

Inspection of The Cygnets Milton Pre-School

Humphries Way, Milton, CAMBRIDGE CB24 6DL

Inspection date: 27 September 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 arrive happy in this welcoming pre-school. They are eager to start their day and enthusiastically greet staff who respond warmly to them. Children settle quickly at their chosen activity and are keen to explore. They confidently access resources and equipment to investigate a range of stimulating experiences that staff plan. For example, children engage in conversation with staff about various herbs, staff teach them to touch the leaves to release the scent and to snip the leaves with scissors, which they combine to create sensory dough.

Children behave well and listen to staff. They follow simple instructions and enjoy having responsibility for small tasks, such as collecting equipment for friends and watering the garden. Children are keen to do things for themselves. For instance, they self-serve their snack from a variety of healthy options and tidy and wash their dishes when they finish. Children learn to take turns and share equipment. They form friendships with their peers and seek each other out to share ideas and experiences. Children thoroughly enjoy playing outside, and they have ample opportunity to gain increasing control of their physical movements. For example, they confidently use climbing equipment under staff's supervision and develop their skills as they negotiate space on balance bicycles.

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

- Staff have a good understanding of each child's individual needs. The manager has incorporated flexible settling-in arrangements, which help to ensure that children form strong attachments with their key person. For example, parents receive pictures of their child's key person, home visits are provided and detailed information is collected about children's interests and routines. This means that children settle quickly and are prepared well for their learning.
- Staff celebrate children's culture and family backgrounds. They explore a range of festivals and celebrations. For instance, parents bring different food items for children to share and demonstrate how to make various decorative items, such as Diwali lamps. This helps prepare children for life in modern Britain as they develop an understanding and respect for people and communities beyond their own.
- Staff support children's communication and language well. For example, they engage in conversations with children and comment on their actions. Staff repeat children's sentences back for clarity and introduce new words such as 'wrench' and 'mystery'. Children participate in group times to practise their listening and attention. However, occasionally, some group times are disrupted by other routine activities or last too long. Consequently, some children lose interest and become distracted.
- Staff are good role models. They encourage children to use manners, such as

'please' and 'thank you', when making requests. Children receive praise for persistence. This helps to support a 'can-do' attitude to allow children to overcome challenges. Staff incorporate strategies to support children to be patient and take turns, such as using sand timers and children create a waiting list for items using their name cards. This helps children to visualise their turn.

- Partnerships with parents are good. They comment on how pleased they are with the support they receive from the manager and the staff at the pre-school. They describe staff as 'extremely supportive' and 'caring'. They appreciate the lengths staff go to, in order to keep them informed of their child's progress, and value the suggestions for supporting their children at home.
- Staff work closely with other professionals to plan targeted support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. This helps them to reach their highest potential. The manager makes good use of extra funding so that children receive any additional support and resources they need.
- The manager works closely with the management committee. They have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities in running the pre-school. The manager has good strategies in place to evaluate the provision. These include regular team meetings to reflect on the provision, peer observations and regular parental feedback. Staff say they feel supported and are able to extend their areas of professional interests and receive regular training.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager and the staff have a secure understanding of how to safeguard children. They regularly complete child protection training. Staff are familiar with the pre-school's safeguarding policies and procedures. For example, they are aware of the procedures to follow for whistle-blowing and how to raise concerns they may have about a child. The management committee understands its roles and responsibilities in relation to supporting and managing the pre-school. The manager has implemented secure recruitment and vetting procedures. These help to ensure that all adults working with children are suitable to do so. The manager carries out thorough risk assessments and ensures that staff are deployed effectively throughout the day to maintain children's safety.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- improve the organisation of group times and adult-led activities to ensure that all children are highly engaged and focused.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY491073
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	10295250
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	45
Number of children on roll	46
Name of registered person	The Cygnets Milton Pre-School CIO
Registered person unique reference number	RP533680
Telephone number	01223 712286
Date of previous inspection	14 December 2017

Information about this early years setting

The Cygnets Milton Pre-School registered in 2015 and is run by a voluntary committee. It employs 10 members of childcare staff, including the manager. Of these, seven hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 or 3. The pre-school opens from Monday to Friday, during term-time only. Sessions are from 9.05am to 3.05pm. It provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Louise Harris

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the childminder 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 provider.
- The manager joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about the curriculum and what she wants the children to learn.
- Parents provided verbal feedback during the inspection. The inspector took account of all of their views.
- The inspector carried out joint observations with the manager to assess the impact of staff's teaching on children's learning.
- The inspector spoke to staff, children and some members of the management committee at appropriate times during the inspection.

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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