

# Thakeham Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	113754
<b>Inspection date</b>	31 October 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Christine Clint
<b>Setting Address</b>	Thakeham Village Hall, Storrington Road, Thakeham, Pulborough, West Sussex, RH20 3EF
<b>Telephone number</b>	01798 815467
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	Thakeham Pre-School
<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 satisfactory. 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?

Thakeham Pre-School opened in 1990. It is a community group managed by a parent committee.

It operates from the village hall, in the rural village of Thakeham, West Sussex. The pre-school serves the local community and surrounding areas.

The pre-school opens five days a week during school term time only. Sessions are from 09:15 to 12:00 and on Monday and Thursday, children can stay to lunch club which continues until 13:00. A separate Tuesday session is available from 12:30 to 15:00. Children attend a variety of sessions.

There are currently 28 children on roll. This includes 16 children in funded educational places. The setting supports children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

There are seven members of staff and three staff hold qualifications in child care and education. A first aid trained staff member is on duty every day. The setting receives support from the

local early years network and holds an award for completing the West Sussex Quality Kite Mark Scheme. At the time of the inspection 15 children were present.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in clean and organised premises, where they follow very regular routines to maintain their personal hygiene. Older children independently use the adjacent toilets and younger children are assisted by staff; steps and toilet seats are available. Children immediately recognise when they need to wash their hands after painting and they regularly use an anti-bacterial gel for their hands before snacks; staff remind children frequently about washing hands.

Children are learning to be confident and pour their own drinks at snack time, they can access water at any time during the session. Children help to prepare healthy choices of food, they sit together with staff to cut up the fruit for snack time. Children are excited and talkative during snack time, because of the Halloween celebrations, they sit in groups with staff who encourage and manage their conversations. Older children who attend the lunch club are encouraged to unpack all their own food and they are given ample time to eat at their own pace. Children with allergies or special dietary needs are fully considered and information is competently shared between staff and parents. Children have individual name cards which show their needs.

Children's health is clearly prioritised and any accidents that take place are competently recorded and signed by parents on the day. A first aid kit is immediately available and a first aid trained member of staff is present at each session. All regulatory requirements are in place to give medication if needed, parents provide written permission for administering any medication and all details are recorded.

Children regularly play outside and have a wide range of outdoor play opportunities and freedom of movement during the session. They talk about how they feel, whether they are hot or cold, they stretch at the beginning of their physical activities and at the end. They learn how to brush their teeth because they have a visiting hygienist, who also includes information about foods that are good for teeth. Children are sometimes weighed by a visiting nurse who also talks about healthy food and packed lunches.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are safely cared for in a spacious hall, with ample light and ventilation. They are supervised at all times during outdoor play in the temporary fenced area and they can choose to play outside for a large part of the morning. The main entrance is secured when children are inside and any visitors can be clearly seen on arrival. All visitors' attendance is signed and timed on the premises. Notices are displayed for parents in various areas and they are welcomed into the setting at the start and end of the session.

Children have freedom to choose from a wide selection of well organised and planned activities during the morning, because staff ensure that these are set up and available before children arrive. They move spontaneously between well resourced activities, which are effectively

supported by staff who explain and assist in children's play. Children are encouraged to help to tidy the toys and staff pack all equipment away daily.

Children's safety is considered because staff carry out detailed risk assessments and these are recorded. However the risk assessments have not highlighted the hazards posed from the hot storage heaters situated around the hall. Children are well supervised throughout the session and there are procedures for lost or uncollected children in place. Children take part in regular fire drills every term and these are thoroughly recorded and evaluated. All visitors to the premises are recorded and their attendance is timed.

Children's welfare is fully considered and staff have attended training in child protection, they show an understanding of the procedures for referring any concerns and all injuries that children have on arrival are recorded. A policy is in place to safeguard children and parents are notified of the duty to respond. The policy has recently been amended but does not show the procedures to be followed in the event of any allegations against staff.

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

The provision is good.

Children enter the pre-school happily with their parents and carers, they find their names to self register. They have free choice of the prepared activities and resources; they eagerly enjoy choosing indoor or outdoor play. Older children confidently offer to help younger ones, they spend time together at specific activities and learn to share play equipment; they encourage younger children to participate. All the children are beginning to understand about sharing and taking turns and they know that the sand timers are used to help them to achieve this.

Children often make decisions about their play and staff follow these spontaneous choices during free play, especially in the role play area. Younger children's needs are met because they are offered alternative activities at group story times to ensure that their interest is maintained. Children are encouraged to be responsible for putting away the toys; they are learning to know that certain music indicates the clearing away of all toys. Children co-operate and respond to staff well. All children's development is observed and assessed using the aspects of the Birth to three matters framework. This is thoroughly recorded and fully linked with children's progress towards the Foundation Stage curriculum.

