

# Sandon Cygnets Group

Sandon JMI School, Sandon, near Buntingford, Hertfordshire, SG9 0QS

<b>Inspection date</b>	08/10/2014
Previous inspection date	15/10/2008

<b>The quality and standards of the early years provision</b>	<b>This inspection:</b>	2
	Previous inspection:	2
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		2
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		2
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		2

## The quality and standards of the early years provision

### This provision is good

- Teaching is good and sometimes outstanding. Practitioners listen attentively to children and follow their ideas. The areas of learning are covered well, both inside and outdoors and this supports children with different preferred styles of learning very effectively.
- Practitioners develop highly effective partnerships with parents. In addition, the strong bonds between children and practitioners promote a sense of security and belonging.
- Practitioners track children's progress very effectively. The robust, systematic approach ensures that gaps in learning are narrowed. The inclusion of all involved with the group in reflecting on practice and the development plans for the future are helping to drive the group forward.
- Practitioners, with effective support from school, have excellent safeguarding knowledge and procedures to protect the children in their care.

### It is not yet outstanding because

- Practitioners do not consistently promote children's language for thinking and talking to the optimum.
- Children are not always supported to be as independent as they might and to follow the robust hygiene procedures because the mobile sink does not always have a ready supply of water.

## Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are:

- scheduled at least once in every inspection cycle – the current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- scheduled at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The provision is also registered on the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

## Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities in the classroom and conducted a joint observation with a practitioner.
- The inspector, practitioners and children had wide ranging discussions at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector looked at documentation related to the management of the setting, including safeguarding, children's progress and self-evaluation.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to at the inspection.
- The inspector checked evidence of suitability and qualifications of practitioners working with children and checked the suitability of committee members.

## Inspector

Alison Reeves

## Full report

### Information about the setting

Sandon Cygnets Group was registered in 1988 on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is situated at Sandon School and is managed by a committee. The group serves the local area and is accessible to all children. It operates from a classroom in the school and there is an enclosed area available for outdoor play. The group employs five childcare practitioners, of whom three hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above, including two with Qualified Teacher Status. The group opens Monday to Friday during term time. Sessions are from 9am until 12 noon, with an additional lunch club until 1.30pm on Monday and Wednesday to Friday. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 18 children attending, who are in the early years age group. The group provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

### What the setting needs to do to improve further

#### To further improve the quality of the early years provision the provider should:

- enhance children's language skills, for example, by extending the use of practitioners' commentary or narration of activities where their language is less developed
- extend opportunities for children to be fully independent, for example, by ensuring that the mobile sink unit has a ready supply of clean water for hand washing.

## Inspection judgements

### How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

Practitioners have a good understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage. They plan and deliver a wide range of activities that promote children's learning through play. The quality of teaching is good and sometimes outstanding. Practitioners support children effectively, helping them to make progress towards the early learning goals from their individual starting points. Practitioners plan carefully and thoughtfully, looking to provide children with first-hand experiences that interest them. They frequently observe children's play. Practitioners use their precise observations to assess children's stage of development and to support them in identifying the next steps in learning. They use what they see to help them devise suitably challenging activities and play experiences to assist children in achieving further. Practitioners actively encourage parents to get involved their children's learning. They are extremely successful and parents regularly contribute examples of children's experiences and achievements at home.

Children are active and inquisitive learners. They relish the opportunities to explore and

investigate. Children trying the bubble painting activity, enthusiastically blow through the straw, making the bubbles rise up from the cup. They are fascinated by the mounds of bubbles, some looking closely at the shape, size and colour. Children in the sand become deeply engrossed. They talk to one another, exchanging ideas and developing their play. Practitioners, alert to the needs of their key group, skilfully tailor activities to ensure individual children benefit from what is available. For example, an activity involving counting and sorting small, coloured objects is readily adapted to ensure children are suitably challenged and therefore, get the maximum benefit. Children eagerly join activities with them in the reception class. They listen attentively to the teacher, participate well and bring back their new knowledge and understanding. Following a session about colour mixing, children enthusiastically explain how yellow and blue liquids become green when put together.

Practitioners often use highly effective strategies to interest and involve children. Story telling is particularly engaging. Practitioners use clear speech, ensure children can see the pictures and that each child has time to absorb what they have heard. The practitioner recaps events and encourages children's participation by including sufficient pauses for them to say the repeated phrases. This promotes children's love of books and their communication and language skills very effectively. At other times during activities, practitioners do not give sufficient emphasis to promoting the youngest children's language for speaking and thinking. For example, they do not provide a commentary of children's actions to explain what they are doing or extend the vocabulary. However, practitioners listen carefully when children do speak, use open questions to explore how and why things happen and are animated and interested. This encourages children to join in with all that is available and prepares them for the next stage in their education, such as school.

