

Inspection of Croft Playgroup

Marlborough Lane, Swindon, Wiltshire SN3 1RA

Inspection date: 25 May 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Leaders and staff implement a successful curriculum to suit children's individual interests. Staff promote an approach where children learn in the moment, while supporting them to meet their milestones in all areas of development. Leaders create an ethos for a warm, friendly and welcoming atmosphere with the intent for children and their families to feel valued, safe and happy.

Children are progressing well in their physical development. Staff provide a wide range of garden equipment to support children in developing their large muscles. These include climbing equipment, such as ropes, frames and ladders on trees, which also helps children to learn about managing risks safely. Children also take part in Latin-inspired dance sessions once a week as part of an exercise regime to live healthy lives, where they learn rhythm and how to move their bodies to a beat.

Children are developing a love for books through the ample experiences available. Staff provide activities where children develop their own stories and act them out to their friends, using a wide range of imagination and confidence skills. There is an on-site library that children and parents use regularly, and story sacks to borrow and read together at home. This has positively improved children's interests in books, and enhanced their communication and language skills, as it promotes a platform for practising their speech.

What does the early years setting do well and what does it need to do better?

- The highly qualified managers are extremely enthusiastic in promoting staff's continual professional development. They inspire staff to lead their own learning through their interests and the needs of their key children. This allows staff to strengthen their knowledge and provide a curriculum to suit children's individual needs. Managers effectively carry out staff observations to detect further training needs and to be reflective of staff practice.
- Staff promote British values to introduce the ethos of 'how they want the world to be'. They initiate new topics each term and share the themes with children during circle times, such as accepting each other's differences to embed inclusiveness for all. However, at times, staff do not support older children to regulate their emotions and understand the feelings of others, to help build secure relationships.
- Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have a strong support network around them. Staff get to know the children well, they gain knowledge and understanding of their needs to support them in their development. Managers hold meetings regularly with staff, parents, and outside agencies, to ensure children with SEND are set realistic targets. This supports them in meeting their milestones and reaching the best possible outcomes.

- Staff allow children time to work on their problem-solving skills as part of the setting's child-led approach to learning. For example, children attempt to carry water across the garden from the water tray to the role-play café. Children quickly realise that carrying the water in their hands or in funnels is not effective. Children use their thinking skills to figure out that they need jugs to successfully resolve the issue.
- Parents feel very well supported in their child's development. Leaders and managers hold highly informative meetings to support parents in understanding their child's learning, and provide ideas of how to promote learning at home. Staff and leaders create good communication with parents through handovers, parent's evenings and online platforms to provide insight into their child's learning. Parents express their gratitude for the supportive management team, as they advise them on sleep routines and toilet training.
- Managers make great effort to expand children's learning experiences by inviting people of various professions into the setting. For example, an astronaut came to visit the children to speak with them about planets, space shuttles and the space station. This expanded children's ideas of the universe, particularly for children who have a deep interest for space rockets.
- Children are well prepared for school. Staff ensure that children are meeting their early years outcomes through good quality assessments, highlighting any gaps in development. For example, staff encourage children's independence, including confidently accessing resources, asking for help when needed, knowing how to get a drink, use the toilet and dress themselves. Managers invite teachers into the setting to meet their new pupils and to share their development reports, in readiness for a smooth transition.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Managers prioritise children's safety. They are dedicated to ensuring that staff have excellent knowledge in how to keep children safe, providing access to an abundance of safeguarding training, so they know how to manage safeguarding concerns. Staff can identify signs and symptoms of abuse and understand how to report this to protect children from potential risks. Staff understand how to put the whistle-blowing policy into practice if they have concerns about the suitability of their managers.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

To further improve the quality of the early years provision, the provider should:

- continue to support older children to regulate their emotions and gain an understanding of the feelings of others, to help them in securing friendships.

Setting details

Unique reference number	109058
Local authority	Swindon
Inspection number	10289467
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	3 to 4
Total number of places	48
Number of children on roll	73
Name of registered person	Croft Playgroup Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP518188
Telephone number	01793512882
Date of previous inspection	27 November 2017

Information about this early years setting

Croft Playgroup registered in 1972. It is located in Swindon, Wiltshire. The playgroup opens on Monday to Thursday, from 8am to 6pm and on Friday from 8.00am to 3pm, during school term times only. The playgroup employs 14 members of childcare staff. Of these, four hold an early years qualification at degree level, seven hold a qualification at level 3 and one holds a qualification at level 2. The playgroup receives funding for the provision of free early education for three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Michelle Oram

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the setting.
- The managers lead the inspector around the setting on a learning walk to discuss their curriculum.
- Parents provided the inspector with their views of the setting and staff.
- The inspector observed and spoke with the children throughout the inspection to review their experiences.
- The inspector observed the impact of interactions between staff and children.
- Managers held a meeting for the inspector to review their roles and responsibilities and view relevant documents.
- The inspector and manager carried out a joint observation to reflect on the educational benefits of activities.

We carried out this inspection under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the early years foundation stage.

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