



Crosslands Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	141747
Inspection date	22 February 2006
Inspector	Stella Grace Dykes
Setting Address	45 Crosslands, Stantonbury, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire, MK14 6AY
Telephone number	01908 317869
E-mail	
Registered person	Anne Mead
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day 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 good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Crosslands Day Nursery is one of two nurseries owned by the same provider. It opened in 1997 and operates from a house that has been converted for its use. It is situated in a residential area of Milton Keynes. A maximum of 21 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 08.00 to 18.00 for 51 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 23 children aged from 8 months to under 5 years on roll. Of these, 8 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from a local catchment area. The nursery currently supports some children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs six staff. Of these, five staff including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications. One staff member is working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children play in suitably hygienic surroundings, which contribute to them staying healthy. Babies benefit from the effective regimes that ensure that their toys and equipment are clean. Staff have good procedures when changing nappies, which helps to protect babies from the risk of infection. Older children begin to learn about safeguarding their own health, for example by washing their hands before meal times. Staff can act in children's best interests if they become ill while in their care, because they have the relevant information and consent from parents to do so.

Children have opportunities for energetic physical activity as they regularly play outside. During this play they extend their existing skills and develop new ones. They learn about controlling their own bodies when they guide doll's buggies and wheeled toys around.

Children have a variety of healthy snacks and meals, which are prepared by staff on site. They have only those foods that are suitable for them, because staff act on information from parents about their children's dietary needs. Meal times are sociable occasions, when children sit together. Staff sit with babies, and chat with them while they spoon feed. However, some children have difficulty eating some foods, because it is not given to them in a form that they can easily manage.

Children have continuous access to drinks, because the nursery provides each child with their own water bottle with their name on it, which they take with them as they move from room to room, and when they play outside. Staff in the baby rooms make sure that babies' fluid intake is sufficient by offering them frequent drinks.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are comfortable and at ease in the familiar surroundings of the nursery. They benefit from spending their time in a welcoming and child friendly environment, where there are suitable levels of hygiene and maintenance. They move confidently around, choosing the best place for their play. Children benefit from having access to an outdoor play space that includes an area that is sheltered so that they can use it for much of the year.

Children choose for themselves from a range of toys and play materials, which are stored so that they have easy access to them. It includes items that meet the varying needs of the children who attend. Some items are well used, but remain serviceable. Staff keep the stock in good order, so that it is well presented, and remains attractive to children throughout the day.

Children use child-sized tables and chairs, and have facilities to rest and relax, for example in the book areas, where there are soft cushions on the floors. Children who need to sleep during the day have comfortable mattresses, which are labelled for their individual use.

Children play safely, because staff put the nursery's effective regimes into practice, for instance, carrying out regular fire drills. Children are further protected by the equipment, such as safety gates and door-hinge protectors, that is in place throughout the nursery.

Staff maintain good levels of security, and only the manager or her deputy opens the front door to parents and visitors. Staff supervise children effectively, and make sure that there are enough adults to care for them during staff breaks, so that the risks to children are reduced.

Staff promote children's welfare because they have an adequate knowledge of the signs and symptoms that might be cause for concern. However, the nursery's policy does not give staff sufficient guidance on the lines of communication in such circumstances, nor does it include the procedures to be followed should an allegation be made against a member of staff.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are settled and at home in the nursery. They generally have warm and friendly relationships with each other, and with staff. They choose from a wide range of activities that stimulate and engage them. Staff spend time talking with children and supporting their play, so that they get the most from each experience and make progress.

Staff know the children well, and are able to meet their individual needs. Children of all ages receive good standards of care. Staff take account of the Birth to 3 framework, to help them to further improve the care and learning experiences of the babies and younger children in the nursery.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a good knowledge of the Foundation Stage which they use when planning activities. They note what children can do, and use this information to plan a variety of experiences that help children to make good progress towards the early learning goals.

Children are self-motivated learners, and are keen to take part in the life of the

nursery. They feel confident, safe and secure, so that they are able to focus on their chosen tasks. Most children behave well, and generally understand the behavioural expectations in the nursery. Most show care, concern, and consideration for others.

Children use language effectively to exchange ideas and information, and to explore their play. They speak confidently to each other and to known adults, and pay attention to what others say. Older children use language to negotiate and organise their play with each other.

Children enjoy looking at books. They hold them the right way up and handle them with care. Most children enjoy listening to stories, and if they are familiar ones, older and more able children can say what happens next.

Children readily choose from the good range of resources for mark making and writing. They are learning that writing carries meaning, for example, when they use pencils and paper to make "invitations" for each other. They are skilled at holding and using pencils and other writing tools correctly. Older children use pens to trace their names when written by an adult.

Children show an interest in shape and space, for example when arranging a number of toys in a row. Older children correctly identify familiar shapes, such as circles and squares. Younger children count confidently up to five, while older children reach 10 and beyond. Children are beginning to use language in their play to describe the position of things, for example, identifying that one object is under another. However, children generally do not have enough opportunities to use numbers for counting, as labels, or for simple calculation.