### **The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children**

Children settle quickly into the group because practitioners are kind, friendly and reassuring. The classroom is organised effectively by practitioners to help children to feel welcome. Children are assigned a key person, who works with them and their family, making sure they get to know them well. The highly effective partnerships means that there is an excellent level of trust. This contributes significantly to children's emotional well-being and sense of security. This in turn ensures that children are ready to make the most of the learning experiences on offer. Children show how content they are with their smiling faces and readiness to involve practitioners in their play. Children, who are just getting settled-in, bring practitioners some of the items they have found, showing them the wild animals linked to their jungle topic. Practitioners delight in this, expressing their pleasure in sharing an experience with new children.

Children move confidently around the classroom and outdoor area. The oldest children regularly visit the reception class next door and this helps them to prepare and adjust when the time comes for them to go to school. Practitioners and parents work very closely to plan children's move into school. They ensure children develop their confidence and skills to help them to manage new challenges. This means that children have the support they need. Children behave well. Practitioners are consistent in implementing the agreed

behaviour management strategies. This helps children to learn the expectations of acceptable behaviour quite quickly. Practitioners are calm and use language appropriate to children's age and understanding when giving them explanations. They help children to develop self-control and to understand how to keep themselves and others safe.

Practitioners promote children's independence very well most of the time. Children's opportunities to choose their activities and manage their shoes, boots and coats, all contribute significantly to their rapidly growing abilities to be independent and self-reliant. Practitioners sometimes overlook the need to keep the mobile sink water supply replenished. This means that children cannot always wash their hands independently, which is confusing to the youngest children, who are trying to follow the routines and are less familiar with the environment. Children enjoy an active and healthy life at the group. They use the outdoor space frequently and practitioners understand the importance of fresh air and exercise. Children enjoy feeding the chickens the scraps left over from snack. They are learning about the needs of living things as well as their own health needs. Children are developing their understanding of eating well and how this helps them to stay healthy. Practitioners use snack time well to talk with children about what they eat and drink.

### **The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision**

Practitioners at the group have an extremely secure understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage. They expertly fulfil their responsibility for meeting all the safeguarding and welfare requirements. Practitioners' knowledge of child protection is excellent. Managers at the group ensure practitioners understand and implement the robust procedures. Senior members of the school staff support the team very well and this helps them to quickly address any possible concerns about children's well-being. All practitioners attend training to keep their knowledge and skills up to date. Rigorous recruitment procedures, including a thorough induction and probationary period, are used effectively by managers to ensure practitioners are suitable to work with young children. Practitioners work together very effectively to ensure the environment is safe and secure by making regular checks on the spaces and resources used by children. Practitioners ensure they are deployed properly to support children in their play.

Managers monitor the educational programme very closely. They regularly evaluate the activities, checking on the success and making changes to improve the effectiveness. The team work together tracking children's progress, identifying gaps in their learning and developing strategies to ensure these are narrowed. The team regularly reflects on their practice and the group as a whole. They seek the views of parents, children and other professionals, including school staff, to identify aspects of the provision that they can enhance. This enables them to develop precise actions plans to secure rapid improvements. Practitioners are well qualified and this has a very positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning. They frequently attend training to further extend their knowledge and expertise.

Practitioners work hard to establish the highly successful partnerships with other

professionals. As a result, they have an extensive network of supportive experts to call on for advice and guidance. This enables practitioners to signpost families to the necessary local services and to secure appropriate early interventions. The highly successful partnerships with school staff help practitioners to support children in the move into the reception class. The team have equally effective relationships with parents. This helps to ensure the excellent communication continues and that information is shared to promote children's optimal progress towards the early learning goals. Parents express their complete satisfaction with the practitioners, the learning experiences and the very good progress their children are making.

### **The Childcare Register**

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are	<b>Met</b>
--	------------

The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are	<b>Met</b>
---	------------

## What inspection judgements mean

### Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	The provision is not giving children a good standard of early years education and/or there are minor breaches of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. We re-inspect nurseries and pre-schools judged as requires improvement within 12 months of the date of inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement action. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected again within six months of the date of this inspection.
Met		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

## Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the Early Years Foundation Stage.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	146865
<b>Local authority</b>	Hertfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	874924
<b>Type of provision</b>	
<b>Registration category</b>	Childcare - Non-Domestic
<b>Age range of children</b>	0 - 17
<b>Total number of places</b>	24
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	18
<b>Name of provider</b>	Sandon Cygnets Committee
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	15/10/2008
<b>Telephone number</b>	01763 287 238

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance '*Complaints procedure: raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted*', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

## Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools



and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises, which are usually the childminder's own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store St  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2012