### **Nursery Education.**

Children eagerly attend and participate in activities, they readily socialise with each other and know that they can make choices and freely play. They respond and share equipment and they know how to use the timers for taking turns with equipment. Children responsibly find their names and put items on the table to take home. Children know the routines to self register, they are learning to manage their personal care independently and to make decisions during the session. They choose indoor or outdoor play at times, they help themselves to water and choose from the wide variety of activities. They recognise the rules of the pre-school from the sequence of pictures displayed and they can relate back to staff what the pictures signify. They understand the meaning of the rain stick sound which is used to indicate story or quiet time.

Children can fully recognise and sound the letters of their own names, they learn to put the letters in the correct order and some children manage this with their full name. Children are eager to write their names on their printing work, they have clear skills of emergent writing and frequent opportunities to practise. Children are building their vocabulary and connecting

their thinking, especially when answering questions related to their imaginary play. They talk about building a house and what they need to buy first, they plan what to do next and organise their thoughts with language. Children have easy access to a variety of story and information books, they sit together quietly at times to read from pictures. They are keen to respond to questions about stories and eagerly listen to stories that are told without using books. Children take books home to share with parents and carers and often carry out small activities at home linked with language or literacy.

Children instantly recognise shapes and eagerly say that they have a round sandwich at lunch time. They carry out sequencing tasks to copy a line of different shapes. They readily count how many children there are when numbers are low and they can easily add the number of staff to give a total number of people. Children recognise number symbols and can match these with the correct number of dots on the printing stamps. They understand and use positional language, when planning journeys with the programmable toy. They talk about going forwards, backwards and recognise how to programme left or right. They talk about going on long journeys or short journeys. Children respond when they are asked to guess how many steps are needed to reach the door to let all the parents in, they are learning to estimate.

Children have opportunities to use programmable toys and plan journeys, they travel over pretend rocks and try to stay on the large sheets of paper that are joined together. They practise mouse control using the computer and they are encouraged to practise with the digital camera. They listen to music regularly played from tapes. They construct a track for the train and have ideas about how to use the hooks on the carriages, they talk about needing a snow plough for the track. Children look out of the window at the trees, they talk about the colours and identify plants that are weeds. They learn about the seasons and talk about the weather. They make collages with different materials and join these together with glue. Children have a wide variety of planned topics which increase their understanding of the wider world. They take part in cooking and wear chefs clothes to have a barbeque in the outside play area. They look at and touch real crabs; they go on pond dipping outings. Children have regular visitors from the community to share information and encourage their learning.

Children have daily opportunities for increasing their physical development. They use stilts indoors during free play, they push trucks around the room on their knees. They practise skipping and use their skipping ropes to make shapes on the floor. Children can ride in the rocker and they spontaneously sing to staff. They are encouraged to practise jumping and learn to stretch and extend their bodies. Children have equipment available outside for balancing and they step in and out of tyres and jump from the low beams. Children routinely use scissors and regularly practise cutting up fruit with knives whilst they are supervised.

Children follow their own ideas when making collage pictures to turn into hats for Halloween, they ably use the glue and choose which items to stick. They fully enjoy imaginary role play, which begins with shopping and through conversation and ideas this extends to building a house. Children use a blanket as their house and have torches underneath the cover; they talk about 'not being scared' because of the Halloween celebrations and costumes being worn by some children. They are able to express and communicate ideas to staff and to each other. Children experience a wide variety of different play mediums, they use pasta and coloured spaghetti. They play in a trough of sawdust and make pretend ice creams using wet sand. They use their senses to play listening games and feel items to identify them, they also take part in food tasting. Children are learning songs and beginning to practise making up their own poems.

The quality of the teaching and learning is good. All staff show a strong awareness of including appropriate language and questioning to increase children's thinking and to encourage their understanding. They listen to children's ideas and act upon their spontaneous suggestions. Staff show a high level of knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum, they are committed and dedicated to children's learning at all times. There are clearly defined roles during the session and staff are aware of their responsibilities. They show excellent levels of team work and share the planning of activities and linking these with children's learning needs. They each have key worker roles and they observe and assess children's development. Plans for activities are comprehensive and show good levels of differentiation and evaluation. Staff incorporate children's individual ideas at times to broaden areas of learning when required.

Children's development profiles are fully available and contain ample observations to show how staff have assessed their progress. Most profiles show the next steps that children need to take to increase their learning and staff have a good knowledge of their key children to ensure that this takes place.

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

The provision is good.

Children are encouraged to have an open attitude towards including each other and broadening their knowledge of the wider world. They have a good supply of books which reflect the diversity within society and show children of different nationalities. Many labels around the room are written in French as well as English, to include children who are learning English as a additional language. There are dolls which reflect different cultures and examples of children learning how to make Rangoli and Mendhi patterns. Children's pictures also show that they are learning about a variety of religious festivals.

Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are fully supported from an early stage because all staff show awareness and understanding. There is clearly recorded information to identify and support children's learning needs and close links are maintained with parents and other agencies. These include following individual learning plans and observing and recording all achievements. Children's needs are regularly evaluated and included in formal and informal discussion, which helps all staff to understand and recognise progress. Staff react promptly to alternative activities for managing and supporting children at group times to ensure their needs are met.

Children behave very well, they relate to each other with enthusiasm and join each other's activities. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. There are good ratios of staff to children and staff are on hand to respond immediately when children are excitable and noise levels rise because of the Halloween celebrations. Children learn about the daily routines from sequenced pictures and they are praised for responding and assisting staff.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Children are happy and settled in the nursery because their parents are welcomed at the beginning and end of the session and they can volunteer to help at any time. Parents have clear information displayed about the planned activities and how these link with the early learning goals. They have a welcome pack which explains the policies and procedures and the daily routines. There is a procedure for recording any complaints and parents are notified of the contact details of Ofsted. Parents have regular newsletters, they attend open evenings every term to review children's progress. They are impressed with the quality of the pre-school and the level of achievement that children gain;

some parents have deferred their children's entry into full time school because of the benefits of learning through play. Parents have regular access to children's development profiles and contribute to these through monitoring children's small homework tasks. Many parents have completed questionnaires during the summer term and all comments refer to children being happy, interested and keen to attend. Parents fully appreciative and support the work of the pre-school staff.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children's care and the daily management of the nursery is planned and organised. The parent committee are newly appointed and have recently sent applications to Ofsted for clearance, however they have not yet organised effective systems to show how new staff or new committee members' suitability is assessed. The nursery has a soundly stated operational plan and all policies and procedures are in place, although some are being updated and further amendments are required. The registration certificate is displayed and children and staff attendance is clearly recorded.

There is a high ratio of staff to children and there are sufficient staff with qualifications at each session. Staff are motivated, competent and work very well as a team, they all show a keen response to individual children and dedication to the nursery and their roles. Staff continue to attend training and seek advice through the local early years network. They make changes following advice and continually evaluate their daily practice to meet children's needs.

The leadership and management is good. All staff show strong levels of following spontaneous, child led activities and supporting choice for children. They work collaboratively in planning and providing activities and resources to give children a broad choice of opportunities for play and learning. The planning in place for all children enables staff to follow each child's individual progress and make clear observations of children's abilities. All staff complete self assessments of performance and annual appraisals are carried out. There are training opportunities and forthcoming training is listed. The supervisor shows competent and effective leadership, she has completed a very comprehensive action plan to follow the last inspection and the daily management of staff and children is well organised and planned. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom they provide.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last child care inspection the provider was asked to ensure that the complaints procedure includes Ofsted's contact details; to ensure the fire exits are kept clear at all times and to review the policies and up date them to reflect the settings individual needs.

The complaints procedure now has a contact address for Ofsted and a complaints book is available for parents to raise any concerns. Parents also complete regular questionnaires and can raise any issues about their children's care. The fire exit is clear and immediate access is available to ensure children's safety. Many policies and procedures have been reviewed and this is ongoing to meet the regulations for children's welfare.

At the last education inspection several key issues were raised. The provider was required to improve the monitoring of behaviour to ensure all children are able to participate fully in the activities. Staff now provide alternative activities for children who are not able to sit for longer stories and their interest is maintained. Children's behaviour is closely monitored by staff who

use distraction at times. Children's individual interests are also linked to activities to encourage and broaden their learning.

The pre-school were also asked to provide a quiet area where the children can use books independently to further develop their interest in reading. Children use the comfortable book corner at any time, they frequently sit with books and read from pictures. There are ample books available and children's interest in reading is promoted through taking books home.

The provider was also asked to include more opportunities for children to become familiar with numerals in a variety of situations and different contexts. Counting, quantity and estimation are regularly included in daily activities to ensure that children become familiar, many older children are recognising numerals readily.

The pre-school were required to display the curriculum planning and provide opportunities for the parents to make written contributions about their children's learning at home. The daily activities are now displayed and linked with the Foundation Stage curriculum. Parents are encouraged to complete information about children's progress and assess the small homework tasks, or write about children's interest levels when they share the borrowed books at home. These assessments clearly contribute to children's learning.

### **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 satisfactory. 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):

- develop clear procedures to ensure that new staff are suitable to work with children and have these available for inspection
- ensure that Ofsted are notified of any changes to the registered providers
- ensure that the child protection policy includes procedures to be followed in the event of any allegations against staff



- ensure that fitted storage heaters conform to safety requirements and do not pose a hazard to children

### **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):

- include targets for children's next steps of learning in their development profiles.

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)