

Mount Scar Cygnets Playgroup

Swanage County First School, Mount Scar, Swanage, Dorset, BH19 2EY

Inspection date	14/01/2014
Previous inspection date	08/11/2011

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	
	Previous inspection:	
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		1
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		1
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		1

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is outstanding

- Toys, equipment and activities fully ignite children's interest and the vibrant, outdoor area has many opportunities for children to develop in all areas of learning. Children benefit greatly from creative, imaginative and sensory play opportunities which maximise their exploration and investigation skills.
- Systems to monitor and evaluate the educational programmes are exceptionally well-embedded and robust self-evaluation leads to challenging target setting and improvements.
- Staff have an exceptional knowledge of each child's backgrounds and needs. They are highly skilled and sensitive in helping children form secure emotional attachments, and provide a strong base for their developing independence and exploration.
- Staff have an excellent understanding of their roles and responsibilities regarding safeguarding children to protect their welfare. They implement robust procedures to support children's good health.

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 conducted a tour of the premises and viewed the equipment and resources available for children.
The inspector held discussions with the manager, children and staff. The inspector
- also held discussions with the manager and committee member regarding notifications to Ofsted.
- The inspector looked at children's observation, assessment records and planning documentation.
- The inspector checked evidence of suitability and qualifications of the staff and the safeguarding policy and procedure.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents and carers.

Inspector

Marie Bain

Full report

Information about the setting

Mount Scar Cygnets Playgroup opened at its current premises in 1980. It operates from a portacabin in the grounds of Swanage County First School, near the centre of Swanage, Dorset. Children have use of two play rooms and the school outdoor play area. The playgroup is run by a committee which primarily comprises of parents. The playgroup is open each weekday from 8.45am to 3.15pm during term time only.

The play group is registered on both the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The play group receives funding for the provision of free early education to children aged two, three and four years. There are currently 43 children on roll in the early years age range. The play group supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The play group employs 10 members of staff who work directly with the children. Of these, nine hold relevant early years qualifications, including one member of staff who has a qualification at degree level. The playgroup receives support from the local authority.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- extend the range of materials and objects of various textures and weights to enhance role play activities for example, fruit, pasta, and vegetables, to inspire exploration and encourage sensory experiences.

Inspection judgements

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

Children flourish in this stimulating, safe and nurturing environment. Exciting and interesting experiences are provided daily across all the areas of learning, which enrich children's overall development. Children are confident, happy and well settled. Staff are very enthusiastic in their approach and channel their energies into interacting with the children while they play. They clearly recognise the value of children learning through fun, play and first hand experiences and provide an excellent balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Consequently, the quality of teaching is excellent. Children make choices throughout the sessions, as they independently select the resources and activities they prefer. Staff teach children the value of experimentation through a range of mediums and asked open-ended questions to provoke intuitive thinking. For example, they ask children what will happen when they mix different colour paints and add water to sand and colours to paint. The children show high levels of interest as they explore skills for the

future. They enjoy using an extensive range of programmes on the computers which support their problem solving skills. The programmes extend children's learning about numbers, calculation, colour and shape. Staff teach children to tell the time, and some are proficient at knowing the time 'on the hour'.

Broad themes offer a focus, widen children's experiences and stimulate their learning but are very flexible to follow children's interests and ideas. At the moment the theme is nursery rhymes and fairy tales. Children take part in a range of interlinked activities which promote specific areas of learning. For example, children have been thoroughly enjoying activities linked to Goldilocks and the three bears. Staff read the story to the children using props to teach the sequence of the story through repetition and order. This helps children learn that the story has a beginning, middle and end. Staff promote children's understanding of mathematical concepts by looking at and talking about size comparison of the three bowls, spoons and chairs. Staff promote children's mathematical thinking by asking questions, such as how many bears are in the story, how many chairs are broken and whether they can find the same number of objects to match to the written number. Children experience taste and texture through practical application by making porridge and eating it for snack. They learn to discuss debate and understand action and consequence as staff encourage the children to think about what Goldilocks did in the story and whether it was the right or wrong way to behave and to think about what she should have done. The role play area is set up with a range of resources to emulate the story and to spark children's imagination and creativity. However, there are fewer opportunities to extend children's exploration and encouragement of sensory experiences in the role-play area. This is because there are fewer materials and natural objects of various textures and weights, such as fruit, vegetables or pasta and rice, in order to further promote children's imaginative play. There is a sharp focus on helping children to acquire communication and language skills and to support their physical, personal, social and emotional development. Staff skilfully use opportunities to enrich children's vocabulary. They extend their conversation in English and children are learning French and Spanish from external teachers who come to the setting.

