-behaved and have a clear understanding of expected behaviour. This results in children respecting others and learning to cooperate with peers. Excellent links with other settings and the sharing of information support consistency for meeting children's needs within their learning and development. Children play a dynamic role in their own learning and their thoughts and suggestions are taken into account by staff for future planning. For example, the outside wooden hut is being resourced and transformed into a highly innovative pets home. This, combined with the staff's excellent support, helps build self-esteem and develop skills that will significantly benefit the children as they move onto the next steps in their learning. Staff enthusiastically liaise with local schools, where children transfer, to ensure children are extremely well prepared for their next move. For example, Reception class teachers are invited to visit children in the nursery.

The nursery has a cook who gives utmost priority to ensure children enjoy excellent nutritious home-cooked meals where their individual dietary requirements are carefully considered. Older children skilfully serve themselves at meal times, which promotes their independence. They learn about good hygiene procedures as staff explain why they should wash their hands before eating and after toileting. Consequently, children's independence skills are promoted very well. Risk assessments are regularly undertaken, ensuring that children are protected from any risks and respond readily to any changes in the environment. Children enjoy using the outdoor learning environment, which provide a good range of learning opportunities for all children. Regular physical exercise classes take place. This allows children to develop a healthy balanced lifestyle where their physical needs are effectively promoted. Their knowledge and understanding is further enriched as they plant, grow and harvest produce, such as pumpkin seeds for the nursery garden. Parents comment that they have excellent relationships with all staff and feel reassured that they know their children remarkably well. For example, they comment, 'my key person knows my child better than me sometimes'. This care and attention enhances parents' sense of trust and security in the quality of their child's care. Children's well-being

is addressed extremely well and parents are provided with clear details on the nursery's practices through policies on transition, safety, illness and accidents. Children take activities home to share learning with their families. This helps parents to understand how to support their child's learning through play in the home. Parents are very happy about the care offered by the nursery stating the nursery is 'brilliant'.

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

Children's welfare is promoted well because arrangements for safeguarding are thorough. All staff receive regular training in this area and are well supported by management. Staff request visitor identification and record this in the visitors' book. Recruitment of staff is robust and ensures that all staff working with children are suitable. Management ensure that new staff have a good awareness of safeguarding, by including this in the thorough induction process. All staff and volunteers are vetted to ensure they are suitable to work with children. Furthermore, the premises are kept safe and secure. Staff undertake daily checks of the premises and outdoor area. These procedures contribute to keeping children safe. Staff have completed safeguarding training and are confident about their role to protect children in their care. Consequently, safeguarding procedures are good and promote the safety of children.

The management is aware of their responsibilities with regards to the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage, and through the effective deployment of staff, ensures the nursery is well-organised. Regular room and team meetings ensure that staff are supported, further promoting their professional development. This ensures that staff have a good understanding of their responsibilities, and access a range of regular training opportunities through the local authority. Monitoring of the educational provision is effective as the tracking systems and children's assessments are carefully managed, to ensure these identify any gaps in children's learning. Additionally, any identified gaps in children's learning are planned for and closed quickly. The manager leads a dedicated and well-established staff team, many of whom have worked at the nursery for many years. The management undertake formal and informal observations of how staff interact with children. This is used to inform the regular supervision and appraisals. The nursery management meets with other providers to access training opportunities, and to also share aspects of positive practice.

Self-evaluation is effective with areas of strength and weakness identified and targeted for improvement. A range of opportunities are used to drive forward improvements and further development. Since the last inspection, recommendations have been fully addressed. Management regularly consult parents through discussions and questionnaires, so that they are regularly updated in respect of their opinions and ideas. This information is used when considering changes and improvements to the setting, for example, recently amending the opening hours. Parents comment the staff are 'very friendly and professional' and they are 'very happy with the fantastic nursery'. Recent questionnaires include parental comments, such as 'we will be recommending you to all of our family and friends' and 'the way my child settled in so well was completely unexpected, she loves it

here'.

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
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. We re-inspect nurseries and pre-schools judged as requires improvement within 12 months of the date of 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		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. 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	218503
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	865764
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	54
Number of children on roll	46
Name of provider	Croft Nursery School Limited
Date of previous inspection	19/09/2011
Telephone number	01782 614247

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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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M1 2WD

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