



Office for Standards  
in Education

## COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 507656

DfES Number: 513207

### INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 21/01/2004  
Inspector Name Jan Burnet

### SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care  
Setting Name St Thomas Pre-school  
Setting Address St. Thomas Church Hall  
Wickham Close  
Keresley  
Coventry  
CV6 2PD

### REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name St Thomas Pre-Schools Ltd

### ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name St Thomas Pre-Schools Ltd  
Address Parkville Highway  
Coventry  
CV6 4HV

## ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality and standard of day care in accordance with the National Standards for Under Eights Day Care and Childminding; and 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 Pre-school operates in the hall of St Thomas Church and a smaller room, which is the pre-school room for three and four year old children. There has been a playgroup or pre-school operating in the church hall for over 20 years. Operational times are term time only, Monday to Friday from 9:00 until 15:00. Some of the children attending live locally but vacancies are available to all who apply and some children live in Warwickshire as well as other areas of Coventry. A secure outdoor play area is adjacent to the hall.

There are currently 83 children from two to under five years on roll. This includes 11 funded three year olds and four funded four year olds. The pre-school currently supports children with special educational needs.

Seven members of staff work with the children and over half have early years childcare and education level three qualifications. Other staff are working towards a level two qualification. The setting receives support from an Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership teacher.

The pre-school has Pre-school Learning Alliance membership.

### How good is the Day Care?

St Thomas Pre-School provides satisfactory care for children. Staff provide a very warm and welcoming environment, organise good routines and use space well to ensure that the needs of children are met. Equipment and resources are good but on the day of inspection it was found that at snack time there were not enough small chairs for the children. Staff/child ratios are good. Four staff are qualified to level three and three are working towards level two. They demonstrate a commitment to developing their skills and knowledge by regularly attending training. Documentation and records are kept in good order.

Safety is given a very high priority and measures taken are regularly reviewed. However, although the main kitchen door is kept locked, children could access the

kitchen from the pre-school room. Security is good. Staff are active in promoting good health and children learn about the importance of good hygiene routines. Children are provided with a choice of fruits and a drink midway through the two and a half hour session.

The interaction between the staff and the children is good. Staff are aware of individual needs and establish good relationships with the children. Toys and equipment are plentiful and are used to provide a balanced range of activities for all children. The children are settled and happy. The management of behaviour is good. Children behave well and are aware of behaviour boundaries. Staff ensure that children with special needs are well supported. They work closely with parents and have worked with other professional to ensure that the service provided enables children to reach their full potential. Resources that reflect positive images of culture, gender and disability are provided but could be further developed.

The partnership with parents is given a high priority and communication, verbal and written, is good.

#### **What has improved since the last inspection?**

Not applicable as there were no actions raised at the previous inspection.

#### **What is being done well?**

- The operational plan works very well in practise; an effective appraisal system that links to staff training, clear objectives and comprehensive policies and procedures.
- The relationships between the staff and the children are good. Children are happy and settled and show great interest in the variety of stimulating activities, which ensure that they are making progress in all areas.
- Good quality toys and equipment are used to ensure that children experience a good variety of activities.
- Health issues are given a high priority. Four staff members hold in date first aid certificates and one has completed food hygiene training. Comprehensive procedures are in place to ensure good health and hygiene.
- The management of behaviour is good. Staff take account of different levels of development, they lead by example, are consistent in their approach, remain calm. They promote positive behaviour with praise and encouragement and remind children of the "Golden Rules" with regard to sharing, turn taking and being kind and considerate.
- The partnership with parents is good. Parents are made welcome. A booklet is provided which includes policies and procedures and general information. Newsletters are regularly sent and information is displayed on parent notice boards. Some home visits have taken place.

**What needs to be improved?**

- the inaccessibility of the kitchen
- the provision of sufficient numbers of child sized chairs
- the further development of the range of activities and resources that promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.

**Outcome of the inspection**

Satisfactory

**CONDITIONS OF REGISTRATION**

*All registered persons must comply with all conditions of registration included on his/her certificate of registration.*

*As a result of this inspection conditions of registration have been imposed / varied / removed and a new certificate of registration will be issued.*

**WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE NEXT?****The Registered Person should have regard to the following recommendations by the time of the next inspection**

Std	Recommendation
4	Make the kitchen inaccessible to the children.
5	Ensure that there are sufficient numbers of child sized chairs.
9	Continue to ensure that children have an appropriate range of resources that promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.

