

# Thringstone Community Centre Pre-School Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	226242
<b>Inspection date</b>	08 February 2008
<b>Inspector</b>	Susan Andrews
<b>Setting Address</b>	The Green, Thringstone, Coalville, Leicestershire, LE67 8NR
<b>Telephone number</b>	01530 222337
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	The Trustees of Thringstone Community Centre Playgroup
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Sessional care

## ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

### The key inspection judgements and what they mean

*Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality*

*Good: this aspect of the provision is strong*

*Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound*

*Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough*

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).

## THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The Thringstone Community Centre Playgroup opened in 1993 and operates from a two-storey building with access to an enclosed outdoor play area. The playgroup is situated in the village of Thringstone near Coalville in Leicestershire.

A maximum of 26 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. The playgroup is open each weekday from 09.30 to 12.30 during term time. There are currently 40 children aged from two to five on roll. Of these 22 receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local community and nearby towns and villages. The playgroup has experience of providing care for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities .

The setting employs six staff. Including the manager four staff hold appropriate early years qualifications and two staff are working towards a qualification.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm, clean and child-oriented environment. They are able to experience a range of activities which contribute to their good health, such as daily exercise and fresh air, using a range of toys and equipment that develop their physical skills. General standards of hygiene at the premises are good. Staff wash their own hands before preparing cooking activities and cleanse tables using antibacterial spray before snack time. However, children's health may be compromised as the risk to cross-infection is not always minimised. For example, children share a hand washing bowl and towel in the group room after messy play activities and staff are not rigorous in washing their own hands after assisting children to wipe their noses.

Children's medical welfare is carefully taken into account. At the time a child is placed at the playgroup all relevant information regarding children's health is obtained, discussed with parents and good systems for recording information are in place. Staff hold relevant first aid qualifications and follow clear procedures when dealing with accidents and the administration of medication. As a result staff are able to respond positively should a child have an accident or become unwell, whilst in their care.

Children are well nourished and are provided with a range of healthy, nutritious snacks which promotes their growth and development. For example, a variety of fruit such as mangoes and bananas as well as raisins, unusual vegetables, pancakes and bread sticks are provided. Children have good opportunities to learn about healthy eating because they try new foods and textures and learn through a range of activities that develop children's understanding of what foods are good for them. For example, children bake wholemeal bread and eat the tomatoes and cress that they plant, tend and prepare for themselves. Children are given a choice of drinks of milk, water and juice at 'the snack bar' during the session. If they are thirsty, children can access additional drinks from a jug of water and beakers provided. Staff are vigilant in ensuring children take extra fluids when the weather is hot or after physical exercise, therefore, children remain well-hydrated.

Children make good use of the outdoor area to play daily in the fresh air and develop their physical skills. Their balance and coordination is developing well and children ably run, jump and play freely. Children have a good sense of space as they use the climbing frame, clamber through the tunnel and competently manoeuvre and change direction when necessary, as they move to music, dance, ride on the tricycles and pedal cars or use the balance beams. Children play safely and purposefully as they competently use a variety of tools, such as paintbrushes, crayons, scissors, rolling pins and craft materials, that develop their fine muscle control.

### Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play in a well-organised, spacious environment, with clearly defined play areas. Children benefit from the use of the adjacent outdoor play area which has an impact absorbent safety surface and is safely enclosed. There is sufficient space between each of the indoor and outside activities, so that the children are able to move around comfortably, engaging in both quiet and physical activities. As a result their decision-making skills, choice and independence are promoted. Children have easy access to a varied range of safe and suitable furniture and

equipment which is in good condition. Toys and resources are plentiful, varied and reflect diversity. They are age-appropriate and provide challenge, therefore, children develop their skills, are stimulated and interested in what is available.

Children's safety is prioritised. They are well protected from the risks of accidental injury, as staff are highly safety conscious. They take positive steps to plan for emergencies and to prevent and manage accidents, for example, through the use of a range of risk assessments, daily checks to reduce any potential hazards and regular fire drills. Effective practices are in place, which actively contribute to keeping children safe and free from harm. For example, staff are extremely vigilant in the supervision of children and the security arrangements for the arrival and departure of children and their parents, are extremely well-managed. Children are never left alone with people who have not been vetted or released to unauthorised adults, consequently, they remain safe and secure within the playgroup.

