

Cygnets Playschool

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

Inspection date	02/12/2014
Previous inspection date	18/10/2010

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	3
	Previous inspection:	2
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		3
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		3
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		3

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision requires improvement

- Staff provide a welcoming, friendly setting and offer good support to help children develop their personal, social and emotional skills.
- Staff provide a flexible and relaxed approach to care and learning, which particularly suits younger children.
- Parents comment that the wraparound service for children attending the on-site school nursery is very helpful to them.

It is not yet good because

- When assessing children's progress, staff rely too much on general evaluations of activities rather than on the capabilities of individual children. As a result, they are not fully effective in planning for children's individual needs.
- The quality of teaching is variable between sessions, particularly in delivering activities that challenge older children.
- Staff have little time to set up the learning environment as they share the premises with the school's breakfast club. The morning session gets off to a slow start and staff do not ensure that the environment broadly reflects all seven areas of learning, which reduces opportunities for children to develop their skills in some areas.

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.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities both indoors and outside.
- The inspector completed a joint observation with the supervisor.
- The inspector took account of children's assessment records, planning documentation, evidence of staff suitability and parent questionnaires.
- The inspector held a meeting with the supervisor to discuss various aspects of leadership and management.

Inspector

Gill Little

Full report

Information about the setting

Cygnets Pre-school registered in 2003. It operates from premises within Langford Village Community Primary School in Bicester, Oxfordshire. It is run by a voluntary committee. Children have access to enclosed outdoor play areas within the school grounds. The pre-school operates morning and afternoon sessions during school term times from 8.45am until 3.15pm, Monday to Friday. Places are available as wraparound care for three and four year olds attending the on-site school, and for two year olds. The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register and there are 26 children on roll, including children learning English as an additional language. It receives funding for the provision of free early education for children ages two, three and four years. The pre-school employs seven staff, of whom six hold relevant qualifications at levels 2 and 3.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage the provider must:

- improve observation, assessment and planning by ensuring that these focus more carefully on the progress and capabilities of individual children, in order that they make good progress in their learning and development
- raise the quality of teaching to a consistently good quality so that older children engage in challenging activities in each session that focus on developing specific skills to help them move forward in their learning and development
- plan the learning environment to more broadly reflect the seven areas of learning by providing well-planned resources and activities to promote children's mathematical development and understanding of the world, particularly for older children.

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

- review procedures for setting up activities and resources at the beginning of the day so that the morning session can start more effectively in order that children benefit fully from their time at the pre-school.

Inspection judgements

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

Staff provide a relaxed environment with a flexible approach to learning. They follow children's interests appropriately and, at times, make good use of incidental learning opportunities to further children's skills. This approach is particularly suitable for younger children, who settle well in the pre-school. However, as the pre-school shares premises with the school's breakfast club, staff have little time to prepare the room at the start of the day. On the day of the inspection, the morning session got off to a slow start as staff continued to prepare activities while children engaged in free play. This reduces the time available for children to engage in good quality learning opportunities.

Staff use circle times well to encourage children's communication and language skills, such as singing songs and using sign language to aid understanding, and sharing stories. Some good support is available for children learning English as an additional language, such as bilingual staff talking to children in their home languages. Staff help children to develop an awareness of number through counting during daily routines and talking about the pre-school's advent calendar. Children enjoy exploring the environment. However, staff do not set out activities and resources to encourage children to explore all seven areas of learning, although sufficient resources are available in storage boxes which children can choose if they wish. On the day of the inspection, most activities and resources set out reflected creative and imaginative play, such as a Christmas tree craft activity, a modelling dough activity, home corner and small world play. While staff encouraged children to develop additional skills, such as using scissors, to promote their physical development, there was a lack of focus in other areas of learning. For example, few resources were set out to encourage children to further explore mathematical concepts or to learn about the world around them. This reduces opportunities for children, particularly older children, to develop their skills in some areas. Furthermore, the quality of teaching is variable between sessions. On the day of the inspection, there was less focus in the morning session on challenging older children than in the afternoon session.

Staff maintain individual development profiles as part of their observation, assessment and planning procedures. These include examples of children's pre-writing skills and artwork, and some observations of their developing skills. However, staff rely too much on general evaluations of activities for groups of children rather than the capabilities and progress of individual children. As a result, they are not fully effective in planning for children's individual needs and ensuring that children are fully prepared for their next stages in learning.

Staff encourage parent partnership, for example by inviting parents to contribute to children's development profiles. They suggest ideas to support learning at home, such as encouraging independence, and they send out newsletters to keep parents updated about pre-school life.

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

Staff have a welcoming and friendly approach. They provide good support to help children develop their personal, social and emotional skills. They offer lots of encouragement and praise to reward children for their efforts, which promotes confidence and self-esteem.

Children develop good relationships with each other and with staff, and display good levels of behaviour. Close partnerships with the on-site school ensure continuity for children attending both settings and help younger children to be well prepared emotionally for their move into school. Children are able to develop skills to support their independence, such as learning to peel oranges at snack time. Staff support children's understanding of good hygiene, such as through close supervision at toileting times. Children are developing a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe. On the day of the inspection, they responded calmly to a fire drill and staff evacuated them from the building quickly and effectively.

While staff support children's well-being effectively overall, the learning environment is not fully successful in supporting children's all-round development. As well as gaps in the indoor provision, children do not currently have full access to a well-equipped outdoor area. The staff and committee are working together to raise funds to improve the pre-school garden, which is currently not in use due to poor ground surfaces. Staff make use of the school grounds to provide children with outdoor play opportunities on a daily basis, such as using the school nursery's outdoor area or the school playground. On the day of the inspection, children were able to develop their physical skills using playground equipment but did not have access to other resources outdoors to develop a greater range of skills.

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

The staff and committee overall demonstrate an appropriate understanding of the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Since the last inspection, the pre-school has expanded to offer morning sessions and to take older children. There is a strong focus on providing informal wraparound care for older children, together with a relaxed environment for younger children. However, there is not enough emphasis on rigorously assessing children's progress, planning for their individual learning needs or providing a rich and stimulating environment to fully support their all-round development. Self-evaluation processes are adequate in identifying some areas for further improvement, such as developing the garden. Parents are welcome to contribute to the self-evaluation process and they comment positively on the service the pre-school provides, particularly the wraparound care. The staff and committee have improved partnerships with parents since the last inspection, by introducing the use of a website and a social media site to improve communication. Staff work appropriately with other settings, such as local childminders and the on-site school, to share information about individual children, through discussion and the use of communication books.

The joint supervisors communicate regularly to provide some consistency on a day-to-day basis. They monitor staff practice sufficiently to provide children with a suitable range of experiences over time. The supervisors check that development profiles are being updated regularly. They provide guidance to staff in order to support individual children and encourage good practice. However, they are not implementing monitoring procedures effectively enough to provide consistently good learning experiences for children. Staff

receive an appropriate induction to help them learn about their roles and responsibilities, and they have opportunities for ongoing training. The committee follows appropriate recruitment procedures to ensure that persons working with children are suitable to do so.

The staff and committee demonstrate a suitable commitment to safeguarding children. All staff working with children have appropriate background checks. Staff offer good levels of supervision to the children to help reduce the risk of injuries and accidents. Staff have a good working knowledge of safeguarding procedures, such as possible symptoms of children at risk and how to respond to concerns.

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

Unique reference number	EY267146
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	833292
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	2 - 5
Total number of places	16
Number of children on roll	26
Name of provider	Cygnets Playschool Committee
Date of previous inspection	18/10/2010
Telephone number	01869 369021

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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.

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