



## **Cygnets Day Nursery**

Inspection report for early years provision

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| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | EY272736        |
| <b>Inspection date</b>         | 18 January 2006 |
| <b>Inspector</b>               | Gill Moore      |

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| <b>Setting Address</b> | Hartwood House, High Street, Bordon, Hampshire, GU35 0AU |
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|---------------------------|----------------------------|
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| <b>Registered person</b>  | Cygnets Day Nurseries Ltd. |
| <b>Type of inspection</b> | Integrated                 |
| <b>Type of care</b>       | 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](http://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?

Cygnets Day Nursery opened in 2004. It is a purpose built provision situated in the grounds of The Church of the Sacred Heart in Bordon.

There are five play rooms catering for children in age groups from three months to five years. There is an enclosed outside play area that all children have access to. The nursery serves the local and wider geographical area.

Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting welcomes children with special needs and those who speak English as an additional language. A maximum of 51 children may attend the nursery. It is open Monday to Friday 08:00 - 18:00 51 weeks of the year, excluding bank holidays.

There are currently 59 children on roll aged under 5 years. Of these, 13 are in receipt of funding for nursery education. A qualified manager is responsible for the day to day running of the nursery. In addition 13 staff work directly with the children, 10 of whom are qualified. One member of staff is currently working towards an early years qualification. The setting is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance and the National day Nursery Association and receives support from a development worker and the local early years partnership.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children's health is well maintained because all practitioners have relevant first aid training and implement effective procedures when dealing with accidents and the administration of medication. A clear understanding and highly effective implementation of health and hygiene policies ensure children's risk of infection is minimised. For example, gloves are worn when changing nappies, mats are sterilised, cots are used for individual children and bedding is washed after use. Children learn the importance of following good personal hygiene routines as they independently wash their hands with soap after toileting and before meals and snacks. They discuss why this is important recognising the need to wash the germs away and this is introduced to the younger children by practitioners during discussions and daily routines.

Activities and discussions help children to learn about what their bodies need to keep healthy and how they grow. Children learn how to care of their skin when it is hot and sunny and recognise the need to wrap up warm in the winter as they independently dress themselves for outside play wearing coats, hats, scarves and Wellington boots. They benefit from daily physical activities, both inside and out, and enjoy being active recognising the importance of physical exercise as part of maintaining a healthy lifestyle. Children confidently ride a range of bicycles and scooters, develop skills in using bats, balls and bean bags and enjoy opportunities to dance and explore their bodies through music and movement. Babies' and young children's physical needs are very well met and they enjoy a range of play experiences learning to gain control of their bodies. Babies kick the play gym, learn to sit unaided and practise crawling through tunnels before gaining confidence to walk with and later without support.

Children gain an understanding of healthy eating as this is well promoted across the nursery. They benefit from a range of fruits and yoghurts at snack time, and have the option of three meals a day including a nutritious two-course cooked dinner and a cold buffet tea. Children remain healthy because their individual needs and special dietary requirements are fully met and consistent routines between home and nursery are applied. A three weekly menu is rotated ensuring children receive a healthy

balanced diet and parents are kept informed about what their child has eaten as this information is recorded in various different ways, including individual diaries. Babies snuggle into practitioners to be fed bottles and learn to develop their self-care skills as they are supported whilst trying to feed themselves. All children have options of milk and fruit juice and water is available throughout the day in individual bottles and cups, helping older children to recognise when their bodies become hot and they need a drink.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is outstanding.

Children enjoy a safe and secure learning environment because practitioners are exceptionally vigilant about ensuring their safety. They implement extensive health and safety policies across the nursery ensuring risk assessments are carried out on all areas inside and out of the building. Attendance of children, practitioners and visitors are clearly recorded, an intercom system is fitted to the main entrance of the nursery and locks placed on doors, which contribute to ensuring children's safety. Children talk about how to keep themselves safe when going out into the garden to play and ride safely around one another outside on bicycles. Their understanding of safety and awareness of dangers is very well promoted through discussions with practitioners, for example around the use of electricity and the dangers of touching plugs and by regularly practising fire drills ensuring they know how to evacuate the building safely in an emergency situation. Detailed records and checks are made on sleeping children, electrical, gas and fire equipment and designated health and safety officers within the staff team place high priority on ensuring health and safety requirements are fully adhered to.

Children are extremely well protected and safeguarded from harm whilst at nursery because practitioners have an in-depth knowledge of child protection issues and recognise their role with regards to protecting children from abuse. They have a secure understanding of the different types of abuse and confidently implement nursery and local procedures to ensure children's safety. Detailed procedures and arrangements are in place for lost and uncollected children and written information is obtained relating to who can and cannot collect children from nursery. This ensures children's safety remains a high priority at all times.

