

Holy Cross Pre-School (Nursery Education)

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY293703
Inspection date	23/09/2008
Inspector	Michele Messaoudi
Setting address	Holy Cross RC Primary School (Nursery Building), Tracyses Road, Harlow, Essex, CM18 6JJ
Telephone number	01279 306327
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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 report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration whichever is the later, which require Ofsted or the provider to take action in Annex C.

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

Holy Cross Pre-school moved into its new premises in 2004 and operates from a purpose-built nursery within the grounds of Holy Cross Primary School. It is situated in the outskirts of Harlow. A maximum of 44 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 09.00 to 11.30 and from 12.30 to 15.00 during term times. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. There are currently 51 children aged from just under three to under five years on roll. Of these, 43 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from both the local and wider catchment areas. The nursery currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language. Most children move up to the reception class of Holy Cross Primary School. The nursery employs 12 members of staff, all of whom, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications. The nursery is on the Early Years Register and both parts of the Childcare Register. It fulfils its obligations under the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 2002.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Children enjoy their time in pre-school and make good overall progress as a result of good organisation and effective partnerships with parents, Holy Cross Primary School and outside agencies. The excellent quality of links made with parents to involve them in their children's care and education is a real strength of the provision. Consequently, parents feel very well informed of their children's progress, have full confidence in the setting's procedures to ensure their welfare and are overwhelmingly positive about the nursery. Another strength is the setting's outstanding provision for children's personal development and well-being, which gives them the secure foundation they need to make significant gains in their learning. The manager and staff form a cohesive team that has identified the correct priorities for improvement as a result of good ongoing self evaluation.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- plan more opportunities to extend the learning of individual children
- focus the planning of children's next steps sharply on the EYFS assessment criteria so as to enable them to progress at a faster rate and monitor their progress rigorously.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The manager has a clear strategy for managing change effectively, ensuring that the nursery meets all the requirements of the EYFS, and nurturing a collective culture of self evaluation and improvement. This is achieved through a

commitment to continuous staff development and daily staff meetings that ensure the sharing of emergent issues and of a common understanding of good practice. The team listens carefully to the views of parents, children and relevant outside agencies and acts on them to make improvements. The manager works in close partnership with Holy Cross Primary School to ensure the smooth transition of children moving up to the reception class. The nursery has links with a cluster of local settings with which it shares good practice. However, it has not sought out models of outstanding practice in the sector and beyond to raise its aspirations higher.

The proprietor ensures that there are robust policies and procedures in place to safeguard children at all times. Rigorous recruitment procedures ensure the suitability of staff to work with children prior to confirmation of their employment. The staff have a good understanding of the procedures to follow in case of child protection concerns. This was a recommendation made during the last inspection and the school now complies with this welfare requirement. Regular risk assessments are carried out to minimise risks in all circumstances.

The staff foster an inclusive learning environment very effectively by giving equal opportunities to all children and parents, whatever their backgrounds, showing positive images of diversity and promoting very positive relationships based on mutual respect. Key workers are very attentive to the specific needs of the children in their care, whether they have learning, linguistic or emotional needs.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

The curriculum is planned carefully to provide a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities and promotes each of the six areas of learning. Staff support learning effectively by creating an orderly and harmonious atmosphere in which children develop an exceptionally high level of self-discipline and respect for others' space and entitlement to learn. Consequently, children feel physically and emotionally safe and have the confidence to engage creatively in learning and contribute to their community. The staff are very skilful in using open-ended questioning to encourage children to think and develop good speaking, listening and numeracy skills when role playing. For example, some children used their imagination and real life experiences to invite their key worker to their restaurant. During free play, children's decisions to continue or change activity are respected by the adults and so children feel valued and develop independence. The nursery is rich in indoor and outdoor resources, which staff use effectively to provide a stimulating and versatile learning environment. For example, a raised bed in the outdoor area provides opportunities for 'messy' play as well as growing vegetables. Children show an excellent understanding of how to stay healthy as they speak of the choice of fruit they have daily and the milk or water they drink. They wash their hands at appropriate moments and pass around the fruit bowls with great care.

As recommended during the last inspection, short-term planning has improved satisfactorily to match more closely the needs of children of varying abilities. However, the team has not explored all the opportunities available to extend the learning of individual children, and this has been recognised by the manager. Staff

use a consistent approach to recording their observations of children's achievements. However, as the staff are familiarising themselves with the new EYFS assessment system, the planning of children's next steps is not as sharply focused as it could be. Consequently, the staff do not monitor children's progress as rigorously as they could and therefore cannot ensure that individual children progress at the rate of which they are capable. Key workers liaise very effectively with parents and others to provide a high standard of care. They keep records of children's learning journeys that give parents an instant picture of the progress made.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

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

Overall effectiveness

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

Leadership and management

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

Quality and standards

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

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

Annex B: the Childcare Register

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

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

Annex C: complaint/s made to Ofsted

This section of the report includes details of any complaint/s made to Ofsted when:

- we took action for the provider to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- we asked the provider to take action in order to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- the provider had already taken any necessary action to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register.

We will not report on any complaint where the provider met the requirements of the Early Years Register or did not require any action by Ofsted or the registered provider.

Detail of the complaint/s

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

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.