

St Thomas Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	507656
Inspection date	20/05/2010
Inspector	Lisa Parkes
Setting address	St. Thomas Church Hall, Wickham Close, Keresley, Coventry, CV6 2PD
Telephone number	02476 338237
Email	caroline@pre-schools.co.uk
Type of setting	Childcare on non-domestic premises

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It rates council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2009

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.

Please see our website for more information about each childcare provider. We publish inspection reports, conditions of registration and details of complaints we receive where we or the provider take action to meet the requirements of registration.

Description of the setting

St Thomas Pre-school is part of a chain of day nurseries which are privately owned. It was registered in 1999 and operates from two main playrooms in St Thomas Church, Coventry. A maximum of 38 children aged under eight years may attend at any one time. There are currently 00 children on roll who attend for a variety of sessions. The pre-school is open from 9.00am to 3.00pm Monday to Friday, all year round. There is a fully enclosed outdoor play area for outside play.

The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The pre-school serves families and children in the local community and surrounding areas. The pre-school supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language.

The playgroup currently employs seven practitioners, five of whom hold appropriate childcare qualifications. The other two practitioners are currently working towards childcare qualifications. The pre-school receives support from the Local Authority and is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are provided with high levels of care and make good progress in their learning and development. Practitioners offer an inclusive and welcoming service, supporting all children to actively participate in activities which meet their individual interests and developmental needs. Children are confident, independent and clearly enjoy their time at the pre-school. The pre-school is led by a motivated and experienced manager who embraces the process of self-evaluation and demonstrates a very positive attitude towards continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- extend the use of Learning Journals to ensure that observations are used systematically to identify the next steps in learning for each child
- help children to embrace differences in gender, ethnicity, language, religion, culture, special educational needs and disabilities through activities that challenge their thinking.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Careful consideration is given to promoting children's welfare and keeping them safe. Children are protected from harm by practitioners who are trained to respond

promptly to any concerns. A comprehensive safeguarding children policy is actively shared, ensuring everyone involved with the pre-school has a good understanding of their responsibilities with regard to safeguarding children. Well-organised recruitment procedures ensure all staff and volunteers complete the required suitability checks and are deemed suitable to be in contact with children. All children, parents and visitors to the pre-school receive a very warm welcome. Risk assessments are routinely undertaken to limit children's access to potential hazards within the premises and during outings. In addition, the effective deployment of staff helps to ensure that children remain well-supervised during their time at the pre-school.

Practitioners take time to build strong relationships with parents and carers in order to find out about the needs of individual children. For example, parents are encouraged to contribute to their child's Learning Journey, providing meaningful information about children's development at home. Parents are very well-informed about all aspects of their child's achievement, well-being and development and are receptive to suggestions from practitioners as to how they can actively support their child's learning at home. Effective partnerships with parents and carers, as well as good links with external agencies and services, make sure that the needs of all children are effectively met. The manager demonstrates a commitment to working with others to support the inclusion of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those with additional and specific needs. Recommendations made at the last inspection have been fully addressed and have had clear benefits to children's experiences at the nursery, for example, by improving the outside play area and providing children with further opportunities to test their physical skills.

A positive equality and diversity policy outlines a commitment to promoting inclusive practice at the pre-school, ensuring all children can achieve as well as they can regardless of their background. Practitioners have high aspirations for the quality of the service provided at the pre-school and create regular opportunities to reflect on their practice. Morale is high amongst the staff team, as they feel that their professional development is supported and their contributions to the setting's self-evaluation processes are valued. All records required for the safe and efficient management of the setting are routinely and effectively maintained. Practitioners are enthusiastic and passionate about their roles in raising standards for children. Children benefit from high levels of individual attention and are nurtured by cheerful, knowledgeable practitioners.

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

Practitioners demonstrate a strong knowledge and understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and how to promote children's learning and development. A delightful and well-equipped environment successfully reflects children's backgrounds and the wider community. Practitioners are extremely well-deployed to enhance children's learning and welfare and they are skilled at promoting positive attitudes to learning. High-quality planning and organisation ensure that every child is challenged by the learning experiences provided. Activities are

matched to the full range of children's needs. Through ongoing observations of children's play, practitioners develop a good understanding of children's individual developmental needs and interests. Each child's Learning Journey reflects their progress well and shows that children are involved in a wide range of interesting and stimulating play opportunities. However, Learning Journeys are in the early stages of development. Consequently, observations are not used as effectively as they could be to ensure learning priorities are identified. Nevertheless, children make strides in their learning.

Children display a lovely sense of belonging within the pre-school and all appear settled and happy. They behave well and children are beginning to show a good awareness of responsibility. For example, they independently access toilet facilities, help themselves to snacks, select activities and tidy away their toys. Children are motivated and share responsibility for decisions. They play and work harmoniously alongside their peers and build strong relationships. Children of all ages actively explore their surroundings with interest and receive an abundance of praise from practitioners. Children know what is expected of them and good quality interaction and well-organised routines help them to become secure and confident. Children are active, curious and inquisitive learners, understanding the need to cooperate and resolve situations by themselves. Although diversity is reflected very well, practitioners are currently considering new and innovative ways to teach children about differences. This will give all children the best opportunities to develop a positive sense of themselves and others. Children's understanding of safety issues and how they demonstrate this is exceptional. Children are extremely confident and competent in communicating their thoughts and show a mature response to taking responsibility about their own and others' safety.

Children are actively involved in learning about the world around them and gain a good understanding of healthy lifestyles. For example, they demonstrate a positive attitude towards eating healthily, routinely wash their hands and learn about germs. Children willingly participate in a wide range of physical activities, both indoors and outside. There is plenty of space for vigorous free play and children test their physical skills as they use a climbing frame, slides, balancing beams, ride-on toys, and a see-saw. Topic based activities are implemented to consolidate children's understanding of being healthy. In addition, they take pleasure exercising and dancing to music, and learn about the effects of exercise on their bodies. Children of all ages regularly come across new and interesting challenges and learning is lots of fun. Children develop a good understanding of the wider world and are well-equipped with the skills they need in order to secure future learning.

Children are imaginative and adore role play. They assume adults roles such as shop-keepers and draw upon personal experiences. Children write shopping lists and bring props including empty food packets into their play. At the work bench children design plans with paper and pencils, and they take measurements. Children have fun as they explore the world around them and learn about living things. They are fascinated with the pre-school pet, a Giant African Land Snail called Brian. In addition, children grow plants and watercress. Children's creativity is extended through the use of malleable and messy play, and children are provided with ample time to explore and develop ideas as they experiment with

gloop and play dough. Children listen attentively to stories and willingly join in with songs and rhymes. Children learn to become independent through secure relationships with adults and all children are valued and feel part of the group. Practitioners are dedicated to their roles and create an inviting and inclusive atmosphere where children thrive.

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?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
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	2
--	---

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	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

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