

# St Thomas More Catholic Nursery School & After School Club

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	260900
<b>Inspection date</b>	16/03/2009
<b>Inspector</b>	Ann Taylor
<b>Setting address</b>	Park Lane, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire, PE1 5JW
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<b>Email</b>	
<b>Type of setting</b>	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).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

## Description of the setting

St Thomas More Catholic Nursery opened in 2001 and is overseen by a management committee. It operates from a large room and outdoor enclosed play area next to St Thomas More Catholic Primary School in Peterborough. There is access for those with restricted mobility and additional disabled facilities are available in the school next door.

The nursery caters mainly for the local Catholic community. The setting supports children who have English as an additional language. It also supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The nursery is on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

There are currently 39 children on roll between the ages of three to under five. The nursery is registered to take 26 children at any one time. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting opens five days a week during school term time. Sessions are from 9.00 to 12.00 each weekday morning with extended lunchtime provision from 11.30 to 12.30. Afternoon sessions are each weekday from 12.15 to 15.15

There are six members of staff and almost all have recognised early years qualifications. The setting receives ongoing support from the local authority's Early Years and Childcare Team.

## Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

The provision at St Thomas More Catholic Nursery is satisfactory overall. It meets the needs of early years children adequately. The acting manager has responded well to the support and advice from the local authority and has started to improve provision. The setting's approach to inclusive practices is satisfactory. Recently introduced self-evaluation systems have correctly identified important areas for the setting to work on. This means that there is satisfactory capacity for further improvement.

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

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

- improve the expertise of those supporting the learning and development of children whose first language is not English
- ensure that activities to improve children's communication, language and literacy skills meet their individual needs better, are more interesting and engage them more effectively
- improve the quality of planning and assessment so that children make better progress
- improve management by ensuring there is enough dedicated time to allow improvements to be implemented.

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

Leadership is satisfactory and the acting manager has capably managed recent but ongoing staffing difficulties. However, the impact of staff shortages has resulted in an irregular rate of improvement. Day-to-day running of the club is satisfactory and parents are happy with the nursery. All advice and guidance from external consultants has been welcomed and acted on. The acting manager shows a strong commitment to improving what the club offers. Whilst time for management has been eroded because of staffing shortages, a positive start has been made in establishing regular staff meetings to help improve practice. Self-evaluation procedures are ongoing but it is too early to gauge much impact in provision for learning, although there has been a positive impact on arrangements for children's welfare. It has not always been possible for staff to attend vital pre-booked training courses, although this is now being overcome through better access to a bank of relief staff.

Care and welfare arrangements are satisfactory and appropriate procedures are in place to keep children safe and secure. All necessary procedures for checking staff before they work with children are carried out and staff have a range of relevant First Aid qualifications. Improvement since the previous inspection a year ago is satisfactory. There are better arrangements for snack time, although there is still scope for further improvement in providing a wider range of more filling foods, in order to respond to the needs of children.

Partnerships with parents are satisfactory. The club has tried several approaches to make more meaningful relationships with parents, often with disappointing results. This is due in part because training for staff on how to be more successful when engaging with parents had to be curtailed. There has been some success though. Mother's Day and Father's Day lunches where parents share a meal with staff and children is a popular event. There is scope to forge more informal contacts in order to build better relationships with parents. Links with external agencies are satisfactory. There are contacts with a number of external professionals, but there is some way to go before productive two-way working relationships start to make a visible difference to the quality of children's and families' lives. The process for helping children transfer into school is handled well and there are a number of useful informal contacts. Partnership with the school is less strong in relation to the sharing of expertise and good practice regarding children's learning and development between one setting and another.

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

Children's learning and development are satisfactory. They develop in confidence and make friends easily. Children with little or no spoken English settle well. They feel safe and secure. These factors help children to be included and mostly involved in activities. Relationships between adults and children are kind and caring. Their learning is helped by adults instigating conversations, for example, when the children were playing with bricks and measuring who was biggest. They

take full advantage of playing outside where there are some interesting activities for them such as mixing earth and water, ready for planting seeds. Children enjoy these, although sometimes children distance themselves from activities they do not understand and gravitate to peers who share the same home language. Staff do not always know how best to support children with little spoken English and help them to be more adventurous. Children like cutting up fruit for snack time and do this well, but could do even more things to develop their independence, such as choosing from a wider range of menus, handing out the plates and washing up. They have a sound understanding of health issues, such as needing clean hands when eating. Their sense of their place in the community is satisfactory and they enjoy walking around the school grounds. They develop satisfactorily in self-confidence and are being satisfactorily prepared for the next steps in their education. Procedures for planning activities to meet children's very wide and diverse needs and for assessing how well they are progressing are rightly being reviewed. Staff, using vital external expertise, are still formulating their ideas for how they wish this area of their work to progress. Currently, arrangements are satisfactory although often opportunities for informal assessment during the day are missed. Planning and assessment is not yet refined enough to cater fully for the wide spread of ability and need. There are focussed times when letters and the sounds they make are taught, but these lack enough rigour to ensure everyone receives some input according to their ability. Teaching letter sounds helps children gain some familiarity and understanding. However, it lacks accuracy, with some grammatical and spelling errors and some words used are too complicated. Resources are not engaging or suitable enough to keep everyone fully involved.

## 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>	3
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	3

### Leadership and management

<b>How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?</b>	3
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	3
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	3
How well are children safeguarded?	3

### Quality and standards

<b>How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?</b>	3
<b>How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?</b>	3
How well are children helped to stay safe?	3
How well are children helped to be healthy?	3
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	3
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	3
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	3

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 B: the Childcare Register**

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met

## **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.