Children develop, explore and test their physical control through an excellent range of indoor and outdoor activities; for example, yoga, balancing, kicking balls, and riding bikes. This supports children in all levels of self-control during activities and develops their confidence in social situations. This also helps them develop an excellent understanding of how to manage risks and challenges relative to their age. Children learn about the world around them through an extensive range of exciting outings. This includes explore the sights, sounds and textures on the beach where they look at, and talk about, the slimy, gooey, smelly seaweed, make sand angels and play parachute games. They also enjoy learning about different animals, from ducks to alpacas, at an adventure farm. On a walk around Swanage, staff teach the children about places of note, such as the fire station and church. Staff make excellent use of the environment as a learning resource and encourage children to look for numbers and letters on the sign posts and street names.

Staff have totally embraced, and demonstrate a thorough understanding of, the Statutory Framework Early Years Foundation Stage. They plan very effectively to ensure that children enjoy challenging experiences that take account of their next steps in learning and individual interests. This enables them to give the utmost priority to child-initiated,

spontaneous play. The reflective planning is meticulously evaluated by staff who ensure that children are offered a range of rich experiences in all areas of learning.

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

Children are extremely settled, supported by the calm and consistent interaction of the staff. All staff are highly skilled and sensitive in helping children form secure emotional attachments, and provide a strong base for their developing independence and exploration. Staff recognise and support the uniqueness of each child. The high levels of quality attention children are given, helps them gain an exceptionally strong sense of security. Consequently, children confidently make their needs known, secure in the knowledge that adults will listen and respond. For example, children ask for help to find resources, such as scissors and glue, to make their furry teddy bear masks.

All staff consistently give the highest priority to the safety of children and effectively support children's growing understanding of how to keep themselves safe. For example, regular practice of evacuations of the premises gives children an understanding of how to leave the premises in an emergency. Staff are deployed extremely well, use consistently applied strategies and provide clear guidance for children about what is acceptable behaviour. Relationships are strong at all levels and children are learning to respect and tolerate each other's differences. Children's behaviour shows that they feel safe and secure in the setting.

A particular strength of the setting is that staff give clear messages to children to ensure they are developing an excellent understanding of why it is important to have a healthy diet and gaining an understanding of the need for physical exercise. Children enjoy the excellent, healthy snacks of fruit, porridge and bread sticks provided and are skilled at using serving spoons to serve themselves from the dishes. This fully supports their independence and small physical skills. Opportunities for all children to have fresh air and exercise are available throughout the day as the playgroup operates a highly effective free-flow system from indoors to outside. The excellent outdoor areas are exceptionally well equipped with excellent climbing and balancing resources and natural materials, such as multi-sized wooden blocks and rubber tires. Children relish climbing in the wooden pirate boat and pretending to be pirates or captains 'sailing' to far off places. This gives the children opportunities to build, climb and make obstacle courses, as well as to experiment with their imaginary ideas. Children enjoy early morning exercise and music and movement sessions. The play group uses the school hall during periods of wet weather to undertake large physical activities. This further develops children's physical skills and spatial awareness. Children's understanding of personal health and hygiene is promoted extremely well through the daily routines and planned activities. Individual health and dietary needs are met well and supported in close cooperation with parents, to effectively promote children's welfare. Older and more able children are competent at managing their personal needs relative to their ages. They use the toilet and wash their hands independently. Staff display excellent hygiene procedures as they use appropriate disposable clothing and gloves when nappy changing.

