



Cranmore & Doultong Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	142975
Inspection date	22 November 2006
Inspector	Jan Healy
Setting Address	Memorial Hall, West Cranmore, Shepton Mallet, Somerset, BA4 4QJ
Telephone number	07751533997
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Registered person	Cranmore & Doultong Pre-School
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Sessional care

ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Cranmore and Doultong Pre-School opened in 1992. It operates from the Memorial Hall situated in the centre of the village of Cranmore, approximately three miles from Shepton Mallet in Somerset. A maximum of 24 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The nursery is open Monday to Friday during term time, from 09:15 to 12:15. The children share access to a secure outdoor play area.

There are currently 16 children from two years to under five years, on roll. Of these seven children receive funding for nursery education. The nursery employs five staff, two of whom are full-time and all hold a qualification in early years.

The pre-school is committee run and receive support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

The staff aid the children, by preventing the spread of infection, by ensuring the children attending are fit and healthy. If a child becomes ill during their stay, they are swiftly reunited with their parents, to help ensure children's good health. A cleaning routine is in place which does not interrupt children's activities, so adult: child ratios are maintained, providing children with appropriate adult support. Children are taught about the benefit of exercise, as well as the need for rest. Children are taught about the advantage of effective hand washing and drying, to prevent the spread of cross-infection. Staff attend first aid training, so they are capable of dealing with an emergency if necessary. Accidents are recorded and parents are informed about any injury to their child, including those where no wound is visible.

Staff discuss the importance of healthy living with the children, for example, what foods provide them with the minerals and vitamins to keep themselves healthy. They eat a healthy and nutritious snack of fruit, milk and water, and have independent access to fresh drinking water, which helps to prevent dehydration. Staff are aware of the children who have a special dietary requirement, and prevent children from swapping food, to ensure they remain healthy.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The group meet at a memorial hall, which they share with other groups, making it difficult for the staff to display children's work, however, they make the premises as welcoming as possible with posters and pictures. The playroom is clean, warm and well maintained, adding to children's comfort. Children and parents are greeted by the staff upon arrival, making for a pleasant atmosphere, and the room is prepared with a reasonable range of toys which children confidently access.

Most toys and resources are stored in boxes which are found on shelves within children's reach, so they are able to independently access toys of their choice. Boxes are labelled with words and pictures, aiding children's knowledge of the resources available. There is also a book containing photographs of the toys, further aiding the children who are less confident. There are enough child sized chairs and tables to allow the children to play and eat together in comfort. Children have access to natural materials, for example, play dough, which the staff make, and to recycled material, such as empty cereal boxes, which they use for model making.

Staff minimise hazards, by regularly checking the provision is safe, for example, ensuring all toys and equipment are suitable for use. Photographs of poisonous plants inform the staff about any hazardous flowers and shrubs, so they are removed for the good health of children. Security is a priority, with doors being kept locked, to prevent access to unwanted visitors. Staff maintain fire drill records, which children practise on different days of the week to ensure part-time children take part, so they are able to leave the premises swiftly and safely. Staff are deployed effectively during outings and are vigilant to ensure all the children are supervised.

Staff have sound knowledge and understanding with regard to child protection. They are aware of the signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect, such as changes to a child's behaviour or appearance, and are capable of dealing with a concern should one arise. Staff seek appropriate on-going training to keep themselves up to date and share a written policy with parents. Staff avoid putting themselves in situations that may lead to allegations being made about them, however, this procedure is not stated in the policy.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

The staff and children share a warm and affectionate relationship. Children are able to approach the staff and ask them questions, as they are friendly and respectful of their needs. Reassurance is given to children who are learning a new task or who become upset, through positive and caring communication and body language. A reasonable range of activities help the children to develop in their learning. Most resources are easily accessible, so the children are able to make choices and to use their initiative.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The person in charge holds a relevant qualification in early childhood education and has the ability, the experience and the skills to lead the staff. She ensures her staff receive the training they require to enable them to carry out their duties, which in turn has a positive impact on the children. The children are appropriately grouped, giving consideration to their number, available space and the activity the children are involved in. Staff spend the majority of their time working with the children, sitting at their level, joining in their play, and answering their questions. However, planning lacks detail and so is therefore not very focused. Planning is the key to making children's learning effective, exciting, varied and progressive, therefore, the staff need to think and talk about children's learning and plan how to promote it effectively.

Children are making acceptable progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world. They collect leaves from their local environment, looking at the colour, feeling the texture and exploring the weight, by noticing how they blow away easily when dry. Children explore the features of living things, for example, tadpoles, identifying the basic differences as they grow and change. They build and construct using recycled material to make musical instruments. Staff take the children on outings, walking around their local village, helping the children to understand the purpose of such features as the church, shop, railway station and bus stop. Children are learning to make use of everyday technology, for example, playing games on a computer and developing the art of making use of the mouse.

Children are making sound progress in their physical development. Children interlock pieces of simple jigsaw, couple carriages of trains and fasten pieces of Lego together, aiding to enhance their dexterity and hand and eye coordination. They are becoming more sure of their ability when climbing the steps of the slide and turning to sit. Children are beginning to show an awareness of space, when participating in music and movement, using their sense of space, when requested to stand in a line for outdoor play. They are learning to move with control and coordination when riding the wheeled toys, avoiding bumping into each other.

