



Office for Standards  
in Education

## COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 153459

DfES Number: 517787

### INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 26/05/2004  
Inspector Name Carole Argles

### SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care  
Setting Name Mount Scar Cygnets Playgroup  
Setting Address Swanage County First School  
Mount Scar  
Swanage  
Dorset  
BH19 2EY

### REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Mount Scar Cygnets Playgroup 1014564

### ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Mount Scar Cygnets Playgroup  
Address Swanage County First School  
Mount Scar  
Swanage  
Dorset  
BH19 2EY

## ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality and standard of day care in accordance with the National Standards for Under Eights Day Care and Childminding; and that the nursery education for funded three and four year old children is of an acceptable quality. Inspection of nursery education also identifies strengths and weaknesses so that providers can improve the quality of educational provision and help children to achieve the early learning goals (elgs) by the end of the Foundation Stage. This inspection report must be made available to all parents.

If the setting has been inspected previously, an action plan will have been drawn up to tackle issues identified. This inspection, therefore, must also assess what progress has been made in the implementation of this plan.

### Information about the setting

Mount Scar Cygnets Playgroup opened in 1976. It operates from two rooms in a horsa block in the grounds of Swanage County First School, near the centre of Swanage. The playgroup serves families the local area. The playgroup is registered to accept 26 children aged 3 to under 5 years.

There are currently 44 children from 3 to 4 years on roll. This includes 15 funded three-year-olds and 29 funded four-year-olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The playgroup supports children who have special needs and who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09.00 until 11.30 and from 12.45 until 15.15 Mondays to Thursdays, with only a morning session on Fridays.

There are six part-time and one full-time members of staff who work with the children, of whom four have early years qualifications. The setting receives support from a teacher from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

### How good is the Day Care?

Mount Scar Cygnets Playgroup provides satisfactory care for the children. The sessions are well organised and run smoothly. Staff create a welcoming environment for children and parents. They use the rooms well to provide a range of activities which help the children make good progress in all areas of development. There is a suitable range of toys, furniture and equipment to meet the children's needs. Appropriate policies and procedures are in place. Staff keep all necessary records but some lack detail. The format of accident and incident records does not ensure confidentiality is maintained.

Staff have a good understanding of safety issues and make sure that the premises are safe and secure for the children. There are effective procedures for the safe

collection of children. Staff promote good hygiene through hand washing and act in children's best interests if they become ill. They do not keep written parental consent for seeking emergency medical treatment for children. Drinking water is freely available. Staff provide good support for children with special needs. They have a satisfactory understanding of child protection issues.

Children are happy and settled. They relate well to other children, playing co-operatively together and sharing fairly. They are eager to take part in the wide range of interesting activities provided. Staff make regular observations of what the children can do and use this to help them plan activities which provide suitable challenges for most children. There is scope for staff to develop their knowledge of equal opportunities issues so they can provide a wider range of activities to help children learn about others in society. Children behave well at all times. Staff help them understand what is expected of them and give them praise and encouragement.

Parents and staff have a friendly relationship. They frequently exchange information about children's care and progress and what they will be learning.

#### **What has improved since the last inspection?**

At the last inspection the provider agreed to develop recruitment and induction procedures; review the organisation of the setting; have valid insurance; revise accident and incident records; record risk assessments; record details of visitors; develop staff's understanding of equal opportunities issues and provide resources reflecting disability; ensure that drinking water and a choice of healthy snacks are available; and appoint a named member of staff with responsibility for behaviour management.

Since the last inspection there has been satisfactory progress. There are effective procedures for recruiting new staff and for the smooth running of the sessions. Staff carry out formal risk assessments and ensure valid insurance is in place. They ensure that drinking water is freely available. They have provided resources reflecting positive images of disability. A named member of staff makes sure that all staff implement the behaviour management policy consistently. These actions have increased children's safety and well being and enhanced their opportunities for learning.

However, there has been little progress on other issues. Accident and incident records are not confidential and no detailed record of visitors is maintained. There is still limited choice of healthy snacks for children. Staff have not developed their understanding of equal opportunities issues. There is no clearly defined procedure for the induction of new staff. Further action on these issues would continue to develop the partnership with parents and the safety and learning of the children.

#### **What is being done well?**

- Children are happy and settled. They are eager to take part in activities and show sustained concentration and perseverance. The children are confident

and speak readily with others, talking about their homes and families and past events in their lives.

- Staff plan and provide a wide range of interesting activities for the children which help them make good progress. They work with the children, giving assistance but allowing them time to practise new skills.
- Staff have a good understanding of positive ways to manage children's behaviour. They help children learn what is expected of them by having consistent expectations for their behaviour and giving children explanations and gentle reminders. They praise and encourage the children who behave very well in response to this.
- The premises are clean, tidy and welcoming to parents and children. Staff have created an attractive environment through many displays of children's pictures, posters and notice boards. They make good use of the rooms, setting them out to provide either quiet or more physical activities. The children are able to select activities independently from low units.
- Children with special needs receive good support from the staff who work closely with parents and others involved with their care. Staff have adapted the premises to meet children's specific needs. They make sure that all children can take part in the activities.

