



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 228969

DfES Number: 533429

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 17/01/2005
Inspector Name Jennifer Turner

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Full Day Care, Creche Day Care
Setting Name St. Thomas Centre Nursey
Setting Address The St. Thomas Centre, Bell Barn Road
Birmingham
West Midlands
B15 2AF

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Ms Fran Munby

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public that the nursery education for funded three and four year old children is of an acceptable quality. Inspection of nursery education also identifies strengths and weaknesses so that providers can improve the quality of educational provision and help children to achieve the early learning goals (elgs) by the end of the Foundation Stage. This inspection report must be made available to all parents.

If the setting has been inspected previously, an action plan will have been drawn up to tackle issues identified. This inspection, therefore, must also assess what progress has been made in the implementation of this plan.

Information about the setting

St Thomas Centre Nursery opened in 2000 and operates from a number of rooms in a school building. The centre is a multi- agency provision providing childcare and education support to children and families within the surrounding area. A maximum of 103 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 08:00 to 18:00 for 50 weeks of the year. The centre also offers Crèche facilities for 36 children aged 0 to 5 years and is open each week day from 09:30 to 12:00 and 13.00 to 15:00 on Fridays to support parents undertaking training. The centre also offers Out of School provision and a community Stay and Play. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 92 children from 6 weeks to under 5 years on roll. The nursery is registered to receive funding for nursery education. Children come from a wide catchments area, as most of their parents live in the area or travel into work on or around the estate. The nursery currently supports a number of children with special needs, and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 4 qualified teachers including the head and 17 staff all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications.

INSPECTION OF THE NURSERY EDUCATION PROVISION FOR FUNDED THREE AND FOUR YEAR OLDS.

How effective is the nursery education?

St Thomas Early Excellence Centre nursery provides very good nursery education enabling children to make very good progress towards the early learning goals in all areas of learning.

Teaching is very good and staff demonstrate a good knowledge of the foundation stage and an awareness of how children learn effectively through practical and meaningful experiences. They use aspects of Reggio Emilia's approach as they follow children's interests when planning themes. Staff manage children's behaviour very well as they encourage children to consider the needs of others. Children's efforts are valued and celebrated to develop their self esteem. A wide range of excellent equipment and resources is presented effectively to enable children to make choices in their learning.

Staff are enthusiastic and committed to providing a rich learning environment for the children. They plan, evaluate and assess children's progress and the effectiveness of activities, in moving children on in their learning, although they do not always maximise opportunities for children to use graphs or charts. Children benefit from appropriate questioning, through positive interaction and support from staff. Children are encouraged to take an active role in planning their activities, carry them out and then review their work and achievements, resulting in them becoming confident learners.

Leadership and management is very good and the children benefit from a committed staff team and a strong management team. They work well together, constantly evaluating practice through regular meetings, appraisals and training.

The partnership with parents is very good as they are encouraged to become actively involved in their child's learning and progress, as well as being involved in learning alongside their children through workshops. A sense of mutual trust develops through the home visiting services and as staff make themselves available as and when parents wish to discuss their child's progress.

What is being done well?

- Children with English as an additional language and children with special needs are well supported through the use of specialist support workers. Staff provide an environment where other languages are included in displays, labels, songs and rhymes.
- Staff skilfully develop children's language as they draw their attention to the phonic construction of words and encourage children to link sounds and letters with their names and other familiar words.
- Staff know how children learn, they follow children's interests and use this

effectively to develop children's awe and wonder through activities such as exploring how things work, particularly things that spin.

- Staff are receptive to new ideas and keen to try new practices such as the plan, do and review sessions which encourage children to think, predict and recall.
- Parents are invited to participate in topics, sharing their professions, experiences and individual skills as well working alongside their children in workshops.

What needs to be improved?

- the opportunities for children to record mathematical findings through the use of graphs and charts.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The setting has made very good progress in addressing the points for consideration raised at the previous inspection. Staff were asked to continue to develop its innovative approach to planning, assessment and evaluation, using observation of children's interests as the starting point for planning, whilst also keeping a careful check that all children are encouraged to make progress in all the areas of learning.

The setting plans effectively. The impact on children, is that they are confident, independent learners, as they take an active role in initiating their own play and learning. Staff also keep records of children who take part in particular activities and use this information to assess how activities could be modified for more able or less able children.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are confident and develop their independence, persisting with tasks and taking pride in their achievements, as they initiate their own play. They are active learners as they independently select activities and play with eagerness and enjoyment. They understand the codes of behaviour demonstrating respect for themselves and others. They work co-operatively to build positive friendships with each other and with adults.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children develop an understanding of writing having meaning and purpose, through a wealth of print in the nursery environment. Children write for a variety of purposes. They write lists during role play. Children recognise their names during self registration and some children have developed further to writing their names clearly. They listen intently to stories and access books for their own enjoyment, often 'reading' to their peers.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children count confidently up to 20 with older, more able children counting beyond as they develop an awareness of counting groups of objects. Children use a variety of methods to measure height, weight and capacity, although they do not always record their mathematical findings in graphs or charts. They count cups needed at drinks time and are challenged to calculate how many are missing and how many more are needed. They know how a timer works as they wait for their turn on the computer.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children are developing an investigative mind as they experiment with objects that spin and question why things happen and how things work. They notice changes in the weather and examine ways of making objects move in the wind. They use a wide range of technology equipment with skill and confidence as they perform on the computers and operate remote control toys. They learn about their own families and the wider world and join in the celebration of different festivals.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children move safely and skilfully as they negotiate space indoors and outside. They climb, run and operate wheeled toys with confidence and care being mindful not to encroach on others. They develop manipulative skills as they fasten buttons, zips and use a variety of tools with dexterity. They understand the importance of a healthy body as they discuss germs and the effects exercise has on their body.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children explore texture, shape and colour through many activities such as making streamers, handling chiffon materials. They discuss their own facial features and design self portraits in their own styles. They use a range of musical instruments to create rhythms and tempo as they sing familiar rhymes. They use their imagination through role play to act out familiar and real life situations. They access a wide range of resources to develop their spontaneous creativity.

Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately.

OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable and is of high quality. Children are making very good progress towards the early learning goals. The next inspection will take place in three to four years time.

WHAT THE SETTING NEEDS TO DO NEXT

There are no significant weaknesses to report, but considerations should be given to improving the following:

- There are no key issues to report, however consideration should be given to,
- improving the programme for children to use graphs and charts to record mathematical findings.

The provider must draw up an action plan within 40 working days of receipt of this report showing how the key issues detailed above will be addressed. The action plan must be made available to all parents and to the Local Authority if required. An evaluation of the action taken will form part of the next inspection of funded nursery education.