



Office for Standards  
in Education

## COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 127631

DfES Number: 581921

### INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 13/07/2004  
Inspector Name Vanessa Wood

### SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care  
Setting Name St Thomas More Nursery  
Setting Address The Priest's House  
The Hermitage, More Park  
West Malling  
Kent  
ME19 6HN

### REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name St. Thomas More Church

### ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name St. Thomas More Church  
Address The Priest's House  
The Hermitage, More Park  
West Malling  
Kent  
ME19 6HN

## 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 More Nursery opened in 1990.

It operates from three rooms in the Priest's House next door to St Thomas More Roman Catholic Church in West Malling. The nursery serves the local parish.

There are currently 33 children on roll aged between two years and five years. This includes 14 funded three year olds and 13 funded four year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. Three children have special needs and no children have English as an additional language.

The group opens four days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 08:45 to 11:45, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday and from 12:30 to 1500 on a Wednesday and Friday and from 13:00 to 15:30 on a Thursday.

Two full time and two part time members of staff work with the children. Three members of staff are qualified.

The setting receives support from a teacher from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

### How good is the Day Care?

St Thomas More Nursery provides good quality of care for children.

The nursery is well managed. Staff are deployed effectively and are aware of their individual roles and responsibilities. They communicate well with children and provide a warm, welcoming environment to enable children to feel secure.

There is a wide range of activities, arranged in an appropriate and attractive way throughout the three rooms. These offer stimulating play opportunities to meet the needs of developing children. A good programme of activities is planned for the year to meet the six areas of learning. Staff develop good relationships with children and manage behaviour well. They are sensitive to the individual needs of all children.

Children are happy and approach staff with confidence.

Staff offer children a snack during the morning, but this is not well managed due to the restraints of the room.

Staff are vigilant in ensuring children's safety. A risk assessment of the premises is completed on a regular basis and each day staff ensure the rooms are clean and all hazards have been made safe.

Staff have a good relationship with parents and take time to talk to parents when they collect children. Policies and procedures are in place but some lack the necessary information.

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

The group was asked to ensure all records are available for inspection. All records of staff are now kept on the premises and made available for inspection.

Staff were asked to review hand washing procedures for children. Staff provide children with individual towels, but when the new building is completed paper towels will be made available as these are considered to be more hygienic.

The group was asked to develop a plan to ensure how the staff qualification requirements will be met. It is anticipated that a member of staff with the relevant NVQ 3 qualification and experience will take control of the group in the near future and another member of staff is hoping to do a relevant child care qualification.

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

- Organisation of the nursery is good ensuring children are well cared for.
- Activities are planned to provide an interesting and stimulating balance of activities to promote children's development and learning.
- Staff give priority to children's safety in the nursery and a risk assessment has been completed and all safety concerns met.
- Staff are consistent in managing behaviour and value and encourage good behaviour.
- A good working relationship is fostered with parents and all information is shared.

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

- the arrangements for managing snack time to ensure this time is more sociable and promotes healthy eating
- the policy for lost and uncollected children should clearly state the procedure to be followed should a child become lost

- the system for staff appraisals.

### Outcome of the inspection

Good

### 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
2	Ensure the policy for lost and uncollected children includes a comprehensive procedure to be followed should a child become lost.
2	Ensure staff appraisals are in place and done on a regular basis to monitor staff training needs and the quality of teaching.
8	Ensure snack time is a more sociable time for children and used to promote healthy eating.

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

### How effective is the nursery education?

St Thomas More Nursery is acceptable and of good quality overall. Children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals. Provision for communication, language and literacy, mathematical and creative development are particularly well planned and children make very good progress in these areas.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Staff have a good understanding of the early learning goals and plan a variety of practical activities that children enjoy. They organise the indoor space and resources imaginatively to create an interesting learning environment in which children increase their independence. Good use is made of the outside play space on a daily basis. Staff are skilled at asking questions that encourage children to think and talk about what they are doing. They interact well with children and manage behaviour in a positive way and children behave well. Planning is good with clear assessments of children's development. Staff complete action plans for specific activities but these are not effectively evaluated.

The leadership and management of the nursery are generally good. Staff understand their roles and responsibilities and work well together. Staff are aware of their strengths and weaknesses and review their practice regularly and attend courses to up date their knowledge. However, evaluating teaching is an area that could be improved.

Partnership with parents is very good. Parents are given regular information about the nursery through newsletters and all information is shared. Parents have the opportunity to talk to staff and to help at the nursery on a regular basis.

### What is being done well?

- Staff provide good resources both inside and outside to promote all areas of learning. Space is well planned and staff are deployed well to ensure children are motivated to take part in all activities.
- Staff provide a good balance of adult directed and child initiated activities to encourage children to use their imagination and creative skills.
- The curriculum for communication, language and literacy, mathematical and creative development is well planned and effectively implemented.
- Partnership with parents is strong and all information is shared.

### What needs to be improved?

- the evaluation of daily action plans, particularly to differentiate learning expectations for three and four year olds

- the evaluation of teaching through regular staff appraisals and staff meetings.

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

Very good progress has been made since the last inspection. Staff have introduced a number of effective measures to improve staff training and increase the use of music and singing in the programme of every day activities, as raised in the key issues in the previous inspection report.

All staff have attended the training in the early learning goals and have attended further courses to up date their knowledge. They also make use of in house training and particular attention is paid to ensure new members of staff are qualified or willing to attend training.

Music and particularly singing songs is now included in the daily programme. In addition to the counting songs and nursery rhymes they sing every day they have obtained instrumental music to familiar and new songs for the children to sing along with. Musical instruments are also used regularly for beating out sounds, playing along with the songs and for free play in the outside area.

## SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

### PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children's confidence and self esteem are built up by staff who are sensitive to their needs and know them well. They are encouraged to be independent and to persist with difficult tasks. Children choose between activities and select resources for themselves. They learn to share and take turns, and to be polite and considerate to others. Children's behaviour is good.

### COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children initiate conversations with staff and each other. Children can recognise their names and a good proportion can write part or all of their name. They are familiar with the sounds made by different letters and to recognise a few everyday words. Children have lots of opportunities to practice their emergent writing skills in role play situations. The book corner is often visited and the staff make good use of information books.

### MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Most children count competently and are provided with lots of opportunities to practice these skills. Children are introduced to simple calculations and staff use mathematical language to ask questions about height, weight, size and shape. Children enjoy singing number rhymes and songs with actions.

### KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

Children have good opportunities to understand the natural world through walks around the large grounds of the house. They frequently explore new ideas through role play and are at present learning about travel and different countries. They learn to explore different materials and are encouraged to design and make things from junk materials.

### PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are set good challenges to use the outdoor space everyday to develop their physical skills. They learn to throw and catch, use the large climbing frame confidently and use sit and ride toys. Children are developing their fine motor skills through the use of a range of tools and construction materials.

**CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children have lots of opportunity to explore different materials. They often make models of their own choice. Most children know the different colours and they are becoming familiar with less common colours. The role play area is well equipped and children use their imagination well with appropriate adult support. Children enjoy singing songs and moving to music.

**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**

- ensure action plans are fully evaluated and in particular differentiate between learning expectations for three and four year olds
- introduce a rigorous system to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching.

*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.*