

# Downlands Pre-School Cygnets

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	141097
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<b>Inspector</b>	Gail Robertson

<b>Setting address</b>	Downlands First School, College Road, Blandford Camp, Blandford Forum, Dorset, DT11 8BG
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<b>Type of setting</b>	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*.

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.

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## **Description of the setting**

Downlands Pre-School Cygnets opened in 1992. At present, it operates from in a room on the premises of Downlands Community School within the Blandford Camp, Dorset. The group have use of the school hall, playground and many other areas within the host school and the grounds. There is disabled access to the pre-school but no disabled access from the setting into the school hall and other parts of the school. The group serves the children of service personnel. The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and the voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

Morning pre-school starts at 8.50am to 12 noon and afternoon pre-school 12 noon to 3pm. Pre-school children attend either morning or afternoon sessions with the option of staying for lunch, or a full day. The before school club is open from 8am until 8.40am and the after school club opens 3pm to 4.55pm.

The above sessions are available for pre-school cygnets and children over the age of eight and up to 11 years. A maximum of 26 early years children may attend at any one time. There are currently 22 children on roll; of these, 19 receive funding. The group supports children with special educational needs and families who use English as an additional language.

A team of nine staff work with the children; of these, five hold suitable qualifications and four are in the process of being qualified. The manager and another staff member are studying for a higher level qualification. There is also a cleaning member of staff.

There are strong links with all other providers and in particular the host community school.

## **The overall effectiveness of the early years provision**

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Downlands Cygnets is an outstanding setting. It is a wonderful place for young children to attend. Children are happy and have fun; they work hard and make good progress because of the high levels of support and encouragement given by the dedicated, diligent staff. The effective and efficient manager and her well motivated team have a shared vision of establishing a high quality service for children and families in the military camp. This is an inclusive setting where diversity and equality is constantly celebrated. The manager knows the setting exceptionally well. She and the committee have a high commitment to continual improvement. There are exceptionally close links with the community school and other providers.

## **What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?**

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- ensure risk assessments cover anything with which a child may come into contact, this relates to the access into the setting if children or adults are behind doors or on steps
- enrich children's learning further to ensure that all activities contain opportunities for challenging the most able children in order to accelerate their learning.

## **The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision**

All the records, policies and procedures that are necessary for safeguarding and effective management are well maintained, and shared with the parents via notices in the entrance area and through the informative website. The manager has a thorough understanding of the legal duties and responsibilities.

The manager and staff team work really well together to maintain high standards and drive improvement. Together they go that extra mile in making Downlands an exceptionally happy and exciting place for children who have had many changes in their lives. It is a place where armed forces children can relax and enjoy their childhood. There is an effective system to evaluate the quality of the provision and to identify areas for future improvement. As the manager said with pride 'We want to be outstanding.' She is dynamic in her approach and has a clear vision of the future. Her energies are channelled at present into getting the best out of the future refurbishment to enhance the provision and benefit all who use the setting. After the last inspection, the manager immediately addressed the few recommendations: children now have constant access to drinking water, electrical sockets do not pose a hazard to children and the assessment records are up to date and give a clear picture of the children's development. Everybody strives for improvement to ensure children are happy, confident, safe and enjoy learning.

All the required and necessary paperwork is well organised for quick retrieval. In staff meetings, everyone is encouraged to contribute their thoughts, ideas and suggestions for improvement. The staff are actively encouraged by the manager and committee to further their knowledge and to keep up to date with new legislation and current educational and care ideas. The manager is in the process of sharing the comprehensive self-evaluation document with the staff and has plans to include parents and children in the future.

The staff check daily for potential hazards and fully involve the children in these checks for both clubs and the pre-school. The host school has a risk assessment for the interconnecting door to the hall but as yet the setting has not completed their own risk assessment. The small stimulating outside area is closely supervised and is open to the children throughout the session. There is a wealth of good quality resources including technology equipment, for the children to use. These are well maintained and well organised to promote children's learning. The resources are used by the clubs and pre-school. The pre-school also has access to

many school resources.

This is an inclusive setting where all children and adults are fully respected. They enjoy each other's company, laugh together and work hard. Staff go that extra mile with all the children.

The setting has outstanding links with the parents of children who use the clubs and the pre-school. One parent said 'This is an extraordinary place. It is wonderful for my children'. Parents are encouraged to contribute to the learning journeys to complete for their children. There are outstanding partnerships with other providers and the host school. The setting is in constant communication with them to ensure continuity in children's learning and development. This is an outstanding feature for forces children who may have uncertainties in their lives.

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

Children thrive in the stimulating, relaxed environment that has been created for them by the experienced, motivated and enthusiastic staff. They are seen as individuals and the staff know each child and their family well. The setting is most welcoming, made attractive and cosy, and children who come for the clubs or preschool have a great sense of belonging. Children and all staff share a warm and caring relationship. When children start either the club or the pre-school, relevant and necessary information is obtained from parents and other sources to ensure children's particular needs are appropriately met.

The promotion of children's health is a priority within the setting. Children have access to a drink throughout the sessions. At snack time they know that they must pay attention to washing their hands and watch the staff clean the tables before the food is put on them. They have a super choice of fruit which they wash before they prepare it. The large basket of fruit is available throughout all the sessions. They have a choice of drink and even the youngest are expected, with help, to pour their drink. Snack time is used as a time to learn to count and recognise words and sounds and to relax and enjoy each other's company. In the outdoor area, children have many challenges. They love creating with the sand, dig the soil ready to plant vegetables to eat later in the year and to just run and jump. In the hall, children in the pre-school use the PE apparatus and show how agile they are.

The well planned daily programme for the pre-school arises from the staff observations, assessment and monitoring of children's individual progress. Children have excellent opportunities to share their views and their family life with interested staff who understand the pressures of service life. Most children are making good progress as a result of the high quality of adult input and the effective verbal communication, although there are occasions when staff miss opportunities to stretch the most able.

Children share equipment and ask politely for tools and decorating materials. While they are working, staff engage children in meaningful conversation to increase their vocabulary and ability to hold conversations with each other and the adults.

Children respond well to the praise given to them. They rise to comments such as 'Wow that was terrific' or 'How did you know that?' and feel extremely proud of themselves.

They learn about people who will play an important part in their life. Those who are in the pre-school are well prepared to go on to their next phase of learning because they have so many opportunities to develop good attitudes to learning and they love the excitement of finding out about the world around them. The club's members are keen to participate in all activities that the adults provide them with.

Children are extremely happy and contented here. They are extremely confident, interested and motivated by the activities that are on offer. They have a great start to their school life and their learning journey.

## 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

<b>How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

### The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

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

### The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
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	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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## **Annex B: the Childcare Register**

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