

Crowgate Child Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY386783
Inspection date	05/05/2009
Inspector	Deborah Ball
Setting address	Oak Meadow, BISHOPS CASTLE, Shropshire, SY9 5PA
Telephone number	01588 630133
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Type of setting	Childcare on non-domestic premises

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

Description of the setting

Crowgate Child Centre opened in 1995 and is a co-operative run provision. It moved to its current premises in 2008. The provision operates from purpose-built premises situated next to the primary school in Bishops Castle, Shropshire. The setting serves both local and surrounding areas. There is an enclosed area available for outdoor play. The setting is open Monday to Friday from 08:00 to 18:00 all year round. Children are able to attend for a variety of sessions.

A maximum of 26 children aged from two years to under eight years may attend the setting at any one time. There are currently 47 children attending who are within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The setting is in receipt of nursery education funding. The provision is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. The setting supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The co-operative employs seven members of staff, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications. Two members of staff hold Foundation Degrees and are currently working towards Early Years Professional Status and BA (Hons) in Professional Development. The setting receives support from the local authority.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good. Children are provided with consistently very good quality care, support and encouragement from practitioners who are very obviously committed to promoting an exciting, happy and motivating learning environment. Effective systems are in place which ensures a safe, secure and well-maintained environment where children are nurtured and enabled to make good progress towards the early learning goals. Policies, procedures and other documentation are detailed, thorough and in good order, reviewed regularly and reflect the good practice evident in the daily routine. Children benefit from the relationships that their parents and carers enjoy with staff, although these could be extended to further support children's learning and development. Although the manager and staff have started systems for self-evaluation, these are not yet fully developed to ensure the setting is able to make continuous improvements.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- develop further links with other providers delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage
- extend the system for evaluating the effectiveness of the provision to ensure that quality improvement is a continuous process.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Children benefit from the strong leadership and management of both the manager and the co-operative. The manager and staff work very well together as a committed and enthusiastic team. Continuous communication enables information to flow effectively, ensuring consistency and continuity for all children. Staff use their time well to ensure that every child's individual and unique needs are well met. Staff have ongoing access to training which ensures they remain up-to-date with current good practice and changes within the early years field. As a result, they are fully informed of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and implement this very well to provide a high standard of care and positive outcomes for children.

The manager makes some use of self-evaluation to consider the group's strengths and areas for improvements and has worked with the local authority mentors and advisors to improve practice. However, the self-evaluation system is not yet sufficiently developed to ensure priorities for continuous improvement are clearly identified and acted upon. Children's welfare is promoted and safeguarded because all required policies and procedures are current and effective in practice. Recruitment, vetting and induction procedures are robust and risk assessments are thorough. Staff are vigilant about ensuring the premises are secure. Ongoing visual safety checks are carried out each day with positive action taken to ensure that all perceived hazards are minimised. All staff have a good knowledge of the setting's child protection policies and procedures, which are reflective of Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) guidelines.

Parents and carers are able to view and contribute to their children's assessment and observation records at any time and these are formally shared at regular times throughout the year. Relationships between staff and local school teachers are well developed and work to support children's transition to school well. However, children's progression and continuity of care when attending more than one provider is not fully supported as relationships have not yet been developed to ensure that information is effectively shared. Relationships with professionals from external agencies are, however, well developed thus ensuring that all children, including children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language, receive the support they need in order to make progress in line with their unique welfare, learning and development needs.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children make good progress in all areas of learning and development and are having lots of fun. Staff structure the day flexibly and make full use of the indoor and outdoor environment to maximise opportunities for children's progress and enjoyment. The quality of planning for individuals is of a good standard and it is carefully informed through regular observations of children during play. Children with additional needs are supported admirably as staff thoughtfully plan activities to encourage all children to reach their full potential. Effective communication between staff and parents ensure that secure links are made between children's

home life and the setting. Staff know individual children's personalities well and the effective key person system actively encourages parents to share information about their child. Attractive and informative 'Learning Journeys' are maintained for children and parents are invited to contribute to these.

Children are learning about the wider world through craft activities, stories, music and everyday discussion. A range of religious and cultural festivals are explored and resources reflect positive images of diversity. Children communicate confidently, readily initiating and engaging in conversation with their peers, the staff and visitors to the setting. The children show an interest in books and stories and an array of texts are available to them. They listen intently during group times and staff skilfully encourage them to reflect on past activities and experiences. Children make good use of writing resources to make marks and practise their developing writing skills. They engage in sorting and matching games and spontaneously use mathematical language in their play, for example, as they compare the differing sizes of bears. Children's creativity is very well supported. They enjoy the freedom to select and express their ideas through easy access to a wide range of stimulating materials, for example, paint, dough, sand and construction toys. Children build with a purpose in mind as they use large scale construction materials to build the three chairs in the story of "Goldilocks and the Three Bears" and compare the differing sizes. They explore volume and capacity in the sand and water tray as they pour from one container to another and investigate and experiment with various textures and materials such as porridge and soil. Children confidently access age-appropriate programmes on the setting's computer.

Children are developing good habits as active, inquisitive and independent learners. Staff promote this through the effective use of open-ended questions and the provision of a wide range of carefully chosen and accessible resources. Children are able to select a wide variety of resources for themselves and they help staff to tidy them away after play. A thoughtfully planned environment makes this possible and available space is optimised well. Children are learning to protect their own safety through discussions during everyday experiences. For example, children are taught to use scissors and tools carefully. Children listen to staff and demonstrate good behaviour and manners.

Children's good health is promoted. They enjoy healthy snacks and drinks and are enabled to enjoy packed lunches provided by parents in a social lunchtime, chatting with friends or being supported by staff to develop their independence skills. All children play outside on a daily basis which allows them to experience nature, the changing weather and seasons and to enjoy the space and opportunity to be physically active and exuberant.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

Overall effectiveness

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	3

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	2
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	3
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	2
How well are children safeguarded?	2

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	2
How well are children helped to stay safe?	2
How well are children helped to be healthy?	2
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	2
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	2
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	2

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Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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