

Inspection of Mount Scar Cygnets Playgroup

Swanage Primary School, Mount Scar, Swanage, Dorset BH19 2EY

Inspection date: 29 April 2025

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is outstanding

Children thrive in this early years setting as they experience a highly engaging and enriching environment. Staff deliver focused teaching that effectively captures children's attention. They support children in sustaining their concentration, helping them use their critical thinking skills to solve problems. For example, they make learning enjoyable and fun for children, such as pretending to make simple mistakes to reinforce mathematical concepts during group activities. Children love correcting them and confidently use their knowledge and skills to order numbers correctly.

Children's communication and language skills benefit from rich language and vocabulary. They enjoy identifying sounds within words, helping prepare them for future reading skills. Staff read stories expressively, celebrating and promoting books. Children actively share their ideas, demonstrating their strong understanding of stories and their characters.

Staff expertly manage children's behaviour. They establish effective routines that help children feel safe and secure. Children respond promptly and joyfully participate in group activities. Because of this, they take part in discussions about their day and learn to make decisions about taking responsibility and keeping themselves safe. For instance, they sing songs about the weather and talk about sun safety and the precautions they must take to stay safe.

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

- The provider's curriculum is broad and ambitious, promoting progress for all children. Staff plan and sequence activities skilfully, allowing children to build on their interests and learning needs. They learn about sounds within words, preparing them for future reading skills, and apply mathematical concepts in their play, such as using money to pay for flowers from the shop. The provider values role-play opportunities, allowing children to practise and consolidate the skills they have learned. They arrange for real experiences for children, so when learning about transport, they go on trips travelling by train and bus.
- Children learn a wide range of vocabulary. The provider arranges their curriculum so that children learn subject-specific language. For instance, children learn about plants and flowers. Staff provide diagrams and pot plants that label parts of a flower. Children love using magnifying glasses to successfully identify the stem, petals and roots of the plant. They have excellent knowledge of plants and have the communication skills to explain how flowers grow with confidence. Children draw their own diagrams, using colours to create representations of flowers. Staff talk with children about their drawings, guiding them in evaluating and discussing their work. Children sustain their concentration and remain well

engaged, displaying pride in their work and their explanations.

- Staff accurately identify children's needs and respond quickly with focused support to close gaps in children's learning. They ensure that children regularly practise the skills they need to recognise. Children make rapid progress. Staff also help children identify patterns and sounds in words. Children join in with staff as they sing songs about letters. They learn about the sound 'x' and examine pictures of an x-ray, while staff emphasise sounds. Children are highly engaged and enjoy using their skills to identify words containing different sounds.
- Staff expertly read stories, creating a comfortable and absorbing atmosphere for children. Children enthusiastically participate and contribute their ideas, demonstrating a strong comprehension of the stories that they listen to. Staff read 'The Highway Rat', using expressive voices while encouraging children to join in with key parts that rhyme, further reinforcing their understanding of patterns in language.
- Children's behaviour is excellent. Staff maintain high expectations and reinforce these through well-established routines. When they sound a shaker, children know what staff expect of them and enthusiastically respond. Children's social skills are well embedded, as they independently play games like 'Guess Who?' while taking turns with one another. When they find it tricky, staff and children work together to come up with more questions that they can ask. These interactions help children sustain their concentration and enjoyment.
- The provider has developed excellent partnerships with parents. They share information with parents about children's progress and support them with key steps to help them learn at home. The provider lends good-quality books for families to share with their children at home. The provider supports children and parents in being ready for school by working with local schools.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts children's interests first.

Setting details

Unique reference number	153459
Local authority	Dorset
Inspection number	10394667
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	26
Number of children on roll	27
Name of registered person	Mount Scar Cygnets Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP907881
Telephone number	01929 426 570
Date of previous inspection	19 September 2019

Information about this early years setting

Mount Scar Cygnets Playgroup opened at its current premises in 1980. It is situated on the grounds of Swanage Primary School in Swanage, Dorset. The playgroup is open each weekday, from 8.30am to 3.15pm, during term time only. The setting offers government funded places. The playgroup employs six members of staff who work directly with the children. Of these, all hold appropriate early years qualifications.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Jonathan Payne

Inspection activities

- The manager, deputy manager and inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the nursery and discussed the early years curriculum.
- The inspector viewed the provision and discussed the safety and suitability of the premises.
- Children spoke with the inspector during the inspection.
- Staff spoke to the inspector during the inspection.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- Staff spoke to the inspector about how they support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The inspector and the manager carried out a joint observation of a communication and language activity.
- 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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