

Inspection of Sturton Cygnets Pre-School

Sturton by Stow Primary School, School Lane, Sturton by Stow, Lincoln,
Lincolnshire LN1 2BY

Inspection date: 28 April 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children are greeted warmly on entering the safe and inviting environment staff have created. They find their names on their coat pegs and settle quickly with the familiar and longstanding staff team. Children play imaginatively in the mud kitchen. They use their small muscles to fill up jugs and mix with the mud, exclaiming, 'I've made birthday cakes!' Staff support the children to find mint in the garden and to use a variety of kitchen tools to stir the muddy mixture.

Children use their large muscles to dig excitedly for worms. They gently hold a worm in their hands, and staff help them to identify its size and shape. Children play harmoniously with each other, developing their cooperation skills and imaginations. They use the resources in the role-play kitchen to create pretend food. They chop real vegetables with safety knives and carefully put the food on the table, saying, 'This is a birthday party.'

Children are introduced to new words by staff, which helps to build their vocabulary. They listen carefully to instructions as they make their own play dough. Children use new vocabulary that staff have introduced, such as 'knead', as they squash and squeeze the dough. Children are supported in their mathematical development as they discover how old other children are, making the same number of claps as their age.

What does the early years setting do well and what does it need to do better?

- The passionate and dedicated manager and her staff provide an exciting and ambitious curriculum to give children the best start in their learning. They use their knowledge of each child to identify what children need to learn next. As a result, children are making good progress in their development.
- Staff promote good behaviour. They offer praise and encouragement when children are kind to each other. Children understand the routines in place and spend prolonged periods of time engrossed in exciting activities. They share their toys and say 'please' and 'thank you' throughout the day.
- The manager and her staff promote a love of books in the setting. Children share familiar books together, and they use their recall skills to help remember the plot, joining in enthusiastically with the words in the story. Children borrow books to take home and enjoy with their families, which helps to promote literacy at home.
- Parents are highly complimentary about the setting. They receive daily updates about their children's progress and talk about the wonderful and stimulating environment in the home-from-home setting. Parents comment that staff go above and beyond to find out about children and their families before they start, helping to quickly settle children with a familiar key person.

- The manager uses additional funding to enhance the experiences offered at the setting. For example, they have provided additional resources so that children can plant and watch seeds grow at home. This has a notable impact on children's progress.
- Staff promote children's good health. Children spend a lot of time in the welcoming and stimulating garden. They are offered activities that help to develop their large-muscle skills, such as pushing wheeled toys and digging in the mud. Healthy snacks are offered throughout the day, and fresh water is available for children.
- Transitions to school are well supported. Staff make contact and share information about the children with the teachers at the children's schools. The setting makes use of the facilities available to them within the school. This helps children to familiarise themselves with areas such as the school hall and the library.
- Children are familiar with the routines in place. They understand what is happening now and what will happen next during the session. For example, they understand when snack is available to them and come to the table to help to prepare their own snack, chatting with their friends as they eat. However, at times, less experienced staff do not use these routines as an opportunity to interact and engage with children, to promote learning.
- Building independence is a particular feature of the curriculum. Children use real crockery as they independently pour their own drinks. Staff sensitively give children domestic tasks, such as helping to carry the washing to the laundry. They carefully supervise children as they load up the washing machine and press the button to start the machine.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All staff are knowledgeable about how to keep children safe. They benefit from regular training, which helps them to identify signs of abuse, and they report any concerns about a child's welfare. This includes keeping children safe from radicalisation and female genital mutilation. Staff understand their responsibilities to report any concerns they have about another staff member. There are clear and robust recruitment procedures in place to ensure that all staff working with children are suitable. Risk assessments are in place, and hazards are minimised to ensure that the children's environment is a safe and suitable place to play.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- strengthen the quality of interactions between less experienced members of staff and children to ensure a consistent approach within the staff team.

Setting details

Unique reference number	253471
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10279748
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	31
Name of registered person	Sturton Cygnets Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP519164
Telephone number	01427787053
Date of previous inspection	22 September 2017

Information about this early years setting

Sturton Cygnets Pre-School registered in 1993 and is situated in the village of Sturton, Lincolnshire. The pre-school employs five members of childcare staff. Of these, three hold an appropriate early years qualification at level 3 and level 4. The manager holds an early years qualification at level 5. The pre-school opens from Monday to Friday, during term time only. Sessions are from 9am until 3pm. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Stephanie North

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the pre-school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the pre-school.
- The manager joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about their curriculum and what they want their children to learn.
- Children told the inspector about their friends and what they like to do when they are at pre-school.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation of a group activity with the manager.
- Parents shared their views of the setting with the inspector.
- The manager showed the inspector documentation to demonstrate the suitability of staff.

We carried out this inspection 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.

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