

St Thomas More Pre-School



St Thomas More Pre-School, St Thomas of Canterbury Centre, The Priest's House, Lucks Hill, West Malling, Kent, ME19 6HN

Inspection date 25 April 2017
Previous inspection date 14 May 2015

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Good	2
	Previous inspection:	Good	2
Effectiveness of the leadership and management		Good	2
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Good	2
Personal development, behaviour and welfare		Good	2
Outcomes for children		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision is good

- Staff have a good understanding of how children learn. They identify next steps to support children's development and consider children's individual interests well. Children are regularly absorbed in play of their own choosing and are motivated to learn.
- Children are settled and enjoy their time at pre-school. They thrive in this well-presented environment. For example, children particularly enjoy using the garden which is well resourced and interesting.
- The manager and staff use additional funding particularly well to support good outcomes for all children. For example, they have recently worked with a speech and language therapist to help staff offer better communication and language support.
- Children are confident and all make good progress in their learning and development. This includes children who have special educational needs and/or a disabilities and children who learn English as an additional language.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- The manager has not considered further ways of working with parents to support them to share more information about children's learning beyond the pre-school.
- Sometimes, staff miss the opportunity to ensure that all children benefit from group times and are able to develop their concentration at these times.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To further improve the quality of the early years provision the provider should:

- develop further the relationship with parents to support and encourage them to share more information about children's learning at home
- extend the use of group time to support children to build their concentration skills and all benefit from the activity.

Inspection activities

- The inspector spoke to parents and took their views into consideration.
- The inspector observed the quality of teaching and assessed the impact on children's learning.
- The inspector jointly observed an activity with the manager and discussed children's learning.
- The inspector spoke to children and the staff at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector reviewed the pre-school's self-evaluation, policies and procedures and children's learning records.

Inspector

Sarah Taylor-Smith

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of the leadership and management is good

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Staff have a secure understanding of their responsibility to keep children safe. They are aware of the action to take if they have any concerns about children's welfare. The manager supports staff's training and development needs effectively and staff use their experience well. For example, staff receive individual and group training to help further develop their skills and support children's learning. The manager and staff have a good understanding of the strengths of the pre-school and reflect well on their practice. They have a good and accurate overview of children's development and are aware of the progress of individual and groups of children.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

Staff introduce mathematical language in discussions to support children's developing knowledge. For example, they use words such as 'plus' and 'equals' and show children the relevant written symbols. Staff have good relationships with external professionals and other settings that children attend and work well to learn how best to support individual children. Links with the local schools support children's move to school successfully. For example, staff support children to take part in activities that they will be doing at school, such as physical education. Staff give children effective support during their play and learning. For instance, staff help children to consider how they would like to build and what might happen as they add more to their structures.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are good

Children play well together. For example, staff work well to help them manage turn taking and to consider the needs of others. The manager and staff work well together and provide a consistent approach to support the care and learning needs of children. Overall, staff's relationships with parents are good. For instance, parents receive clear feedback about their children's well-being and progress. Staff encourage children to complete tasks themselves. For example, children enjoy the challenge of opening the paint and pouring it. Children benefit from the opportunity to choose where to play, for instance, many prefer to be more active and explore their physical skills and play outside.

Outcomes for children are good

Children learn a wide range of skills to help them be ready for their next stage of education, including starting school. Children enjoy exploring a range of natural resources such as pine cones and sand. They take part in role play, for example, they make 'cakes' and 'pies' out of sand and pretend to cook them in the oven. Children are eager to learn and find out more. Children learn about diversity and people in the community. For instance, they are involved in a good range of community events and celebrations.

Setting details

Unique reference number	127631
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	1089368
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Day care type	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Registers	Early Years Register
Age range of children	2 - 4
Total number of places	26
Number of children on roll	50
Name of registered person	St Thomas More Church Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP910085
Date of previous inspection	14 May 2015
Telephone number	01732 874559

St Thomas More Pre-School registered in 1990 and is in West Malling, Kent. The pre-school is open each weekday during term time. Sessions operate from 9am to midday and from midday to 3pm, except on Tuesday afternoon. The pre-school employs eight member of staff; of these, six staff hold early years qualifications to level 4. The manager holds early years professional status and another member of staff has a foundation degree. The pre-school receives funding to provide free early years education for children aged two, three and four years.

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