Staff have a good knowledge of child protection issues and reporting procedures and are familiar with the 'Local Safeguarding Children Board' guidance. A comprehensive child protection policy is in place and staff have attended additional training to update their knowledge. They are aware of the signs and symptoms of abuse and fully recognise their duty to protect the children in their care, therefore, children's welfare is safeguarded.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled in the playgroup. They are confident, independent and are developing their self-esteem. They receive lots of support and encouragement from staff which helps children to feel good about themselves. They are cared for by keen and motivated staff, who know children well and give them lots of individual attention, therefore, children feel secure, welcomed and valued. Children are able to approach staff with ease and form close, trusting relationships.

Younger children's overall development is supported as staff have a clear understanding of how children learn. Staff are implementing the 'Birth to three matters' framework and they provide a range of stimulating activities and spontaneous experiences. Good methods regarding observation, assessment and planning for children's individual development are implemented. Consequently, staff's assessment of what children are interested in or need to do next, effectively promotes their development.

### **Nursery Education.**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have clear knowledge of the Foundation Stage. They are aware of how children learn through the 'stepping stones', what the areas of learning include and provide a range of exciting, innovative and interesting activities. Effective strategies for the assessment and planning of the curriculum are well-developed. They provide sufficient challenge, focus and purpose to encourage individual children's sustained independent learning. Staff are enthusiastic and invite children to think and predict for themselves during activities and general conversations. Children have good opportunities to self-select the toys and equipment, therefore, many activities are child-initiated with staff providing close support and encouragement to develop their learning.

Children are confident in large group activities, such as outdoor activities. They listen well when staff are speaking and confidently answer any questions. Children are interested in their play

and enjoy their time at the setting. They form good relationships with their peers and play well together. For example, children play together harmoniously with pasta and water activities and the cars on the road mat. Through effective organisation of resources and time, children have independent access to all activities and can make choices and decisions about their play. Staff manage children's behaviour well, so that they understand what is acceptable and how their behaviour affects others. Children work cooperatively with each other as they take turns, share and help to tidy away the toys, which gives them a sense of responsibility.

Children's mark-making skills are fostered with a variety of materials available on a daily basis. For example, children use paintbrushes, pencils, crayons and draw letters and numbers in the outdoor potting compost trough with their fingers. Children enjoy listening to stories and respond well to questions as they can confidently tell you what happens in the story about the 'Bear Hunt'. They have many opportunities to recognise their name, for example, children use their name cards at snack time and on their art work. Labels and displays around the playgroup room help them to recognise that words have meaning. However, some books are out of children's reach and the seating arrangements and positioning of the book corner is uninviting, consequently, children's interest is not captivated.

Children's mathematical development is encouraged on a daily basis. They are able to recognise numbers on posters and pictures around the room and count confidently up to 10. Children learn to count further during routine activities, such as counting the number of children coming inside from outdoor play. They compare, sort and calculate as they use jigsaw puzzles, construct shapes and see numbers in their environment. For example, as they use calculators, dial numbers on the telephone and use a computer keyboard.

Children enjoy exploring and investigating their environment. They learn how objects grow and change, for example, as they use magnifying glasses to look at worms and slugs and when planting and growing tomatoes and cress. Children are encouraged to become familiar with the village and local community, for example, conducting a traffic survey through their village or talking with visiting police officers and fire fighters. They take walks to visit the 'big tree with a hole in it' and take a torch to look inside. Children study how vegetables grow when they go to the nearby allotments and consolidate their learning by discussing what they see. Children have good opportunities to develop their information, communication and technology skills and enjoy using programmable toys. They are intensely interested in the computer systems, working the keyboard and mouse with skill and precision.

Children develop their physical skills and their creativity through the use of a range of art materials and tools as they paint, crayon, create collage pictures and model with play-dough. Children use their imagination well to express their ideas and feelings in play situations that reflect their home and the wider community. They remember and sing familiar songs, they listen to, dance and move to a range of popular, multicultural and classical music. Children are inspired and use musical instruments with great enjoyment, that help them to explore differing tones, pitch and rhythms.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled in the playgroup. Staff ensure children feel a sense of belonging as children are sensitively supported. They are aware of children's differing needs and abilities including those who speak English as an additional language and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Therefore, children are fully involved, settle well and become more confident.

