

Cygnets Pre School/Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number EY350289
Inspection date 04/03/2011
Inspector Susan Scott

Setting address Swanscombe Town Council, Council Offices & Community Hall, The Grove, Swanscombe, Kent, DA10 0GA
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Email
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*.

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

Cygnets pre-school was registered in 2007. The group previously operated for fourteen years from the Grove and Church Road halls in Swanscombe. The pre-school opens five mornings a week from 8.45am until 11.45am and five afternoons from 12.30pm until 3.30pm. The pre-school is open term time only. Children can attend for a variety of sessions.

The pre-school operates from newly built Council Offices in Swanscombe. The pre-school has sole use of the setting during hours of operation. It has access to a large room, a kitchen, a large outside play area and sole use of toilet facilities and office.

The pre-school is registered for 26 children aged between two and five years. At present there are 60 children on roll, of these 42 children receiving funding for nursery education. The setting supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and English as an additional language. The pre-school generally receives children from the local community.

There are eight part time staff who work directly with the children for a variety of sessions and seven of these have an early years qualification to NVQ Level 2 or NVQ level 3. All staff hold a valid paediatric first aid qualification.

The setting is a Pre-school learning alliance associated group and are managed by a management committee. They receive support and training from the Local Authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

All children make generally good progress in their learning and development inside and outdoors. Those with additional needs experience excellent opportunities to progress and receive a service that is highly sensitive to their individual needs. Children's experiences are enhanced through the involvement of a variety of other professional agencies and excellent partnerships with parents and carers. Staff promote children's welfare through appropriate evaluation which includes obtaining parental views and contributions. Procedures are regularly reviewed and checked ensuring continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- promote opportunities for children to move equipment around your setting, indoors and outside, to extend their own play and learning

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children benefit from the excellent safeguarding procedures which ensure that any concerns are dealt with professionally. The records, policies and procedures are well understood by staff who form a strong and well informed team, committed to working hard to support all children. This effectively supports the welfare of children and enables them to feel happy and secure at the pre-school. There are clear policies and procedures in place to ensure all children play and learn in a safe environment. Accident and medication records and written consents provide further safeguards for children. Parents are given very clear and helpful information on a variety of issues, including how to raise concerns if they wish to. The pre-school completes daily checks to make sure the environment is safe and suitable for the children to use and there is a thorough risk assessment covering all identified hazards. Staff ensure that any issues raised by parents receive their immediate attention and that there are well-organised record keeping procedures. The play resources are plentiful, age-appropriate, in good condition, and safe to use. These include imaginative and attractive activities designed to promote equality and minimise discrimination,. The building is very secure and children benefit from good use of the secure outside environment which has a safety surface available for them to use. There is also a canopy provided to ensure there is shade if the weather is very sunny. The staff complete evaluations of the provision and activities, identifying improvements they can make, although not all of these are recorded on the self-evaluation form. A good awareness of the needs of children and a shared vision for the development of the setting enables continuous improvement in the quality of the provision. The staff communicate effectively with each other and provide positive support and encouragement for all children.

The staff provide a service that is highly inclusive to all families, and clearly values all children's individuality. There is a clear focus on the individual needs of all the children who attend, which enables staff to prioritise the learning and development needs of every child and promote experiences that promote their development. Good relationships with other professionals, such as physiotherapists and specialist teachers, optimise support for children. Staff from the local school have regular contact with the setting making transitions easier for children.

An excellent exchange of information ensures staff regularly make parents aware of children's achievements and any concerns they may have. Staff have very positive relationships with parents and other agencies enabling them to work together to meet the needs of individuals. Children's contributions are valued and staff constantly share information with parents. They are aware of children's changing needs and respond to these promptly. This means that children are effectively supported when they experience difficulties. Information is exchanged when parents attend consultations and they discuss their children's progress records twice each year. Parents express great satisfaction with the service they

receive and the progress their children make.

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

Children settle quickly and happily into this safe environment from the outset. They feel extremely secure in the setting because staff create a calm and nurturing atmosphere promoting children's trust. Staff frequently record what children achieve, noting their observational assessments against each area of learning. The information is then used to plan for children and extend their learning experiences to enable them to make progress. Plans are flexible and take account of children's interests and all permanent staff are aware of children's development and are able to identify their individual, or additional needs. Children enjoy regular and frequent outside play in the secure and attractive garden, although physical activities are most frequently planned for this area. Children benefit from the high staff ratio and receive sensitive and effective support to enable their progress.

Children are confident enough to request resources that may not readily accessible and staff are very responsive to their needs. This enables children to develop confidence and self-esteem. Staff note children's preferences and what they need in order to progress. Activities are then incorporated into the weekly plans to support children's development. Children are consistently engaged in a variety of play and learning experiences that interest them, such as imaginative play. The staff continually acknowledge children's achievements promoting their self-esteem. Positive reinforcement and sensitive reminders encourage children to build upon their social skills and learn how to behave correctly.

Children enjoy good access to outdoor play every session. For instance, they enjoy the opportunity to ride bikes and use racquets and balls. Staff take regular photographs of the activities and children enjoy looking at, and discussing the photos. This promotes their communication skills. Children build upon their understanding of a healthy diet when they help themselves to well-balanced foods such as fruits, toast with butter and jam or marmite at snack-times. They learn about healthy lifestyles and they follow good personal hygiene practices by washing their hands independently after using the toilets and before they eat. Children with particular dietary needs are well catered for as staff are familiar with children's allergies and can easily refer to the records.

Children happily engage in a range of activities while chatting to staff about their experiences. Some children particularly enjoy participating in activities alongside adults who enable all of the children to make choices and express their opinions. For example, children organise a tea party using a selection of imaginative play resources, such as plates, cups and play foods. They sit together and talk about their birthdays and celebrations. This is successfully supported by the patience and sensitive encouragement of the staff who engage children in discussion. Children organise their party and the staff member participates at key times in order to extend the activity. For instance, by asking the children how old they are and enabling them to experience writing for a purpose, building on their social skills and understanding of numbers. Children also develop their understanding of time and place, and of celebrations. Staff clearly value every child's contribution and effectively supports their developing communication skills by asking questions and

prompting children to talk about their ideas and choices.

Children explore their senses by using scented dough, and through their play they learn about the textures and properties of the dough. They experience good opportunities to make connections with their local community through visits from local people. They have learned about guide dog training, and also about safety from the local police officer who visits. During the inspection, they enjoy a visit from a parent with a young baby. They eagerly watch the baby being changed and talk about the care given to babies. Their questions are supplemented by the well-considered information provided by the parent and by staff encouraging their understanding through discussion about their own feelings and experiences.

Children enthusiastically participate in singing and musical activities. They develop their understanding of technology by using a computer, following instructions and developing their fine motor skills using the mouse.

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	1
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	1
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	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	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

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