

Cygnets Playschool

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Gillian Walley

Setting address Langford Village Primary school, Peregrine Way, Bicester,
Oxfordshire, OX26 6SX

Telephone number 01869 369021

Email

Type of setting Childcare on non-domestic premises

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Introduction

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Description of the setting

Cygnets Playschool opened in 2003 and operates from a portacabin within Langford Village Community Primary School. All children have access to the fully enclosed outdoor play areas attached to the school.

The playschool operates from 12.15pm. to 2.30pm Monday to Thursday. A lunch club operates from 11.30am. until 12.45pm. daily for children who attend the nursery in the adjoining primary school. There are currently 16 children aged from two to four years on roll. The playschool currently supports a number of children with special educational needs and those who are learning to speak English as an additional language.

Cygnets committee employs six staff who work with the children, most of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the local authority and works in close partnership with the school.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

All children who attend Cygnets Playschool make good progress because it is inclusive and able to meet the needs of each child, including those who are at the early stages of learning to speak English and those who have special educational needs. The manager and her deputy are very experienced and they attend training courses regularly so that they can improve their skills. This helps them to improve the opportunities they provide for the children. The manager and her deputy evaluate the provision regularly and identify how they can improve it further. The manager embeds ambition well and the playschool has a good capacity to improve.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- review the planning of activities so that the staff are clear about what skills they hope the children will develop through them and can assess them more accurately
- involve parents in evaluating the provision and procedures by asking for their views more frequently

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

All policies for the playschool and the lunch club are reviewed regularly and rigorous procedures ensure that the children are always safe. All staff are vetted appropriately and have been trained in safeguarding children. There are daily checks of the premises so that any hazard, which could cause an accident is

identified. The staff have appropriate first aid qualifications and understand hygienic food handling. There are good procedures if children have accidents or need to be given medication so that parents are always fully informed. Visitors sign in and the gates and doors are locked. The children practise evacuating the building so that they know what to do in an emergency.

The staff have good links with the adjoining primary school. For example, the playschool staff use the same planning as the Nursery class so that the children develop the same skills. The staff who run the lunch club follow the same policies as the primary school so that the children's routines are consistent. The children also play together in the same area. This helps them to settle very easily when they transfer to the Nursery class. The manager and deputy meet regularly to review their practice and plan improvements. They have developed their expertise, for example, in helping children to learn their letters and sounds. They have also identified the need to provide the children with resources which offer them more challenges. The playschool has improved since the last inspection. For example, the key workers now record children's progress more carefully and can share this with parents. The classroom is now better organised for the age range of the children.

The playschool works closely with parents, who feel that their children are safe, well cared for, and make good progress, particularly in their social skills and gaining confidence. They especially like the improvements in security. Parents receive information, both about what is going on and the activities the children enjoy. They can see records and photographs of their children learning new skills and enjoying different experiences. Parents can also refer to the playschool's policies and procedures which are displayed on the notice board. They feel that they can talk to the staff informally at any time and that the staff know their children well. Parents whose children find learning more difficult are well supported by the playschool staff. Parents are welcome to spend time in the playschool playing with their children so that they understand how they develop. The manager values parents' views but she does not conduct surveys so that she can make decisions based on parents' preferences. The manager also works extremely closely with the local authority when she needs additional support or advice about a child's needs so that these children are very well supported and make good progress. She adapts the activities so that children who find learning more difficult can be completely included.

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

The children's progress is tracked accurately so that their development in each area of learning can be compared, together with the progress of different groups of children. This helps the manager to evaluate the provision and ensures that all children are challenged. Each child has records showing their assessments and what opportunities they need next in order to move on in their development. Parents can always see these files so that they understand how their children are progressing. The records also help the Nursery class teacher to know each child's starting point. The staff plan exciting activities for the children. However, they do

not always know precisely what skills they hope the children will develop through each activity or what progress they can assess.

The staff encourage the children in their activities and praise them for being polite and helpful. They ask them questions frequently, for example about colours, numbers and shapes. Children play and share well together. They are very well behaved because adults have high expectations of them and are good role models. Children are confident and concentrate on one activity, such as making bugs from play dough, for a long time. They choose what they want to do and have many toys, including dolls, construction kits and puzzles. They develop their imagination by dressing up and through role play. Good resources, such as toy trains and dinosaurs, motivate boys well. Outdoors, children learn about plants by planting sunflower seeds. They develop good physical skills by riding bikes. Children develop good creative skills through painting, printing and collage. They use a parachute and streamers to improve their gross motor skills. They develop good speaking and listening skills when they talk about their interests in a group. For example, they talk about the colours of autumn leaves and how they feel to the touch. The children develop their early writing skills using a good range of resources such as large crayons and chinks. The classroom and the garden provide a wide range of activities in a stimulating but rather limited space.

When children start the playschool, parents provide very detailed information so that the staff begin to know each child well and can provide activities children will enjoy most. This helps them to settle easily and is reassuring for their parents. The children learn to become independent by putting toys away and preparing snacks such as sandwiches. They learn about the importance of a healthy lifestyle by talking about the fruit and vegetables they eat at snack time. They understand why they need to wash their hands. Children make good progress in understanding the diversity of the world around them because they talk about people from different cultures and they learn about celebrations and customs. For example, at Chinese New Year they cooked noodles and ate them with chopsticks. They play with puzzles and dolls that reflect a multicultural society.

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

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	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	2
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	2

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	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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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