

Watermead Cygnets Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Sarah Fletcher

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Type of setting Childcare on non-domestic premises

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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*.

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Description of the setting

Watermead Cygnets Pre-School is run by a committee of parents and operates from one room in the community centre, in the residential area of Watermead, close to Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire. Children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area. The pre-school is open each weekday from 9.15am to 11.45am during term times and is registered on the Early Years Register, providing funded early education for three and four-year-olds.

A maximum of 26 children may attend the pre-school at any one time, and there are currently 29 children aged from two years to the end of the early years age range on roll. The pre-school currently has a number of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities on roll. There are seven members of staff, six of whom hold early years qualifications to at least Level 2, including one member of staff who has achieved Early Years Professional Status.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Staff meet children's learning and developmental needs routinely by getting to know the children individually and by providing a relaxing environment where they can play and learn together. Children are safeguarded carefully and benefit from the well established and very effective two-way communication system developed between staff and parents, which provides a range of quality information and makes good use of daily discussions to maintain continuity. Staff skilfully support children to help them feel secure, welcome and valued. They are keen to further improve the quality of children's care and learning and take positive steps towards self-evaluation.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- further develop systems of observation and assessment to include links to the areas of learning to clearly monitor children's progress from their individual starting points and capabilities
- further develop children's independence and skills for the future through a range of everyday activities.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are safeguarded well as staff keep the premises secure, safe and child-friendly, with appropriate ratios maintained at all times. Secure entry systems protect children from unvetted adults and clear recruitment and induction procedures are in place to ensure the suitability of those looking after children.

Staff maintain thorough daily checks to promote children's safety, allowing them the freedom to move around in a secure environment. Clear and detailed risk assessments are in place to reduce potential hazards and dangers for all areas and equipment children access, indoors and outside. Staff have a good understanding of protecting children from harm, which they have gained through their qualifications and training courses; securing their knowledge and understanding of safeguarding children to promote outcomes effectively at all times.

Children's quality of care benefits from good quality written policies and procedures, which receive regular reviews and are shared with both staff and parents. Records for individual children are suitably maintained and written permissions from parents are obtained routinely at registration. Attendance is recorded accurately and information regarding any children's accidents is shared with parents in confidence. Parental questionnaires demonstrate they are very supportive of the pre-school and are happy with the care and learning their children receive. Families are invited to be involved in their children's learning through a home reading scheme and have access to children's achievement records. Parents and children develop good quality relationships with their child's key person, which begins with home visits before the child starts at the setting, and continues until they leave for school, enabling the children's developing feelings of security. Noticeboards and information folders provide parents/carers with clear details about the operation of the pre-school and its established routines. Staff pro-actively assess their practice through a clear system of self-evaluation towards continuous improvement, addressing areas for development and making on-going analyses.

Children are able to select from a wide range of good quality toys, resources and equipment to aid their learning and development. New children are individually welcomed and staff skilfully help them to settle in, using effective strategies to increase their feelings of security and confidence in their surroundings, while getting to know staff and their peers. Staff have established links with outside agencies to support children who may require help; and have access to training and awareness courses should children with special educational needs and/or disabilities attend. Children learn about different cultures and languages through a wide range of resources to aid their knowledge and understanding of the wider world. For example, they freely access a large selection of books, small world play, multicultural puzzles, role play resources and posters showing differing languages. Computer programmes enable children's interactive learning, working alongside a variety of activities and resources to observe cultural festivals, such as Diwali, Chinese New Year and various Christian celebrations. Staff aid children's learning about people who help them by inviting the community policeman for regular visits to talk to them about his work.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

Children access a wide variety of activities which relate to their interests and offer appropriate challenge. They have daily opportunities for outside play in a secure outdoor area, which provides children with a suitable range of equipment to

develop their physical skills. Ample space allows children the freedom to move around indoors and outside, using the play equipment as they choose, or playing quietly alone or with friends. Staff are on hand to support children as they play or join in with activities, forming positive relationships with both adults and their peers.

Children show their developing awareness of simple hygiene routines, using the bathroom independently, with gentle reminders to wash their hands after toileting or before eating snacks to avoid cross infection. Children's good health benefits from a variety of nutritious snack options, such as cucumber, melon or apple pieces with wholemeal bread and spread. Some of the children help spread the bread to share with everyone, although further opportunities for children to develop their independence are not always optimised; for example, staff pour children's drinks from jugs at the tables automatically at snack time, rather than encouraging children to try this for themselves.

Children are making good progress in their learning and development and receive positive praise for all their efforts and achievements. Staff implement the Early Years Foundation Stage framework effectively, making observations and assessment of children's progress; however, the current system does not easily link these observations to the areas of learning to clearly monitor progress from their individual starting points and capabilities. Children freely choose to play with a wide selection of resources to develop their individual physical skills, such as cutting out paper circles to make snowmen or playing a mini fishing game with magnets. Small world toys, construction resources and a range of play equipment in the role play corner enable children's developing imaginations. Staff offer high levels of interaction with the children, extending their vocabulary as they discuss group topics or read stories together. Children learn about their world through simple technology, for example, using interactive education games on the computer. They develop their understanding of recycling to help the environment through discussions with staff when playing with large cardboard boxes.

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

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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