Children benefit from child-centred purpose built facilities and thrive in the wonderfully welcoming and stimulating nursery environment. Space is well used, both inside and out, and children move freely and safely whilst engaging in their activities and play. All rooms are extremely comfortable and inviting equipped with an extensive range of furniture and play provision suitable for the ages of children in the individual units. Children develop increasing independence as they freely access the wonderful provision and highly effective systems are implemented to ensure all equipment is kept sterile, well maintained and safe for children to use.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children thrive during their time at nursery and have a wonderful time because all practitioners have a very good knowledge of child development. They are extremely happy and settled and develop secure and trusting relationships with key workers in their individual rooms.

Babies babble with excitement bouncing up and down as they giggle and clap their hands watching the practitioner blowing bubbles around the room. They develop the use of language and become skilful communicators responding to gestures and imitating words spoken by practitioners as they snuggle up to share stories. Children squeal with delight as they excitedly participate in familiar songs and action rhymes and play peek a boo hiding from practitioners using silk scarves.

Babies and young children have plenty of opportunities to be imaginative and creative experiencing a wide range of textures and media including jelly, spaghetti, crazy foam and paint. They explore their senses independently accessing a range of tactile toys, such as sensory bottles, and benefit from practitioner's understanding of the importance of heuristic play. Children show great fascination as one points to the window noticing the squirrels outside and practitioners effectively support this talking to the children about what they are doing. They continually praise and encourage children to learn and develop new skills introducing new language to them and questioning them about their play. Children become competent learners as they complete a range of jigsaw puzzles and enjoy building models from construction equipment. They demonstrate real concentration and perseverance when their model falls over clapping their hands and giggling before starting all over again.

Children benefit from a wide range of exciting and stimulating activities and experiences suitable to their individual age and level of ability. Practitioners make very good use of the Birth to three matters framework to guide their planning and use written observations of children's progress and achievements to identify the next stage in their individual development. Practitioners make excellent use of the exciting inside learning environment and all children have regular opportunities to use the outside environment, for physical activities, for example. Much more use is made of this area during the summer months, although it is not used to fully promote all aspects of children's development all year round. Excellent systems are in place to ensure a smooth transition between each unit across the nursery, ensuring all children are confident, self assured and play an active role in their learning.

#### Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children make good individual progress because practitioners have a secure understanding around how young children learn. They recognise the importance of play and provide an exciting and interesting programme of activities and experiences enabling a very good balance of child and adult initiated ideas. Children are motivated and eager to learn and build on their existing skills and knowledge because practitioners are highly effective in the questioning techniques they use. They are encouraged to make predictions about why water passes through some resources more quickly than others and children explore their own ideas thinking of ways to make water pass more quickly through the funnel. Their investigative skills are promoted as they engage in practical activities linked to topics, for example planting seeds and exploring what they need to

help them grow. Children search for mini beasts using magnifying glasses, investigate with magnets and make hot air balloons as they explore how different things move.

Children develop good independence as they pack away resources when they have finished using them and recognise letters and familiar words helping them to know where things belong. Many children confidently identify letters and talk about sounds and this is extended as practitioners encourage children to label their work and build on their understanding of sounds and letters through the use of Letter Land. Consequently, children notice sounds and are beginning to recognise rhyme as they share stories and books together with practitioners and independently with their peers. They learn how to form letters correctly and use a range of writing tools and materials which are accessed freely across the session. Children's spoken language is developing well and they use very good vocabulary to describe their real and imagined ideas in their play. They discuss their ages and talk confidently about their new school, where this is in relation to where they live and enjoy discussing their families. Children play extremely well together listening to and valuing one another's ideas as they negotiate roles in their imagined play. They enjoy dressing up and imitate their own experiences, such as having a picnic as well as extending their idea using wonderful imagination as their boat begins to sink. Children's imagination is encouraged as they enjoy many planned opportunities to experience a range of textures using a variety of media and materials, including water, sand and dough. They enjoy exploring symmetry with paint, build models from recycled materials and print using a range of vegetables, although have limited opportunities to freely explore creativity accessing the full range of materials during their self chosen play.

Children enjoy opportunities to sing, dance and explore music and rhythm in large group activities. Practitioners link sessions to the current topic, for example children move their bodies imagining they are a plant growing from a seed linked to the nursery topic which is Growth. Children measure one another and compare heights using good mathematical language, such as taller and shortest, and count confidently recognising numerals around the room. Their understanding of the comparison of number is not fully extended because practitioners do not identify links in their planning to all aspects of the curriculum, which means this area is not given sufficient priority. Children's recognition of shapes however is very good and they talk confidently about the differences between triangles and circles. They have free access to mathematical resources increasing their understanding of shape, number and weight and benefit from using computers to develop their early mathematical skills, such as matching and sorting.

Children's individual progress is observed and monitored and practitioners update their assessment records every three months to show their ongoing achievements. Practitioners know the individual children in their key work group and talk confidently about what they are able to do. They recognise the skills each child has and provide effective support to enable the younger and less able children to build on these and extend their knowledge developing at their own pace. However, the system for recording children's progress in all aspects of their development is not fully developed and clear learning intentions are not identified to help inform planning for the following three months. Children benefit from the routine of the day and practitioners make good use of time and resources to ensure children develop

towards the early learning goals across the six areas of learning, although this is not fully promoted in the outside learning environment.

