

St Thomas' Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number 309787
Inspection date 30/06/2009
Inspector Andrew Clark

Setting address St Thomas' CE Primary School, St Thomas' Road, St Annes,
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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 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' Nursery opened in 1999 and is run by a private company. The setting operates from a purpose built classroom, outdoor area and associated facilities in the grounds of St Thomas Church of England Primary School in St Annes. The setting supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. A maximum of 25 children aged from two to five years may attend in any one session. There are currently 40 children on roll. Of these, 40 children are in the Early Years Foundation Stage, of which 36 are in receipt of funding for nursery education. The sessions run from 09.00 to 15.30 five days a week, term time only. The setting is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

There are seven members of staff. The two managers, and all other staff, hold at least level 3 qualifications.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of provision is outstanding. Inclusion is outstanding because of the high quality of well planned support for all children including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language. This contributes to the outstanding progress all children make towards the early learning goals. The nursery staff rigorously monitor and continue to develop all aspects of provision to the highest standard. They ensure they are kept up to date with current early years practice and are very well trained. As a result, the nursery's capacity for continuous improvement is outstanding.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- build on the outdoor provision to further extend the range and quality of activities for all areas of learning.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The managers and their staff are fully committed to ensuring they meet the highest standards in all their work. Standards of record keeping and organisation are outstanding and underpin the excellent work of the nursery. All policies and procedures are succinct, current, easy to understand and robustly guide the work of the nursery. There are rigorous procedures in place for keeping children safe and ensuring all staff are suitable people to work with children. Self-evaluation is outstanding because all aspects of provision and outcomes are closely monitored and lead to precise areas for improvement. The views of parents and children are fully reflected in planning for the future. Excellent links with local businesses and

services have a significant impact on the quality of improvements, such as the ongoing development of the covered outside area and nature garden. The partnership with parents and other providers is outstanding. For example, letters and other communications are presented in the children's home language, including Russian, Latvian and Asian languages, and in English so all parents are fully informed. The nursery staff make very good use of information and communications to achieve this. Very regular meetings with parents ensure they are kept well informed about their children's progress and how they can contribute to it. Very good relationships with the host school contribute to providing a safe and secure environment and developing planning and assessment procedures.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children are very happy and make outstanding progress towards the early learning goals. The staff accurately assess the level of children's skills when they start in the nursery, supported by the very detailed information parents provide. There are thorough procedures to track children's development throughout their time in the nursery. Staff make outstanding use of this information to plan for their next steps in learning and help them achieve them regardless of their ability.

The classroom is bright and stimulating and all areas of learning are promoted exceptionally well. The environment is carefully planned so children can select their own activities and make decisions about their own learning. Mark making and counting skills are developed in fun ways throughout the day. For example, children 'write' about how they care for the nursery's pets or 'sign out' for their vehicles. They try writing in several different languages in response to stimulating displays and labels. There are excellent role play areas where children 'answer' phones and take messages. Children not only eat healthy snacks but plan their own menus and especially enjoy trying foods from different cultures. They take part in a wide range of physical activities from parachute games to sports day races. They explain how exercises make their heart work faster. The promotion of children's awareness in staying safe is excellent. They took part in an exciting project on germs and hygiene leading some high quality creative work. They wear fluorescent jackets on their many walks and visits in the area and have a good knowledge of road safety. Throughout the nursery, displays and resources help children learn about the diversity in modern life. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities work and play alongside others and staff are very skilful at asking and answering questions to promote their understanding. Children with English as an additional language are fully involved in all aspects of learning because of the staff's close team work with parents and accurate assessment of their progress. Children make excellent use of information and communication technology including programming floor robots to make complex journeys around the classroom and run races.

The children make very good use of the outdoor space for all areas of learning and this is currently undergoing extensive development to further enrich learning, particularly through a large nature and garden area. Staff ensure very good levels of supervision at all times.

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

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	1
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	1

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	1
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	1
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	1
How well are children safeguarded?	1

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	1
How well are children helped to stay safe?	1
How well are children helped to be healthy?	1
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	1
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	1
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	1

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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