

# Thornton Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number** 226495  
**Inspection date** 18/03/2009  
**Inspector** Lynn Dent

**Setting address** Community Centre, Main Street, Thornton, Coalville,  
Leicestershire, LE67 1AG

**Telephone number** 01530 230223

**Email**

**Type of setting** Childcare on non-domestic premises

## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration whichever is the later, which require Ofsted or the provider to take action in Annex C.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

## Description of the setting

Thornton Playgroup is a privately owned provision. It opened in 1970 and has been under the current owner since 1996. The playgroup operates from the small, main and sports halls in Thornton Community Centre. It is situated in Thornton village in Leicestershire.

The playgroup is registered on the Early Year Register. A maximum of 30 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. The playgroup is currently caring for 43 children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The setting provides care for children from the village and surrounding areas.

The playgroup is open each weekday from 9:00 to 12:00 during term time and provides holiday care for the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage for four weeks during the summer school holidays. All children share access to a secure outdoor play area.

The playgroup currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The setting is in receipt of nursery education funding. The playgroup employs six staff. Of these, five hold appropriate early years qualifications.

## Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall, the quality of the provision is good. Staff plan a wide range of interesting activities, some of which are evaluated well. Opportunities to fully develop children's independent writing are sometimes missed. The playgroup works in partnership with parents, other childcare providers and agencies to benefit the children. The management has systems in place that enable them to effectively self-evaluate and monitor the provision. A range of procedures help to maintain children's welfare.

## What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- provide further meaningful opportunities for children to mark marks and develop their independent writing
- continue to evaluate all planned activities to ensure that the learning intentions are met
- develop systems to ensure the ongoing suitability of staff to work with the children
- ensure that the risk assessments covers anything with which a child may come into contact with.

## **The leadership and management of the early years provision**

All staff have a sound knowledge and understand of the Early Years Foundation stage and use this effectively to plan and provide a stimulating range of activities and experiences, enabling children to make good progress in their learning and development. It is unclear if the learning intentions of adult-led activities are met as they are not all evaluated. Written policies and procedures are in place and implemented well. Staff are checked at induction to ensure their suitability to work with children. However, systems to ensure their continued suitability are not yet fully in place. Staff clearly explain how they check the premises on a daily basis. On the day of inspection, no hazards were identified. However, records of risk assessments do not fully show how all hazards are managed. Staff can confidently explain how to identify, record and report concerns in accordance with the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures. Consequently, children's welfare is protected.

The management has good systems in place enabling them to self-evaluate the provision. This includes collecting information from parents, children and staff, enabling the management to have a very realistic view of the strengths and areas for improvement. The recommendations made at the last inspection have been fully implemented and demonstrate a commitment to improving the service provided.

The playgroup develops good partnerships with local childminders who also provide care for the children ensuring consistency. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are effectively provided for by working closely with other agencies such as the area special needs coordinator and speech therapists. Consequently, all children are fully integrated into the setting. Parents receive a range of information about the settings at induction. Staff collect information about the children, enabling them to identify their current stage of learning and development and use these to build on what they can do. Ongoing regular discussions, sharing of records ensures that parents are kept informed and involved in their child's learning and developmental progress.

## **The quality and standards of the early years provision**

The effective organisation enables all children to be integrated into the setting at their individual developmental stage. Staff are very aware of the needs of the younger children and have introduced separate register and circle times, ensuring that they spend more time engaged in developmentally appropriate play. Children benefit because staff adapt activities accordingly, for example, more able children count and sing as they play with plastic ducks in a water tray and others develop their confidence to play in the water. Adult-led activities are well-received. As a result children spend time absorbed in a range of craft activities. Children develop their independence as they move between rooms to access the different activities. Staff provide effective interaction with children, moving around the setting to where they are playing and engaging them in games.

Children show good coordination and skill as they catch and throw balls. They move carefully around their friends showing good spatial awareness. Children learn about numbers and solve problems in a variety of ways, For example, they bounce a ball to match the number on the dice. During imaginative play around a well-known fairy tale children talk about the different sizes of bowls and bears. Children use their language well to explain what they are doing. As they roll out play dough with different rollers they explain that the lines are thin or wide and talk about how they feel different. Older and more able children are becoming competent writers. Younger children are beginning to draw recognisable pictures and some can explain what their marks on paper mean. However, opportunities for children to write for a purpose are not fully promoted. They do have access to writing materials and paper at all times but often choose not to engage in this unless an adult is with them. All children enjoy moving to stories, rhymes and songs, older children develop a sense of rhythm as they clap out their name for beat baby and younger children match their movements to animals in a story.

Staff spend time observing children as they play and use the observations well to record children's achievements and to identify the next steps in their learning and development. Consequently, each child has set targets that enable them to make good progress. Children's files are readily available to parent at any time, these are discussed with the child's key person and parents are able to add their own observations and comments. As a result the development records and learning journeys give an overall picture of the child's progress. Staff provide ideas through planning and regular newsletters about what the children are learning enabling parents to extend this at home.

Routines such as snack times are used to effectively promote children's understanding of how to maintain good health and hygiene. Children's welfare is protected well because staff implement sound procedures to prevent the cross-contamination of germs. They learn about the local community as they participate in activities about people who help them. Children show good behaviour, play harmoniously with their friends and have high self-esteem because staff are positive role models and use praise to promote this. Each day the children are reminded of the rules and can explain how these help to keep them safe. Older children are mindful of their younger peers showing a caring attitude and respect for others.

## Annex A: record of inspection judgements

### The key inspection judgements and what they mean

*Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality*

*Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong*

*Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound*

*Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough*

### Overall effectiveness

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b> | 2 |
| How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?   | 2 |
| The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.   | 2 |

### Leadership and management

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?</b>          | 2 |
| How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement? | 2 |
| How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?                            | 2 |
| How well are children safeguarded?  | 2 |

### Quality and standards

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?</b>  | 2 |
| <b>How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?</b>       | 2 |
| How well are children helped to stay safe?  | 2 |
| How well are children helped to be healthy?   | 2 |
| How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?  | 2 |
| How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?   | 2 |
| How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being? | 2 |

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

## **Annex C: complaint/s made to Ofsted**

This section of the report includes details of any complaint/s made to Ofsted when:

- we took action for the provider to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- we asked the provider to take action in order to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- the provider had already taken any necessary action to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register.

We will not report on any complaint where the provider met the requirements of the Early Years Register or did not require any action by Ofsted or the registered provider.

### **Detail of the complaint/s**

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since last inspection.

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.