

Sandon Cygnets Group

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



Inspection date	6 February 2019
Previous inspection date	24 May 2018

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Good	2
	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Effectiveness of leadership and management		Good	2
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Good	2
Personal development, behaviour and welfare		Good	2
Outcomes for children		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision is good

- The co-managers have taken positive action since their last inspection. For example, they have implemented robust procedures for staff supervision. Staff identify their strengths and areas for improvement and regularly meet with their co-managers to discuss and plan for their ongoing training needs. This has a positive impact on staff's teaching practice and supports children to make good progress.
- Staff promote children's personal, social and emotional development. Children develop a strong sense of belonging. They form close bonds and attachments with staff and other children. Children settle quickly and demonstrate that they are happy.
- Children enjoy being creative. They spent long periods of time making musical instruments from a wide range of materials available. Children smiled proudly when they showed their creations to staff and were highly praised for their efforts.
- Children are independent. They have good opportunities to make choices about what they play with. Staff enhance their interests and engage fully in their chosen play.
- Partnerships with other settings are good. The staff team encourage regular communication with other early years professionals, such as school teaching staff, to support young children. This enhances the smooth moves children make when moving on to their next stage of learning.
- Staff promote the use of mathematical language during activities and experiences to develop children's learning further. For example, they encourage children to look at shape and size as they create different items with malleable dough.
- There are not enough opportunities for children to develop an understanding of how things work in different ways.
- On occasions, children do not have enough time to think about how to respond to questions and comments from staff.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- extend opportunities for children to develop an understanding of how things work
- provide children with sufficient time to respond to staff questions and comments.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed the quality of teaching during activities indoors and outdoors and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The inspector held many joint discussions about staff teaching with the co-managers.
- The inspector held a meeting with the pre-school co-managers. She looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of staff working in the pre-school. The inspector also reviewed the suitability of committee members.
- The inspector spoke with staff and children at appropriate times throughout the inspection.
- The inspector spoke to a number of parents during the inspection and took account of their views.

Inspector

Jo Rowley

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Staff are aware of the signs and symptoms of abuse and know what to do if they have concerns about the welfare of children in their care. Recruitment and induction procedures are robust. The co-managers work closely with the committee to ensure that staff suitability is regularly monitored. This ensures that staff are suitable to work with children and promotes children's safety. Staff have effective partnerships with parents. They provide regular opportunities for parents to be involved in their children's learning. For example, staff regularly share future activity plans with parents. This provides good opportunities for parents to extend children's learning at home. Additionally, the co-managers provide parents with informative newsletters and regular opportunities to attend meetings to discuss their children's progress. Parents speak highly of the staff team.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

The well-qualified staff team complete regular observations. They assess and track children's progress and plan well for their next steps in learning. Staff recognise children's interests and ideas, and they provide good opportunities for extending these. For example, children talked to staff about holidaying on a boat. They introduced pirates and treasure maps to their discussion. Staff encouraged children to think about creating their own treasure map. Children skilfully used a range of items to represent each part of the treasure map. This spontaneous activity promoted children's communication and language development and encouraged their imaginative skills. Staff adapt activities to suit the age and stage of individual children. For example, they use effective teaching strategies, such as open-ended questioning, to add further challenge for the most able children. This promotes children's individual learning and development.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are good

Children behave well. Staff are consistent in the way they manage children's behaviour. They embraced children's interest in dragons and dinosaurs but explained clearly to children how other children might feel about this. This helps children to develop empathy towards others and staff reward children for their kindness. Children have very good opportunities to develop their physical skills. They explore the wide range of activities and experiences outside each day. Children make dens, enjoy bug hunts and embrace the large puddles they find by jumping in them. Children learn about healthy lifestyles. They follow daily routines, which include handwashing before they prepare their own snacks. This supports children's well-being.

Outcomes for children are good

Children make effective progress in their learning given their starting points and capabilities. Children are motivated and show high levels of concentration. They initiate their own play and eagerly join in with experiences that support them in acquiring the skills they need for school.

Setting details

Unique reference number	146865
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10084977
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children	2 - 4
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	19
Name of registered person	Sandon Cygnets Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP519052
Date of previous inspection	24 May 2018
Telephone number	01763 287 238

Sandon Cygnets Group registered in 1988. The setting operates from Sandon School and is managed by a voluntary committee. The setting employs six members of staff, of whom five hold relevant childcare qualifications, including the co-managers who both hold qualified teacher status. The setting operates Monday to Friday, during term time from 9am until 3pm, except on a Tuesday when the setting closes at 1.30pm. The setting provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

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