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

### How effective is the nursery education?

St Thomas Pre-School offers generally good quality nursery education, which helps three and four year old children make progress along the stepping stones towards the early learning goals. Children make very good progress in personal, social and emotional development, communication language and literacy, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development.

Teaching is generally good. Staff appointed in Autumn 2003 have received in-house training on the foundation stage curriculum and are due to attend Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership training. They plan a good range of activities and organise a well balanced routine but expectations of the children do not consistently relate to the stepping stones and some planned learning opportunities and activities provided do not link. Children with special needs are well supported. Staff lead by good example and ensure that children are praised and encouraged. The boundaries for behaviour are clear. Staff complete assessment records each term. However, a system of regularly recording observations and using information for these records and to inform planning is in its early stages and some assessment records have been completed from memory and not recorded evidence.

The leadership and management of the pre-school is very good. Staff work well as a team, communication and support are very good and all staff are clear about their responsibilities. An appraisal system has been developed and includes staff identification of how they will develop their own skills and knowledge. Training is given a high priority. Staff meet regularly to plan for the future and review previous practise, policies and procedures.

Partnership with parents is generally good. Information provided is very good and includes a comprehensive prospectus, notice board and newsletters. However, parent involvement in their child's learning is limited, as information from them is not used by staff to inform their planning.

### What is being done well?

- Children's personal, social and emotional development is well fostered. Relationships between staff and children are very good and children relate well to each other, staff and visitors.
- Staff are consistent in their management of behaviour, reminding children daily of the "Golden Rules" which include; to share, to take turns, to be kind and to be a good friend.
- Daily access to a good variety of tools and small equipment, for example scissors and pencils, has led to well developed manipulative skills.
- Children are encouraged to explore and investigate and do so spontaneously and during well planned activities.

- Staff are well supported by managers in identifying their training needs to improve their knowledge and practise.

#### **What needs to be improved?**

- The provision of practical activities for comparing and separating groups and recognising that the total is the same and activities for numeral recognition that reflect the mixed abilities within the group.
- The regularity of three and four year old children's access to large equipment for physical development and planning to ensure that children are appropriately challenged.
- The opportunities children have to learn about practises for good health with regard to exercise, eating and sleeping.

#### **What has improved since the last inspection?**

At the previous inspection the setting was asked to implement an appraisal system in order that teaching be monitored and good practise shared. Training opportunities for individual staff to be identified following this process. This has been fully addressed with a system of appraisals held twice per year. Staff are asked to identify their own development and training needs, these are discussed with the manager and future training is planned and requested.

The setting was also asked to provide more opportunities within the area of knowledge and understanding of the world for children to question how things work and use technology to support learning. This key issue has been addressed fully with children given opportunities to explore and investigate, spontaneously and in planned activities. Information technology equipment is used to support children's learning.

## SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

### PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are happy and secure. They choose activities, select their own resources and get very involved in their activities whether it be with adult support, with other children or alone. They excitedly share experiences with the group and most children speak confidently; younger children do so with adult support. Older children seek out their friends on arrival to talk and play together. Relationships are good. Children are learning the importance of being kind, sharing and turn taking.

### COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children are keen to speak in group situations and most do so confidently. Some still prefer to speak out in a small group. They enjoy listening to a story and eagerly answer questions. They are learning to speak in turn and listen to others. Children handle books correctly. More able children direct others to recreate situations in role-play. They are beginning to link sounds to letters and practise pencil control on a daily basis. Some are using writing as a means of recording.

### MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children count continually, some confidently to five, some to 10 and a few beyond 10. They are learning to recognise numerals but do not establish a sound knowledge of one to five before moving to one to nine. Children have some opportunities to explore "more" and "less" but do not experience practical activities to compare and separate groups of objects in different ways and recognise that the total is the same. Children practise weighing and measuring and name two dimensional shapes.

### KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children examine objects and living things and explore materials to identify differences and change, for example melting ice and raw and cooked pasta. They have a garden and have planted seeds and bulbs. Children competently build and mould with a range of materials and choose from a good variety of tools. They are learning to operate a simple computer program and use the mouse. Children share information on things that happen at home and are learning about different cultures and beliefs.

**PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children move confidently and imaginatively to music, in control copying adults moving quickly, slowly and practising hopping and jumping. They are successfully developing an awareness of their own space during activities and at group time. Children are learning about personal hygiene but are not learning about good practises with regard to exercise, eating and sleeping. They experience a good variety of activities to develop hand and eye co-ordination but access to large equipment is limited.

**CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children regularly explore texture, form and colour spontaneously and in planned activities. They explore their senses with different foods, some linked to festival celebrations, and examine the texture, smell and taste of different fruits. Children experiment with sound when using a good variety of musical instruments. In role play situations they recreate their own experiences or repeat situations that previously involved adults, for example, customer and waiter in the Chinese restaurant.

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

## **OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION**

The provision is acceptable and is of good quality overall. Children are making generally 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: THE KEY ISSUES**

- Provide practical activities for comparing and separating groups and recognising that the total is the same and activities for numeral recognition that reflect the mixed abilities within the group.
- Ensure that three and four year old children have regular access to large equipment for physical development and plan to make sure that children are appropriately challenged.
- Provide opportunities for children to learn about practises for good health with regard to exercise, eating and sleeping.

*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.*

## **SUMMARY OF NATIONAL STANDARDS**

### **STANDARD 1 - SUITABLE PERSON**

*Adults providing day care, looking after children or having unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.*

### **STANDARD 2 - ORGANISATION**

*The registered person meets required adult: child ratios, ensures that training and qualifications requirements are met and organises space and resources to meet the children's needs effectively.*

### **STANDARD 3 - CARE, LEARNING AND PLAY**

*The registered person meets children's individual needs and promotes their welfare. They plan and provide activities and play opportunities to develop children's emotional, physical, social and intellectual capabilities.*

### **STANDARD 4 - PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT**

*The premises are safe, secure and suitable for their purpose. They provide adequate space in an appropriate location, are welcoming to children and offer access to the necessary facilities for a range of activities which promote their development.*

### **STANDARD 5 - EQUIPMENT**

*Furniture, equipment and toys are provided which are appropriate for their purpose and help to create an accessible and stimulating environment. They are of suitable design and condition, well maintained and conform to safety standards.*

### **STANDARD 6 - SAFETY**

*The registered person takes positive steps to promote safety within the setting and on outings and ensures proper precautions are taken to prevent accidents.*

### **STANDARD 7 - HEALTH**

*The registered person promotes the good health of children and takes positive steps to prevent the spread of infection and appropriate measures when they are ill.*

### **STANDARD 8 - FOOD AND DRINK**

*Children are provided with regular drinks and food in adequate quantities for their needs. Food and drink is properly prepared, nutritious and complies with dietary and religious requirements.*

### **STANDARD 9 - EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

*The registered person and staff actively promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice for all children.*

### **STANDARD 10 - SPECIAL NEEDS (INCLUDING SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES)**

*The registered person is aware that some children may have special needs and is*

*proactive in ensuring that appropriate action can be taken when such a child is identified or admitted to the provision. Steps are taken to promote the welfare and development of the child within the setting in partnership with the parents and other relevant parties.*

#### **STANDARD 11 - BEHAVIOUR**

*Adults caring for children in the provision are able to manage a wide range of children's behaviour in a way which promotes their welfare and development.*

#### **STANDARD 12 - WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS AND CARERS**

*The registered person and staff work in partnership with parents and to meet the needs of the children, both individually and as a group. Information is shared.*

#### **STANDARD 13 - CHILD PROTECTION**

*The registered person complies with local child protection procedures approved by the Area Child Protection Committee and ensures that all adults working and looking after children in the provision are able to put the procedures into practice.*

#### **STANDARD 14 - DOCUMENTATION**

*Records, policies and procedures which are required for the efficient and safe management of the provision, or to promote the welfare, care and learning of children are maintained. Records about individual children are shared with the child's parent.*