

St. Thomas's Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date 27/01/2010
Inspector Sharon Dickinson

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Type of setting Childcare on non-domestic premises

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

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Description of the setting

St. Thomas's Day Nursery opened in 2002 and operates from three rooms in a detached, single storey building next to St. Thomas's church in Tean, Staffordshire. The nursery is open each weekday from 07.30am to 17.30pm for 51 weeks of the year. Access to the main entrance of the nursery is via a small step and there is a ramp access to the side. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

The nursery is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 49 children may attend the nursery at any one time, no more than 12 of whom may be under two years old. There are currently 40 children on roll attending various sessions, 30 of whom are in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children come from the local and surrounding areas. The nursery employs nine members of staff to work directly with the children. Of these, eight hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from a local authority early years advisor.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Staff have a secure knowledge of each child's individual needs and satisfactorily promote their welfare and development. Children are generally safe, secure and enjoy their play and learning. A wide range of age-appropriate play activities and first hand experiences are planned. Partnerships with parents are positive and benefit children's welfare and developmental progress. The staff team informally reflect on practice but do not effectively use the self-evaluation process to identify areas for development to ensure that the provision for children is continually improving.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To fully meet the specific requirements of the EYFS, the registered person must:

- ensure the safeguarding policy includes procedures to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare) 11/02/2010
- carry out a full risk assessment for each type of outing, which includes an assessment of required adult:child ratios, and review it before embarking on each specific outing (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare). 11/02/2010

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- ensure staffing arrangements are organised to meet the individual needs of all children, in particular in relation to the manageability of assessment systems, and time available for adults to work directly with the children
- ensure that only medicines prescribed for individual children by a doctor, dentist, nurse or pharmacist are used
- develop resources and play opportunities to increase children's awareness and understanding of diversity, particularly in relation to disability
- maintain a regular two-way flow of information with other early years providers that children attend
- evaluate and reflect on practice to identify strengths and priorities for development that will improve the quality of provision for all children.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff are focussed in providing good quality childcare and learning. They are committed to professional development and have attended various in-house training events including first aid and safeguarding helping to maintain children's safety. Staff have a clear understanding of their responsibility to protect children and know how to implement the local safeguarding procedures. There is a clear written safeguarding policy in place but this does not include procedures to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff. Robust recruitment and vetting procedures ensure staff who have unsupervised access to the children are appropriately checked and the provision is organised to ensure that children are closely supervised at all times.

The nursery is appropriately organised and gives the children opportunities to become independent. Risk assessments are completed on the premises and daily safety checks ensure any hazards to the children are effectively identified and minimised. However, although general safety procedures are in place for outings separate risk assessment are not completed for each type of outing potentially compromising children's safety. Satisfactory policies underpin practice and are shared with parents. However, current medication procedures state that non-prescription medication is provided by the nursery; this potentially puts children's safety at risk. Overall, reliable systems are in place for the maintenance of records which support the care and welfare of children. With support from their local authority advisor the setting have made improvements to their practice, namely; systems for monitoring learning and development. All recommendations made at the last inspection have also been sufficiently addressed. Although, at present there are no purposeful systems in place to evaluate practice to identify strengths and weaknesses. Consequently, plans to promote continuous improvement and deliver improved outcomes for children are not clear or well-targeted.

Useful information is exchanged at the start of a placement to ensure staff are aware of parent's wishes, children's individual needs and capabilities. Key workers build close relationships with parents and keep them fully informed about the child's well-being and what they have been doing through discussion and daily

diaries. Parents of older children are successfully involved in their child's learning as they report on children's progress towards learning aims identified by their child's key worker. Partnerships in the wider context are satisfactory. Staff work with other people involved with the children, such as speech therapists, providing a complete picture of the child and supporting continuity of care. However, this practice is not extended to other early years settings that children attend. Overall, equality and diversity is sufficiently promoted. The needs of each child are carefully considered by the staff; all children are effectively integrated within the provision and any additional needs are well-supported.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

Staff are very warm and welcoming to the children thus providing a stable emotional environment where children feel safe and secure. They have a generally good understanding about how children develop and how to deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage in order for children to progress well. A broad range of resources are available, both indoors and outside, which are set out so that children can make independent choices in what they do. Children demonstrate positive attitudes towards learning and are keen to participate. Staff routinely observe and assess children's learning to monitor their progress towards the early learning goals. They use the information obtained from observations to skilfully plan for children's next steps in learning ensuring activities are suitably challenging for children and tailored to their interests. Overall, good balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities are delivered through an exciting, fun and spontaneous curriculum. However, at times assessment processes interrupt time available for staff to work directly and meaningfully with the children. This results in missed opportunities for staff to extend children's thinking, concentration and imagination.

Children's communication skills are firmly developed through general discussion and enjoyable activities such as sharing favourite books and stories. Frequent opportunities for mark-making are provided as children freely access a variety of media in pre-school and make marks on a larger scale as they chalk on the ground outside. All children have regular access to creative activities such as painting, drawing and collage. Children use their senses to explore malleable materials such as play dough, sand and pasta. Babies confidently explore treasure baskets; discovering textures and sounds of a variety of everyday metallic items. Children particularly enjoy role-play and ample resources are provided to support and extend their imagination. Staff skilfully support children's imaginative play as the toddlers take an imaginary boat and train ride to the seaside. Children's sense of self is effectively promoted through topics such as 'all about me'. Photographic displays of their family tree and art work depicting their favourite foods and colours develops respect for children's identity and supports a sense of belonging.

Basic mathematical concepts are introduced through practical and meaningful activities such as shape sorters, jigsaws and regular baking sessions. Older children match colours and develop an awareness of mathematical concepts such as, more or less as they sort and compare plastic bear counters. The children's knowledge and understanding of the world is increasing as various seasonal and

cultural celebrations are also recognised such as, Chinese New Year, Diwali and Halloween. Children taste foods from various cultures, decorate handprints with Mehndi patterns and make clay Diva lamps. However, there are few play opportunities and resources to develop children's awareness of disability. Children are also given frequent opportunities to use the computer under supervision and the younger children have opportunities to use the interactive toys which help them start to understand about technology. Children benefit from regular outings and develop their understanding of the wider community through trips to the park for a teddy bears picnic and the post office to explore the life of a letter.

The good health and wellbeing of children is well promoted. Consistent and effective hygiene routines help prevent the spread of infection. Children develop a positive attitude to healthy eating as they are provided with a varied and nutritious diet. They plant and tend to fruits and vegetables in the greenhouse and use their produce for cooking activities. For example, toddlers used home-grown parsley to season home-cooked soup. Daily opportunities are provided for outdoor play and fresh air. The spacious garden is well-equipped. Children are taught about safety issues as part of the daily routine. For example, they regularly practise the emergency evacuation procedures so they are fully aware of what to do in the event of an emergency. Staff promote positive behaviour by using effective strategies. Children's confidence and self-esteem are fostered because staff frequently praise them and are sensitive to their individual personalities. Children's achievements are also recognised via the 'special achievements tree' which is prominently displayed in each room for parents perusal. Consequently, children behave well.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	3
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	3
The effectiveness of partnerships	3
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	3
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	3
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met