

Cygnets (Whelnetham)

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector

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Type of setting

Childcare - Non-Domestic

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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 was registered in 2005 and is run by a voluntary management committee. It operates from the school grounds of Great Wheltnetham Primary in Great Wheltnetham, Suffolk. The pre-school serves the local area and has strong links with the school. The pre-school is accessible to all children and there is a fully enclosed area available for outdoor play.

The pre-school opens Monday to Friday from 9.10am until 3.10pm during school term times. Daytime sessions are between 9.10am until 12.10pm and then from 12.10pm until 3.10pm. An after-school club also operates from 3.10pm until 5.30pm and a breakfast club runs from 8.10am before the pre-school session begins. The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 24 children may attend the pre-school at any one time all, of whom, may be on the Early Years Register. There are currently 33 children attending who are within the Early Years Foundation Stage. The pre-school also offers care to children aged over five years to 14 years and provides funded early education for three- and four-year-olds. It supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs five members of childcare staff. Of these, four hold appropriate early years qualifications. The leader has a degree in Early Years studies and the deputy holds a foundation degree. The pre-school receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Children bloom in this pre-school because the qualified staff put their needs at the centre of the provision. Staff, parents and others involved in the care of the children work very closely to ensure children enjoy an inclusive environment where they feel very safe and secure. Children are able to make consistently outstanding progress towards the early learning goals, as the free-flow environment allows them to make independent decisions about their play. The accomplished staff collect extensive information from parents when they start and provide them with ongoing learning journeys, to ensure that children's individual needs are being met. Children's care is further enhanced, as staff are committed to partnership working with other agencies, such as the speech therapist and paediatrician. The setting uses various systems to self-evaluate the provision which has led to accurately identifying areas for continuous improvement, such as extending children's learning further in the outdoor play area.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person

should consider:

- extending further the opportunities for active learning in the outdoor environment.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's welfare is promoted very effectively because staff are familiar with the extensive safeguarding policies and procedures. All staff have evaluated their safeguarding knowledge and attended training to make sure their practice is up to date and children's safety is secured. Risk assessments are thorough and consistently appraised by staff to guarantee all hazards to children are minimised. The committee run pre-school works very closely with parents to ensure they are fully informed about the health, safety and welfare of their children. Parents unquestionably value the level of service they receive and like the fact that staff are always willing to listen to any concerns they might have. The key person system and open door policy mean that staff are constantly available for parents. The accomplished team is well established and this continuity, along with their commitment to working in partnerships, has contributed greatly to the quality of the excellent relationships with parents.

The enthusiastic staff have a comprehensive knowledge about the Early Years Foundation Stage and use this exceptionally well to support children in their learning. The stimulating environment is organised to enable children to select their own activities from a varied selection available inside and out and so they become independent learners. There is an extensive range of quality resources for children to choose from including computers, role play toys, construction bricks, craft materials, puzzles and books. This enables children to make excellent progress in their development.

The committee run pre-school is committed to continual improvement and previous recommendations have been addressed. They use written self-evaluation to identify strengths and weaknesses and look for ways to enhance the quality of provision. For example, although children benefit significantly from the stimulating outdoor areas, they have identified this can be further extended to provide more opportunities for active physical development in a natural environment. Parental questionnaires ensure the pre-school has a comprehensive understanding of what needs to be done to secure improvements.

Parents are fully involved in the planning for children's learning as they provide information about their preferences and interests when they start. The pre-school see this exchange of information as vital to ensuring individual children's needs are met effectively. Parents are consistently informed about their children's progress. The staff provide detailed learning journeys so parents are always kept fully informed about how their children are progressing. The pre-school develops very successful partnerships with others, such as, the local school and other settings which support the children's learning. This means there is continuity of care and exceptionally smooth transitions into school. In order that children with special

educational needs are effectively provided for links with other agencies are developed. For example, speech and language therapists and local authority special needs advisers visit the pre-school. Visits into the community, such as to the post office, local care home and a nearby forest ensure all children are very aware of where they live and feel part of their surroundings.

The pre-school is pro-active in helping all children to understand their own and others cultures and beliefs by celebrating some festivals and learning to speak Chinese. A wide range of multicultural resources are available to help children learn about differences and diversity. Children's photos of special people in their lives are close at hand to promote a keen sense of belonging. The pre-school staff successfully adapt activities to enable all children to participate and to ensure they feel fully included in the setting.

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

Children receive an exceptionally warm welcome into this high quality pre-school so they are very happy and interested to learn through play. Staff clearly know the children well. As a result they grow in confidence and show they feel extremely safe and secure. Staff are exceptionally motivated in helping children to keep themselves safe by carrying out regular fire drills and discussing stranger danger. The staff show a commitment to meeting the individual needs of the children and plan purposeful activities and outings. Children are able to move around the setting freely as they know where they can go. They actively choose from the good quality resources and wide range of toys available. This encourages children to become independent learners and develops their ability to make choices.

Children have excellent opportunities to learn how to lead a healthy lifestyle. They choose healthy snacks, such as, carrot, banana or vegetables that they have planted and grown outdoors. All children enjoy lots of physical exercise and fresh air all year round. They energetically participate in outside play daily, so they are very familiar with the benefits of exercise on their body. They are developing excellent physical skills in climbing, running and jumping because of the wide range of equipment and activities available, such as, the trim trail in the school, exercise in the school hall and on the field. However, staff acknowledge that the outside area is not used as effectively to fully promoting physical play. The staff are meticulously supporting children to keep them healthy by teaching effective care routines, such as, hand washing before snack and after playing outside.

Children are making excellent progress towards the early learning goals because the enthusiastic staff plan activities around their interests and needs. They accurately observe the children's play to thoroughly identify children's learning priorities. Achievements are recorded in the learning journeys which are shared with parents. As a result, children make very significant progress in their learning. Further activities planned are fully effective in meeting their developmental stages. Children are developing outstanding language skills, as the staff engage them in conversations. Children join in with songs using actions and Makaton signing, to increase their understanding. For example, 'Twinkle Twinkle little star'. Children

routinely use mathematical ideas and methods to solve practical problems. They enjoy sorting leaves according to colour and size on a 'forest sound' trail. They also create repeated pattern of sound on this walk. They choose the correct size of wellingtons from the number on their own shoe and learn about weight and volume through cooking activities. Children gain skills in technology as they confidently use a computer mouse to fit the bones on the dinosaur.

Children benefit considerably from an extensive range of sensory experiences; they use sand, water and dough on a daily basis. They thoroughly enjoy exploring textures and consistencies as they have fun with pouring, scooping and cutting. They enjoy digging outside to plant vegetables and watch them grow. They observe butterflies growing from caterpillars and learn to care for the goldfish and the chickens. This also means that children are learning exceptional skills for the future.

All children are developing a high level of respect for themselves and others as staff are thoroughly committed to inclusive practice. Children's behaviour is exemplary as adults give clear expectations and set appropriate boundaries to which they respond. Staff consistently praise the children's efforts. Their paintings, collage and models are displayed at the end of the day for all to see, which promotes a further sense of achievement.

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?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	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	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
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	1
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
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	1

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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