Children are making steady progress in their communication, language and literacy. They are learning to recognise their name during arrival time, as they select their name tag and place it on a board to notify everyone that they are in attendance. Children role-play in the home corner, pretending to be members of their family, and to make telephone calls and dates in a diary. Children are extending their vocabulary by exploring the meaning of new words during baking activities, for instance, gram and kilo.

Children are making adequate progress in their personal, social and emotional development. They are learning to take care of themselves, for example, to use a paper tissue when necessary, and to take care of others, including birds, as they go for walks to the local duck pond, to feed them bread. Self-help skills are increasing, as the children attempt to put on their own coat and to take themselves to the toilet when required. They are becoming more independent during snack time, taking responsibility to ensure each child has a banana or piece of toast and either milk or water.

Children are making sufficient progress in their creative development. They are learning their colours, and to mix two colours to make a third. Children respond to what they see, for example, when making gingerbread men, they spoke about their likes and dislikes to the smell and taste. They play with cooked spaghetti, learning to expand their descriptive language, for example, describing the spaghetti as 'sticky' and 'messy'. Children explore how sounds can be changed, when experimenting with musical instruments, for example, when banging a drum using a drum stick and when using their hand.

Children are making positive progress in their mathematical development. They are learning about the names of shapes, including triangle, circle, square and rectangle, and to count the sides. Some children are able to say that six comes after five, and are able to count up to 13. Children join in with number songs, and are becoming familiar with number activities, which they play cooperatively. They are beginning to recognise and use words, such as large, big, small, fat and thin, to describe the properties of a set of attributes.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children are treated with equal concern with their individual requirements valued and respected, as all the children are able to join in with all the activities on offer. Staff are aware of the importance to expose children to other cultures at an early age, as this results in children being less likely to become prejudiced, as this is usually based on ignorance. Therefore, a sufficient range of books, toys and posters reflect positive images of diversity.

The staff are aware that there are some children who have a learning disability, and work in partnership with parents and outside agencies, such as health visitors and speech therapists, to ensure such a disability is identified, so positive steps are taken to promote the welfare and development of children. All the children are included in all the activities as the staff organise the space effectively.

The staff adopt a consistent approach to behaviour management, as they work as a team and in conjunction with parents. Incidents are recorded, so staff are able to identify any problems, so they are resolved swiftly. Children are given responsibility, for instance, to give each child a banana for snack, and to tidy away the toys they are finished playing with, helping to increase their independence. Rules are in place, for example, no standing on the furniture, which helps to keep children safe, and they are reminded of the rules when necessary. Desirable behaviour is encouraged through praise, and unwanted behaviour is dealt with according to the age and children's stage of development and understanding, such as time out.

Partnership with parents is satisfactory. The staff welcome parents into the pre-school, providing an opportunity for them to meet the staff, and to observe a session taking place, prior to admission. The staff seek to obtain as much information about the children, which is recorded, including personal details, to help provide for their individual needs. Information about the planning, forthcoming events, policies and procedures are readily available, as parents have access to two notice boards. The staff write details about each child's day in a book which they share with parents on a daily basis, so they are kept well informed about any progress being made, or about any concerns noted. A complaints procedure is in place which parents are aware of, however, it does not contain the address and telephone number of Ofsted whom parents may wish to contact.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The person in charge considers the flexibility of the group when varying children's experiences by allowing them to make use of the space available, including the hall for physical play, as well as the playroom and outside play area. Activities are age appropriate, providing for children's individual needs. The person in charge ensures there is a vital link between the parents and staff to ensure continuity of care.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. However, the staff do not record the times of children's or staff's arrival or departure, therefore, in the event of the need to check historical records, the children may not be fully protected. Additional staff are available, so there are always enough staff working directly with the children, so that minimum ratios are maintained at all times. The location of the toilets are adequate, so the children are supervised at all times to ensure their safety.

The staff keep Ofsted informed about any significant changes, and all records and documentation are available for inspection, which are stored confidentially and are shared on a need to know basis, such as the appropriate parent. Relevant records are maintained for a reasonable period of time, so they can be checked by Ofsted to ensure the necessary checks are in place.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, the staff were requested to develop and implement an action plan detailing how at least half of all the staff will hold a level 2 qualification in childcare. All the staff have now completed their training, and hold at least a level 2. The staff now conduct a regular risk assessment on the premises, identifying the risks to children, for example, by

ensuring the outdoor play area is fully enclosed. The staff complete a fire log book, and regularly practise an emergency evacuation procedure. Parents are now requested to provide their written permission, before the staff administer medication to children, and written records are maintained. The staff ensure that children are supported during group times and are considerate to each other, with regard to behaviour management. Opportunities are in place during snack time to enhance children's independence, for example, by providing children responsibility to ensure each child has a drink. The staff now have adequate knowledge with regard to the early learning goals, so they are able to organise opportunities for learning.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

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The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure there is a system in place, for recording the time of arrival and departure of children and staff
- provide the name, address and telephone number of Ofsted in the complaints procedure
- ensure there is a written procedure to follow, in the event of an allegation of abuse being made about a member of staff or volunteer

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure short term plans are based on the long term plan, using on-going observations and informal assessment of the children, writing a clear evaluation

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education (HMI ref no 2599)* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk