

Cygnnet Community Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	142775
Inspection date	05 June 2008
Inspector	Jacqueline Allen
Setting Address	c/o Swanmead Community School, Ditton Street, Ilminster, Somerset, TA19 0BL
Telephone number	01460 57444
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Registered person	Cygnnet Community Pre-School
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 good. 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?

Cygnet Pre-School opened in 1992. It operates from a detached building in the grounds of Swanmead Middle School near to the centre of Ilminster. The building has an entrance porch with toilet facilities and one main room where children play, which has a small kitchen area. Children have access to an enclosed hard standing area and an enclosed grassed area both of which are adjacent to the main building. Children attend from Ilminster and surrounding villages.

The provision is registered to care for a maximum of 20 children between two and under five years. There are currently 60 children on roll of whom 31 receive funded education. The group opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09.00 to 11.30 and 12.30 to 15.00 with lunch in between. The setting currently supports children with learning difficulties.

There are six regular staff working with the children, of whom three hold a Level 3 and two hold a Level 2 qualification in early years.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is effectively promoted as their medication needs are well recorded with written parental consent for the staff to administer clearly obtained in advance on each occasion. Children's minor accidents are appropriately treated by all staff who hold a valid first aid certificate and parental consent is available for the staff to seek emergency advice or treatment, if required. Children who are ill are excluded through a comprehensive policy. Routine hand washing takes place before eating and after toileting by both staff and children, using liquid soap, running water and paper towels, to further prevent the risk of cross infection. Staff ensure tables are clean by using anti-bacterial spray and promote good hygiene when nappy changing by using notices to ensure the changing mat is hygienically cleaned after each use and that staff routinely use disposable gloves when dealing with any bodily fluids. Toilet areas are regularly checked and cleaned and different coloured cloths used to prevent cross contamination, which further promotes children's good health. Children understand the need to put on their sun hats when playing outside on a sunny day. However, staff have not implemented a procedure for applying sun cream to further protect children from the effects of the sun.

Children learn about healthy eating through the snacks provided at the group, which they help to prepare, such as chopped apples and bananas and dried fruit, and the packed lunch supplied by their parents. Staff ensure that children eat healthy foods first, such as sandwiches, yoghurts and fruit before additional treats and are good role models with their own lunch. Children routinely help themselves to water from the small water cooler and have a choice of milk, water or squash at snack time, which they pour themselves. Children's special dietary needs are collated so all staff are well informed.

Children have daily opportunities to practise their physical skills. They move freely between the outside and indoor areas as they develop their play. They confidently use a range of tools and small equipment as well as larger equipment, such as balancing beams, a large play wheel and soft shapes to progress their gross motor skills. Children enjoy tumbling on the safety mats and climbing inside the large play wheel to move around.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children benefit from a well presented, welcoming play area where their work is attractively displayed. They play in a secure environment outside which has two separate areas; one grassed and the other hard standing, where they enjoy a wide variety of activities. They have good access to a broad range of good quality resources, which are safe, clean, age appropriate and interesting. Resources are well labelled using pictures and words on boxes which are housed in low-level storage units to ensure they are accessible to children.

Children's safety is effectively considered through the staff's actions to minimise identified risks. For example, children are well supervised, heaters are covered and a safety gate across the kitchen area prevents children from accessing this area. Children regularly practise the emergency evacuation procedure which is comprehensively recorded by the staff. Children are collected by authorised carers, as designated by parents. Children gain an awareness of their own safety through ongoing discussions with staff. For example, staff explain to children why they need to queue in a particular area so that other children can tumble safely.

Children's welfare is appropriately safeguarded as the staff are aware of possible signs and symptoms of abuse and the procedures to follow if they have concerns about a child in their care, which is in line with the Local Safeguarding Children Board. Staff attend regular training to update their knowledge.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are welcomed into the group and supported by caring staff. Younger children are well supported by all staff who keep a watchful eye and are quick to reassure and distract them when they look a little fretful. This leads to children settling happily and becoming more and more confident throughout the session. They explore the environment, partake in activities of their choosing and join in with daily routines, such as the café system for snack time. They help tidy up and then sit on the mat ready for story time. Staff liaise with parents to ensure they are aware of children's starting points and build on this through effective planning and recording systems.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are confident and interested in their play. They sing their name happily at registration time as they clap out the beat and bring items from home to talk about in circle time. Children are competent at using computer programmes, a small mouse and individual ear phones. Staff support them in printing out their creative work. Children routinely count items in their play, such as when giving out sausages in the shop and use mathematical vocabulary, such as 'how many' when booking a holiday. They register themselves when choosing to have their snack, understanding that their hands must be washed first. They help to chop the banana and cut up the apple using a sharp knife under clear direction and supervision from staff, who routinely praise their efforts. Snack time is a very relaxed social time when staff sit with children and they chat happily, sharing news from home. Children are forming good relationships with staff and their peers, which aids their persistence at activities and extends their play through ongoing discussion and sharing of ideas.