#### **What needs to be improved?**

- record keeping to ensure that there is an accurate record of the times that children and visitors are present
- children's safety by requesting written consent from parents for seeking emergency treatment or advice
- record keeping by revising the format of some records to ensure that information is kept confidential
- staff's knowledge and understanding of equal opportunities issues so that they can further promote anti-discriminatory practice and help children learn about others in society
- children's health by extending the range of healthy snacks available for them.

#### **Outcome of the inspection**

Satisfactory

#### **CONDITIONS OF REGISTRATION**

*All registered persons must comply with all conditions of registration included on his/her certificate of registration.*

*As a result of this inspection conditions of registration have been imposed / varied / removed and a new certificate of registration will be issued.*

## WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE NEXT?

<b>The Registered Person should have regard to the following recommendations by the time of the next inspection</b>	
<b>Std</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>
2	Maintain an accurate record of the times that children and visitors are present.
7	Request written permission from parents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment.
9	Continue to develop staff's knowledge and understanding of equal opportunities issues so that they can help children develop a positive attitude towards others in society.
12	Revise the format of accident and incident records to ensure that information they contain is kept confidential.

## INSPECTION OF THE NURSERY EDUCATION PROVISION FOR FUNDED THREE AND FOUR YEAR OLDS.

### How effective is the nursery education?

Mount Scar Cygnets Playgroup provides nursery education which is acceptable and of good quality. Children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals and very good progress in most areas of learning.

The quality of the teaching is generally good. Staff have a very good understanding of the early learning goals. This allows them to plan an interesting curriculum which helps the children progress well in all areas of their development. Staff observe what the children can do and use this information to plan a generally good level of challenge for them. However, at times they do not extend the thinking and learning of older and more able children by encouraging them to solve problems. Staff relate well to the children, talking with them and giving them praise and encouragement. They work directly with the children helping them with activities and giving them time to practise new skills. Staff manage children's behaviour well. They provide very good support for children with special needs. They create an attractive and well planned environment for the children.

The partnership between staff and parents is very good. They have a friendly relationship and often exchange information about the children informally. Staff give parents information about what children will be learning, making weekly plans available for them. They provide regular opportunities for parents to meet with their child's keyworker to discuss their progress. Staff give parents suggestions about how they can help them at home, encouraging them to become involved with their child's learning.

The leadership and management is generally good. There are suitable procedures to make sure the session run smoothly. Staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities. Although staff monitor the breadth of the curriculum and children's progress, neither they nor the committee have fully established procedures for monitoring the overall effectiveness of the playgroup.

### What is being done well?

- The children are happy and settled. Staff praise and encourage the children which helps them develop good self-esteem. Children are curious and keen to take part in activities. They confidently share their ideas with others. They express their feelings and ensure that their needs are met by asking staff for assistance when required.
- Most children speak clearly and confidently, taking turns in conversation. They show a good awareness of the listener and have learnt to speak politely to others. Children use language to express their thoughts and ideas. They talk about what they are doing and describe real and imaginary events.
- Staff provide many activities to help children develop good hand-eye

coordination. Children skilfully use and manipulate a wide range of objects. They show great concentration and perseverance, for example, when making and completing sewing cards, using hole punches and needles skilfully. This control and co-ordination helps children develop their hand writing skills and many can form recognisable letters and write their names.

- Children express their imaginations and explore ideas in role play and small world activities. They play cooperatively together and often introduce a storyline to their play.

#### **What needs to be improved?**

- the opportunities for older and more able children to solve problems which will extend their thinking and learning particularly in their mathematical development and in construction activities
- the opportunities for children to take part in activities which help them to develop a positive attitude towards others in society
- the procedures which will allow the committee and staff to monitor the overall effectiveness of the setting in supporting children's learning and progress.

#### **What has improved since the last inspection?**

Generally good progress has been made in tackling the key issues raised in the previous inspection report. These required the playgroup to:

extend the assessment system by ensuring that the record sheets used are more closely linked to the early learning goals;

ensure that activities are extended whenever possible to support the needs of four-year-olds in making maximum progress, for example, by encouraging them to solve more problems for themselves; and to provide more challenging climbing activities.

Since the last inspection staff have introduced a new system for recording the children's development which closely follows their progress towards the early learning goals through the stepping stones. This allows staff to plan a wide range of activities which set suitable challenges for most children and help them make good progress. Staff group the children by age and ability which enables them to provide suitable activities for the groups of children. However, at times some of the older and more able children are still not given sufficient challenges to encourage them to think and solve problems, particularly in their mathematical development and in construction activities. There has been no progress in providing more challenging climbing equipment for the children.

## SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

### PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are confident, settled and happy. They are eager to take part in activities and show sustained concentration and perseverance. They are gaining independence both with their personal care and when working at activities. They play co-operatively with other children, sharing fairly and taking turns. Children behave well and understand that there are agreed rules for the routines of the day and times to sit quietly. They confidently express their ideas and feelings.

### COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children speak confidently and clearly. They use language to express their ideas, talking about real and imaginary events, and discussing what they are doing. Children enjoy stories and often ask staff to read books to them. They are learning to link sounds and letters through rhyming activities. Children understand that writing has a purpose and often record what they are doing. They have many opportunities to develop good hand-eye coordination and many children can write their names.

### MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are interested in number and sometimes use numbers in their play. Many children are beginning to count reliably and to recognise numerals and link these to the correct number. They can compare groups of objects and are beginning to learn to solve simple number problems. However at times older and more able children do not have sufficient challenges to extend their thinking. Children are beginning to record numbers. They are developing a good awareness of shape, pattern and sequence.

### KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

Children have many opportunities to find out about the world around them during activities and outings. They observe changes watching the growth of plants and tadpoles. They find out how things work, for example, through cooking activities. Children design and build with construction toys and use tools for a purpose. They have few opportunities to select and experiment with a wide range of materials in their model making. There are few activities to help children learn about other cultures.



## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Judgement: Very Good

Children move with confidence and control and move around the premises in safety. They enjoy playing games in the outside area. They show a good awareness of space both as they play together and when handling objects. They frequently use a range of small and large equipment including the climbing frame in the playroom. Children are developing good hand-eye co-ordination and use simple tools skilfully. They learn about good health and hygiene through the routine of the day and planned activities.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Judgement: Very Good

Children express their ideas and imaginations freely during role and small world play talking about what they are doing and introducing a storyline to their play. They are able to try out a range of art techniques and staff allow them to experiment and develop their own ideas. Children enjoy singing and join in with the words and actions. They use construction toys to build on a large and small scale. Children respond to what they see, feel and hear, talking about their thoughts and feelings.

**Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately.**

## **OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION**

The provision is acceptable and is of good quality overall. Children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals. The next inspection will take place in three to four years time.

## **WHAT THE SETTING NEEDS TO DO NEXT: THE KEY ISSUES**

- plan and provide further opportunities for older and more able children to solve problems which will extend their thinking and learning
- develop procedures which allow the committee and staff to monitor the overall effectiveness of the setting in supporting children's learning and progress.

*The provider must draw up an action plan within 40 working days of receipt of this report showing how the key issues detailed above will be addressed. The action plan must be made available to all parents and to the Local Authority if required. An evaluation of the action taken will form part of the next inspection of funded nursery education.*

## **SUMMARY OF NATIONAL STANDARDS**

### **STANDARD 1 - SUITABLE PERSON**

*Adults providing day care, looking after children or having unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.*

### **STANDARD 2 - ORGANISATION**

*The registered person meets required adult: child ratios, ensures that training and qualifications requirements are met and organises space and resources to meet the children's needs effectively.*

### **STANDARD 3 - CARE, LEARNING AND PLAY**

*The registered person meets children's individual needs and promotes their welfare. They plan and provide activities and play opportunities to develop children's emotional, physical, social and intellectual capabilities.*

### **STANDARD 4 - PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT**

*The premises are safe, secure and suitable for their purpose. They provide adequate space in an appropriate location, are welcoming to children and offer access to the necessary facilities for a range of activities which promote their development.*

### **STANDARD 5 - EQUIPMENT**

*Furniture, equipment and toys are provided which are appropriate for their purpose and help to create an accessible and stimulating environment. They are of suitable design and condition, well maintained and conform to safety standards.*

### **STANDARD 6 - SAFETY**

*The registered person takes positive steps to promote safety within the setting and on outings and ensures proper precautions are taken to prevent accidents.*

### **STANDARD 7 - HEALTH**

*The registered person promotes the good health of children and takes positive steps to prevent the spread of infection and appropriate measures when they are ill.*

### **STANDARD 8 - FOOD AND DRINK**

*Children are provided with regular drinks and food in adequate quantities for their needs. Food and drink is properly prepared, nutritious and complies with dietary and religious requirements.*

### **STANDARD 9 - EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

*The registered person and staff actively promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice for all children.*

### **STANDARD 10 - SPECIAL NEEDS (INCLUDING SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES)**

*The registered person is aware that some children may have special needs and is*

*proactive in ensuring that appropriate action can be taken when such a child is identified or admitted to the provision. Steps are taken to promote the welfare and development of the child within the setting in partnership with the parents and other relevant parties.*

#### **STANDARD 11 - BEHAVIOUR**

*Adults caring for children in the provision are able to manage a wide range of children's behaviour in a way which promotes their welfare and development.*

#### **STANDARD 12 - WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS AND CARERS**

*The registered person and staff work in partnership with parents and to meet the needs of the children, both individually and as a group. Information is shared.*

#### **STANDARD 13 - CHILD PROTECTION**

*The registered person complies with local child protection procedures approved by the Area Child Protection Committee and ensures that all adults working and looking after children in the provision are able to put the procedures into practice.*

#### **STANDARD 14 - DOCUMENTATION**

*Records, policies and procedures which are required for the efficient and safe management of the provision, or to promote the welfare, care and learning of children are maintained. Records about individual children are shared with the child's parent.*