Children have access to a range of resources, play opportunities and activities which reflect diversity and positively acknowledge differences, for example, dolls, dressing-up clothes, posters, books and puzzles. The setting however, recognises very few multicultural festivals and consequently, children are not fully developing their knowledge and understanding about other cultures and the wider world.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children behave well in the setting, they happily share toys and equipment, as they play with cars, use musical instruments and take turns on the climbing frame or use the tools in the potting compost trough. Staff manage children's behaviour effectively in a positive way by listening to them, diverting their attention and praising their achievements. They are calm, consistent and sensitive in their approach and give clear explanations to children which helps them feel secure and know what is expected of them. Staff are polite to each other and to the children, always saying 'please' and 'thank you' and encouraging children to do the same. As a result, children behave well and harmony and cooperation is promoted. Children's self-esteem is thoroughly promoted by praise and encouragement from staff. Children's art work is valued and displayed creatively around the room to further enhance children's sense of belonging.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents and carers speak favourably of the welcoming environment which helps them to feel confident in the care offered to their children. They feel consulted and extremely well-informed. A full range of the setting's policy and procedural documentation is readily available for parents. Staff are frequently taking steps to build positive relationships with parents, listening to them and seeking their views, so that parents feel they are contributing fully to their child's development. For example, through questionnaires and regular meetings with key workers. Parents have access to information about the six areas of learning and information is shared informally through ongoing dialogue, regular newsletters and details posted on the notice board. Appropriate information is gathered at the time a child is placed in the setting, this is constantly reviewed through frequent consultation. Therefore, parents and staff work together to ensure that children's care and learning needs are met effectively.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children are happy and settled, they learn and have fun as effective use is made of space, time and resources to provide a positive environment for children to play and learn. They receive a good level of support and care from keen and motivated staff. They are qualified and experienced in childcare and continue to develop their knowledge and skills through regular training, for example, first aid, child protection and NVQ qualifications. However, sufficiently robust procedures are not in place for ensuring staff are suitable to work the children. The staff know children well and show genuine care and concern for their welfare, this gives children a real sense of security and well-being.

Policy and procedural documentation is clear, comprehensive and used effectively to support the running of the setting and the promotion of children's health, safety, welfare and enjoyment. Staff demonstrate a clear understanding of the policies and their responsibilities to ensure the requirements of the National Standards are met.

The leadership and management of nursery education is good. Staff are familiar with the six areas of learning, aware of their roles and responsibilities, share good practice and embrace training opportunities. The setting is focused on the development and achievement of all

children and careful planning and evaluation takes place regarding children's activities to ensure a broad, well-balanced curriculum is delivered. Therefore, children experience a good range of exciting and innovative learning opportunities, are inspired to learn and have fun.

Overall, children's needs are met.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection the setting agreed to devise and implement procedures to be followed in the event of a child being lost and in the event of a child protection allegation being made against a member of staff.

The setting has taken positive steps to address both issues, therefore children's welfare is safeguarded. A detailed procedure has been devised regarding steps to be taken should a child become lost or uncollected from the setting. Child protection procedures have been amended to include procedures to be followed should any allegation be made against a member of staff or volunteer. Staff have been made fully aware of the procedure and policy changes and documentation is readily available for parents.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

## **THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION**

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

### **WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?**

#### **The quality and standards of the care**

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- minimise the risk of cross-infection, with respect to children's shared hand washing facilities and revise practices to ensure staff cleanse their hands after assisting children to wipe their noses
- revise planning and develop opportunities for children to extend their knowledge and understanding of the wider world, by learning about and celebrating a range of multicultural festivals
- devise and implement rigorous systems regarding the recruitment, selection, induction, ongoing suitability and appraisal of childcare staff members.

## **The quality and standards of the nursery education**

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- revise the seating arrangements and positioning of the book corner to make it more inviting and to captivate children's interest.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education* (HMI ref no 2599) which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)