Practitioners have realistic expectation of children's behaviour and the atmosphere is calm and relaxed because children know what is expected of them. They understand how to play harmoniously together and as a result develop positive relationships with their peers learning to co-operate and negotiate without adult support. Consequently, children enjoy their time at nursery and flourish in the stimulating and exciting learning environment.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Children are extremely happy and self assured developing very good independence. The highly successful implementation of the key worker system across the nursery impacts on the relationships established between practitioners, parents and children and boosts their individual learning. All children are valued as individuals and all practitioners have a very good understanding of their home and family circumstances, which secures the links between home and promotes the family ethos the nursery strives to maintain. Babies and young children gain a sense of belonging to the group, for example as they have individual named coat pegs and drawers and even young babies recognise which is theirs from the familiar picture. They begin to develop responsibility as they are encouraged to help pack away and given roles, such as handing out the pots of snack.

Children have many opportunities to learn about themselves, the local community and the wider world helping to recognise and value the similarities and differences between themselves and others. They explore a range of countries and climates linked to topics and practitioners draw on experiences of children and their families attending, for example bringing in Indian costumes to show and try, introducing a range of different foods and recognising words in different language. Children visit places in the local environment and enjoy visits from people who help them in their community, such as the fire man and the police lady gaining an understanding of their roles and how to look after themselves. They are aware of their own needs and those of others, helping younger children with their painting aprons and respond enthusiastically when their peers manage to complete things by themselves, such as using the potty, showing an understanding of their individual achievements. Children share and take turns happily and all are helped to understand how to behave through the continual praise and encouragement from practitioners. Consequently, babies and children are confident and have good self-esteem and their behaviour is very good. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Babies and young children thrive because the strong links between home and nursery help to lay secure foundations for their learning. Flexible induction and settling in procedures and secure relationships between practitioners and parents ensure practitioners have a very good knowledge of children's individual routines and needs and these are consistent between home and nursery. Informal discussion, the

implementation of daily diaries and regular consultation meetings and open evenings help to ensure communication is effective and parents are fully informed about their child's day.

Partnerships with parents are good. Parents are well informed about the curriculum and activities their child is involved in on a daily basis through a number of ways, including displays of photographs, a detailed prospectus and monthly newsletters advising them about the topics, learning objectives and the experiences children will receive. These include suggestions of activities for parents to try at home with their child inviting parents to play an active role in their child's learning. Children's individual achievements are recorded and shared through progress reports every three months. Consultation meetings and open evenings enable parents to discuss their child's individual progress and next steps for development, although these are not identified on the report. Parents are helped to understand how their child learns through play and recognise the links to the various areas of learning, which enhances the progress children make.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children's care and learning is enhanced because practitioners are committed and work exceptionally well as a team communicating effectively to promote good outcomes for children. The management structure is secure and ensures each practitioner plays an active role in the nursery with clear defined responsibilities. Robust and rigorous recruitment, appointment and induction procedures ensure all staff have the relevant qualifications and experience and promote children's safety and well-being effectively. All practitioners have a secure knowledge of child development and continually update their skills by attending regular training, which impacts on the opportunities they provide for children. As a result, the setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Children benefit because the deployment of practitioners is highly effective and the nursery is extremely well organised enabling children to feel secure and self-assured in the stimulating learning environment. All practitioners have a very clear understanding of the extensive policies and procedures within the nursery and ensure these are implemented effectively helping to ensure children's well-being. They meet regularly informally and formally to discuss operational issues, planning and children's individual progress ensuring all play an active role in planning and assessment.

Leadership and management are good. Management know the strengths within the provision and evaluate regularly to identify areas where improvements can be made. Children benefit because management place high importance on continually monitoring teaching through a variety of ways, including informal observations and formal review meetings. Individual targets are identified for practitioners to work towards and clear objectives and actions set in response to improving their already well-established individual practice. Management play an active role in evaluating plans and children's individual learning to ensure sufficient progress is being made,



although procedures to monitor the overall curriculum ensuring all aspects are sufficiently included have yet to be fully developed. Practitioner's very good use of time, resources and teaching methods ensure all children play an active role in their individual learning, gain in confidence and independence and flourish in a happy, caring and loving environment.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last Children Act inspection the group were asked to ensure parents are able to access the whole operational plan.

This is now included in the parent's copy of the nursery procedures and discussed with them upon registration and induction to the nursery. As a result, parents are well informed about all aspects of the provision, which helps to secure the links between home and nursery.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

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.

## **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 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):

- develop the use of the outside learning environment.

### **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):

- develop systems to evaluate and monitor planning and assessment ensuring all aspects of the curriculum are sufficiently included and next steps for development identified
- increase opportunities for children to make comparisons between numbers and to freely access media and materials to explore creativity during their self chosen play.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)