Staff show good knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum and plan effectively with clear learning objectives. They continually encourage effective communication through good use of open ended questioning to encourage children to think and allow them time to respond. They provide a broad range of interesting resources and activities to encourage children to make choices in their play both inside and outdoors. They meet regularly as a team to improve their knowledge on each child's stage of development so they can be routinely challenged in their play. They observe and record children's achievements and take photographic evidence. Children are encouraged to name their own work, which is well collated to show their progress. Staff have started to complete a new assessment system for children in line with the Early Years Foundation Stage. However, staff generally are still experimenting with the new recording system, so gaps are still evident.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are well supported by all the caring staff, who are attentive to children's individual needs and treat them with respect. The staff provide good role models as they encourage children to be considerate of others. Children learn about diversity through planned activities and their access to a range of resources, such as puzzles, books, dolls and musical instruments

which reflect positive images. Children with learning difficulties are skilfully supported by knowledgeable staff who keep comprehensive records of their individual needs and have clear expectations for their progress. The staff work well with parents and other professionals and are booked on further training to extend their knowledge. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children receive clear, consistent messages from all the staff which results in good behaviour. Staff are adept at taking steps to avoid possible situations as they skilfully disperse any issues through effective interaction and distraction. Children's behaviour incidents are clearly recorded and shared with parents. Children are encouraged to be kind to each other, they help tidy up and listen attentively when staff shake the tambourine to gain their attention. Positive behaviour is routinely encouraged through the staff's ongoing praise and encouragement of children's efforts, which promotes high self-esteem.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Children benefit from having a designated key worker who liaises directly with parents. Parents are provided with lots of information about the care and education their child receives via their access to the group's policies and procedures, the prospectus which includes information on the Foundation Stage and regular newsletters. Staff ensure that current planning is displayed and encourage children to bring items from home to discuss at circle time. Staff complete a termly progress report for parents which also usually includes the next steps identified for each area of learning. Parents have access to their child's record of achievements so they can see how they are progressing towards the early learning goals.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides care. Children benefit from a strong staff team who attend regular training to update their good knowledge. Staff files show evidence of their suitability and appraisal system. Staff deploy themselves effectively and organise daily routines to ensure children spend time both inside and outdoors. Children's daily registration system accurately shows their time of arrival and departure and staff present. This shows that high adult to child ratios are maintained. Documentation is well organised to ensure confidentiality.

The leadership and management is good. Peer observations are now in place as a way to monitor the provision. All staff are involved with the planning and responsible for updating the assessment records of their own key children. Staff meet regularly and work well together. They are committed to further training as a means of improving the provision.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last integrated inspection four actions were raised relating to care and one recommendation relating to education.

The group's actions were to: devise and maintain a system to obtain written permission from parents before administering medication to children; develop the registration system to show accurate times of attendance for children and staff; improve knowledge and understanding of the requirements set out in regulations and set in place a procedure to promptly notify Ofsted of relevant matters, such as changes to the supervisor and committee and ensure that robust procedures are in place to check their suitability; and ensure policies and procedures are updated

in line with regulations, in particular the complaints policy and the procedures to follow if allegations are made against staff.

A clear system is now in place to record children's medication needs and obtain parents' written consent for the staff to administer. The registration system for staff and children accurately shows their attendance. The staff team now have a better understanding of the regulations and have been prompt to notify Ofsted of further changes and follow up suitability checks. The complaints policy has been updated and the safeguarding children policy has been updated to include information on what to do if allegations are made against staff, although the procedure to follow is not clear. Overall, this has improved children's health, safety and general welfare through effective implementation.

The group's recommendation was to develop children's assessments to clearly show their progress in all areas of their learning, which build on their existing skills and abilities, identify the next steps in their learning, promote their independence and provide sufficient challenge to support them in reaching their full potential. The group have started to record children's progress in line with the Early Years Foundation Stage assessment system which is much more comprehensive than the previous system. However, staff are still adapting to the new system so there are still some gaps, although improvement is evident. A new café system has been implemented to encourage children's independence at preparing and selecting their own snack and pouring their own drink. The team are currently reflecting on their practice in order to ensure children are sufficiently challenged.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards. The provider is required to keep a record of any complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain some 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 children are appropriately protected when playing in the sun by obtaining parental consent to apply sun cream which is supplied and named by themselves

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):

- continue to develop children's assessment system to show their development and identify the next steps in their learning.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education* (HMI ref no 2599) which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk