



Crestway Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY310892
Inspection date	31 January 2006
Inspector	Linda Patricia Coccia
Setting Address	The Community Centre, Stonecross Lea, Chatham, Kent, ME5 0BL
Telephone number	
E-mail	
Registered person	Deborah Anne Tutt
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 good. 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?

Crestway Pre-School opened in 2005 and operates from 2 rooms in a community centre. It is situated in the town of Chatham, Kent. A maximum of 26 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 09.15 to 12.00, for 33 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 28 children aged from 2 to under 5 years on roll. Of these, 14

children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from a local catchment area. The nursery currently supports children with special educational needs.

The nursery employs five staff members, three of whom, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications. The other two staff members are waiting for appropriate childcare qualification courses to become available.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children participate in effective personal hygiene procedures. They wash their hands with antibacterial soap after using the toilet or playing with messy play activities. They are regularly reminded why they need to wash their hands. Children use a good system for taking themselves to the toilet if they feel confident enough. Younger children are still accompanied by staff. Children are also kept safe from the spread of infection by the implementation of a well written sick child policy and gentle reminders from well placed posters.

Children are offered a good selection of food which is healthy and nutritious. They are able to choose from a selection of fruit, vegetables and toast during snack time. They are encouraged to spread their toast with jam and butter. They are able to pour their own drinks at snack time and help themselves to water, which is readily available, throughout each session. The children also enjoy tasting different foods such as noodles and rice, which are provided by staff as part of regular activities. Children are beginning to have an awareness of healthy eating.

Children use a good range of energetic, physical activities that contribute to a healthy lifestyle. They develop self confidence in their physical skills as they use a wide range of indoor toys and equipment, from climbing frames and play tunnels to, moving to music or balancing on discs. They are aware of safety issues surrounding the use of large equipment, for example they know they must not go up or down the slide if someone is at the top or bottom, to avoid hurting each other. The children learn to dress themselves in their own coats and boots, as they prepare for their daily outdoor play activities in the enclosed garden area. They use a variety of physical equipment outdoors, hoops and balls but staff also include items such as binoculars and magnifying glasses to help them investigate their surroundings. Children greatly enjoy their physical play.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in an environment which is spacious but warm, and which staff make friendly and welcoming. Children are able to move around safely, freely and independently.

The toys and equipment that the children use are appropriate to their ages, are safe,

checked regularly for hygiene and cleaned when necessary. The children are able to help themselves safely to all the toys as they are stored in child friendly shelving and cupboards.

Children benefit from a good range of safety measures, for example socket covers, fire extinguishers and a fully secure outdoor play area. They develop a good awareness of safety through practising emergency evacuations every half term and discussing the reasons for this with staff. Reminders by staff, such as a request to pick up toys from the floor to prevent someone tripping over, increase children's awareness of everyday safety in the setting. Children learn to keep themselves and each other safe.

There are well written, clear, concise procedures for dealing with child protection issues which help keep the children safe. The written information is shared with parents which ensures they have a good understanding of the group's role in protecting children. Children's well-being is promoted.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy their time at the nursery. They smile, laugh and interact very well with staff. The walls are decorated with children's work as well as brightly coloured information posters, all helping to make the atmosphere homely, friendly and welcoming. Photographs of children enjoying activities are made available to children and their parents. Children settle easily each morning.

There are lots of appropriate and interesting toys for the children to play with, which cover the appropriate areas of development. However, staff do not yet use Birth to three matters to assess the needs of the under threes. There is a well equipped home corner and creative tables where children can draw and paint with a variety of different mediums. There are also quiet areas where the children can relax and read books. Children are able to choose their own activities and utilise them well, for example a number of children used pasta twists in the sand tray but then decided they would use them in the home corner which was doubling up as a restaurant. They selected items from the menu and served them to each other. The relaxed atmosphere allows children to develop at their own pace.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children show a sense of belonging as they play and learn together. They are confident and friendly and show care and concern for others. Children are becoming independent learners as they move around the room, choose their own activities and follow routines such as helping to tidy toys away. However, children of all ages participate fully in the activities provided regardless of their ability, with no differentiation between them. Children aged 3 years are catered for very well. However, those rising 4 and the 4 year-olds become boisterous and unruly during some activities, particularly at story and group times, as they are not sufficiently challenged. Children learn about the similarities and differences between themselves and others through projects and

themes, which include activities about their own families and others from around the world. They demonstrate curiosity as they take turns to use equipment like tape measures and microscopes. The use of both indoor and outdoor areas promotes children's developing physical skills and they are adept at riding scooters and using other large physical equipment. Children are able to recognise their own name as they self-register each morning. They use mark making equipment to construct shopping lists, restaurant orders and record sizes. They use tools such as toy screw drivers to pretend to repair toys and other equipment.