Children display high levels of self-esteem and confidence. They confidently help themselves to the drinking water which is freely available in all rooms. They show good manners when sitting at the snack and lunch table, learning skills for the future. The setting provides a highly stimulating environment with child-accessible resources that promote learning and challenge children both indoors and outdoors. The playgroup is an Eco-school and has achieved bronze and silver awards. This teaches children the importance of recycling the everyday things at the setting, such as plastic milk cartons and scrap paper. The strong skills of all key persons and the key person buddy system ensure all children are well prepared for the next stages in their learning. Children learn to value diversity, the community and wider world because it is incorporated into all elements of practice. This is enhanced by exciting toys and resources accessible to children in their natural play and by images around the environment. Children learn about cultural differences throughout the year and acknowledge festivals during celebration times.

The children's overall experience within the play group has been given the highest consideration. Lots of soft furnishings such as cushions and natural textures are used. Homely spaces have been created to enable children to feel comfortable and secure. Exceptional photographs of children at play and their art work decorate the walls of the play group helping to create the homely environment. This provides parents and visitors with a fantastic insight into how children spend their time at the playgroup and the excellent range of outings offered. Resources and activities are presented imaginatively to meet the needs of all children and to stimulate their curiosity and interest in learning.

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

Children are extremely well safeguarded as staff have a robust understanding of safeguarding issues and are clear about their roles and responsibilities to protect children. All the required checks have been completed to confirm that adults in the play group are suitable to be in regular contact with the children. The play group has a thorough written safeguarding policy and all staff know what action to take if they have concerns about a child. Security is exceptionally well managed to ensure children cannot leave the premises unsupervised. Meticulous risk assessments are carried out to address any potential hazards and staff are extremely intuitive of children's safety and security at all times. All adults who work with the children are first aid trained and confident in acting in an efficient and timely manner when dealing with any accidents that may occur. Policies and procedures are implemented extremely well to promote children's welfare and safety. The play group failed to inform Ofsted of changes of committee members and the 'nominated individual'. However, they have now informed Ofsted of all changes and the provider is fully aware of their responsibility to do in the future. The provider is now fully aware of the changes that Ofsted needs to be informed about, and has implemented changes to ensure that this does not happen again.

Strong partnerships with parents and external agencies consistently contribute to meeting children's needs. Parents are extremely well informed about all aspects of their children's care and staff create exciting ways for them to share in their children's learning. Excellent

information is given to parents before their child starts to outline the aims of the setting and familiarise them with the play group routines. Communication with parents is extended through parent consultation evenings, newsletters, home link books, telephone calls and face to face meetings. Parents are welcomed into the play group for 'stay and play' and 'come dine with me' sessions, whereby they can share lunchtime with their child and learn about their child's playgroup environment. Parents are also actively encouraged to add comments to their children's learning journey records which contributes significantly to the overall accuracy of the planning. Parents' views are valued enormously and they are encouraged to communicate their opinions through questionnaires as well as verbally. Parents are extremely complimentary about the playgroup, describing the friendly caring staff, and the fantastic work they do. The play group is on the site of the school and staff have excellent relationships with the school staff. This enables seamless transitions from the setting into the reception class. During the summer term the playgroup has joint outdoor sessions with the reception class children and the play group children have the opportunity to visit the reception classroom several times with their key person.

Without exception, everyone in the play group demonstrates high levels of dedication, commitment and determination to sustaining improved outcomes for every child. Staff can enrol on courses that lead to higher qualifications as well as courses on specific topics. The enthusiasm of all staff within the play group is infectious and this is driven by the manager's high expectations. A rigorous cycle of monitoring and evaluation means that the management team and staff are always striving to improve the quality and impact of the care and activities provided, demonstrating exemplary capacity for improvement.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

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. It will be monitored and inspected within twelve months of the date of this 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		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		The provision has no children on roll. 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	153459
Local authority	Dorset
Inspection number	950293
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	2 - 5
Total number of places	26
Number of children on roll	43
Name of provider	Mount Scar Cygnets Playgroup Committee
Date of previous inspection	08/11/2011
Telephone number	01929 426570

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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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