Children explore and comment on a variety of different materials, including glue, paint, flour and water. They use some of them to make collages and pictures. They engage in imaginative and role-play, using the toys and materials available to them. They join in enthusiastically with familiar songs and nursery rhymes.

Children move around confidently, showing good control of their bodies. Indoors, they negotiate their way around tables and other furniture. They show an awareness of and respect for other children's personal space. When playing outside, children move in a variety of ways. They run, walk, and creep, changing direction and speed at will. They manipulate tools well, for example when mixing flour and water with spoons, or digging with spades in the garden.

Children are developing an awareness of their own bodies, as when they note that running makes them breathless. They understand the impact that external factors have on them, for example, that their bodies are kept warm by clothing when they are outside, but that their face and hands become cold.

The nursery's consistent routines help children to develop a sense of time. They make connections between different parts of their day, and between events at home and in the nursery.

Children show curiosity about their environment and the objects in it. When outside they investigate and comment on the natural world. They have some opportunities to

use information technology, and to operate simple equipment.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff know children well, and so are able to meet their individual needs. Children have equal access to toys and play activities, and usually to staff's time and attention. They take part in activities that help them to learn about similarities between themselves and others, and to value diversity. The nursery has effective arrangements in place to care for children with special educational needs, although none currently attend.

Most children behave well for much of the time. However, some children are occasionally unable to behave in an acceptable way, despite staff's intervention and gentle guidance. In addition, some staff do not react appropriately to poor behaviour, for example when a child takes a toy away from another, they replace the toy, rather than address the child's behaviour. This sometimes makes it difficult for children to learn right from wrong.

Parents and staff have friendly relationships with each other. They regularly exchange information, so that they can work together to meet children's needs. Staff use a daily diary to record what play the babies and younger children have engaged in, when they have been fed, and other important information about their day. Parents also make their observations to keep staff up to date, so that babies receive continuity of care.

Partnership with parents is good. They have regular opportunities to exchange information with staff. This includes informal discussions with key workers at the end of the day, so that parents are kept informed about children's progress and achievements.

Parents receive good information about how the nursery runs and the education programme that it offers, for example, in the booklet that every parent is given. They also have access to the weekly plans of activities, which are on display in children's rooms.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from the efficient arrangements of space and resources within the nursery. Day to day organisation is good, and staff are deployed effectively, so that the adult to child ratios are maintained at a high level. The staff team works well together and are cheerful and cooperative, so that they provide a positive role model for children.

The nursery has the required records, policies and procedures in place to help staff

to promote children's health and safety, and to provide continuity of care. Only the child protection policy lacks some of the necessary detail. Documents are kept securely, to maintain the confidentiality of the children who attend the nursery, and of their families.

Leadership and management of the nursery education are good. There are appropriate arrangements in place to monitor and evaluate the provision of nursery education, so that areas for improvement can be identified. The nursery manager spends time each day working directly with children, and this practical approach allows her to provide support and guidance for her staff.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, the nursery was asked to carry out a risk assessment and take any necessary action, and to make sure that the first aid box and its contents met the relevant regulations. Both these issues have been addressed, which has further improved safety precautions.

The nursery was asked to keep a record of visitors, to have the procedure for uncollected children in written form, and to include Ofsted's contact information in the complaints procedure. All these matters have been dealt with, which contributes to safeguarding children's welfare.

The nursery was asked to provide more opportunities for children to learn about different cultures and beliefs, and to access books and engage in imaginative play. Arrangements have been made to improve these aspects of the provision, so that children's learning opportunities are increased.

The nursery was asked to make sure that qualified staff were deployed effectively. This has been done, and children benefit from the arrangements that are in place.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been two complaints made to Ofsted since 1st April 2004. The first related to Standard 1 - Suitable person, in that a member of staff was alleged to be smoking cannabis before work and also smoking cannabis in the day time during her breaks at the setting. We asked the provider to carry out an internal investigation and report to Ofsted within 10 working days.

The provider responded with a letter detailing how the investigation had been carried out and explaining that all staff had been interviewed. She advised that some members of staff smoke 'roll ups' in the designated smoking area during their official breaks and that this could have been misinterpreted by the complainant.

The provider remains qualified to be registered.

The second complaint was in relation to National Standard 2 - Organisation, in that a

parent was not happy with the nappy changing procedure, regarding the age and qualification of the staff, and National Standard 7: Health, regarding the general cleanliness of the premises. A Child Care Inspector made an unannounced visit to the setting and all the issues were discussed and procedures were observed. The inspector found that the provider met the standards and no further action will be taken.

The provider remains qualified for 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.

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 good.

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 that meals and snacks are presented in a form that is suitable for individual children
- enable children to gain more awareness of behavioural boundaries and expectations (also applies to Nursery Education)
- revise the child protection policy so that it conforms to best practice, and ensure that it contains the procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff

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):

- extend opportunities for children to use numbers as labels and for counting, and for early calculation

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the

procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website:
www.ofsted.gov.uk