Staff understand children's needs and provide a sufficient range of activities and experiences. They have a sound knowledge of the foundation stage, a reasonable range of teaching methods and an adequate understanding of how young children learn and progress. However, staff do not undertake initial assessments of children's abilities and therefore, they have no starting points to enable them to move children forward. Whilst they do undertake on-going assessments to monitor children's progress, they do not use the information gained to inform planning. Consequently, planning lacks depth as it does not take account of children's individual needs. As a result, older and more able children are not sufficiently challenged.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are highly valued as individuals. They develop a positive attitude to others and gain a good understanding about the wider world and community through celebrating festivals, tasting food from a variety of cultures and having access to a good range of play resources including some sensitive posters which show positive images of culture, ethnicity, gender and disability. Children learn about each other's differences and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The individual needs of all children who attend are well met. The setting has effective arrangements to care for children with special educational or medical needs through the provision of a Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) who works closely with any appropriate agencies, such as speech therapists.

Children receive lots of praise for their achievements. The staff use effective, written behaviour management strategies which are shared with parents. One parent reported that her child's confidence and self esteem have come on in leaps and bounds since attending the group. The staff are enthusiastic about giving praise and not dwelling too much on negative behaviour. Children play freely within effective boundaries and develop good self esteem.

Parents report that the children receive very good care and support from the staff and they feel able to approach staff for advice about their child. Parents receive a good insight into how their children develop through the daily verbal exchanges about the children's well being and achievements. Children receive continuity of care.

Partnership with parents is satisfactory. The parents of funded children receive some information about the foundation stage and the funding system. However, information lacks sufficient detail regarding areas of learning and the stepping stones appropriate

to the children in the group. There are some inconsistencies regarding parents knowledge regarding children's records. Some parents are unaware that development records are kept on their children, whilst others receive written termly reports. Parents receive regular newsletters, know who their child's key-workers are and are satisfied that their children are well cared for.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The group displays their registration document. The provider ensures that the staff are suitable to work with the children through a robust recruitment and vetting procedure. All staff have been vetted and hold Criminal Record Bureau (CRB) checks. Staff are regularly monitored and supervised. Training opportunities such as workshops and short courses are readily available to staff. For example, staff are undergoing training on the implementation of the Birth to three matters framework. The owner and two of her staff hold appropriate childcare qualifications to NVQ level 3. All staff hold current paediatric first aid course certificates. However, a lack of available qualification courses have, so far, thwarted her attempts to get all staff fully qualified.

The group's organisational plan is readily available to all parents. It is currently being updated to include information concerning the Birth to three matters framework and the new recruitment and vetting procedures for staff. Children's records are maintained confidentially and stored appropriately. The group has a complaints log available to parents, procedures for which have been followed impeccably. All Children Act regulations are met.

The leadership and management is satisfactory. The aims and objectives of the pre-school are clearly stated in the operational plan. The registered person has lots of enthusiasm and commitment, which in turn motivates staff. As the new owner of an existing pre-school, she is looking for effective ways to develop and improve the provision, particularly in the areas of partnership with parents and the foundation stage planning. However, a lack of regular monitoring of the planning has failed to ascertain that older children are not being fully catered for. The registered person encourages staff to participate fully in the running of the group and to take on individual responsibilities such as key-worker roles. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since registration.

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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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 written permission is obtained from parents for seeking emergency medical treatment for their children.

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 that the parents of funded children receive more detailed information about the foundation stage and the stepping stones, know about their children's development records and can access them easily.
- increase the information obtained on children's initial assessments so as to ensure that staff are aware of children's starting points.
- develop planning to ensure activities provided offer sufficient challenge for all children.

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