



# St Thomas More R C Primary School

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY292989
<b>Inspection date</b>	21 September 2005
<b>Inspector</b>	Jan Leo
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<b>Registered person</b>	Oxford Active Ltd
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Childcare
<b>Type of care</b>	Out of School 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

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.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

St. Thomas More Out of School Club is one of eight out of school and holiday provisions run by Oxford Active. It opened in September 2004 and operates from St. Thomas More School in Kidlington. The group uses the school hall for most of the activities but children also have occasional access to a classroom and the school's outdoor play areas. The club serves children attending the school.

The group opens each weekday during school term times and sessions run from 15.15 until 18.00.

Two members of staff work with the children at each session and one holds a relevant qualifications.

The provision is registered to care for up to 16 children from the age of 3 to under 8 years and children over the age of 8 are also accepted. There are currently 55 children on roll who attend on a full or part time basis.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children follow good practice regarding hygiene to reduce their exposure to harmful germs. For example, they learn to wash their hands before eating and several do so without prompting. Staff wipe tables regularly to reinforce children's understanding of the need for cleanliness, and the toilet and washing facilities contain soap and paper towels to help prevent the spread of infection. Children eat suitable satisfying snacks to sustain them until they have their evening meal, and they choose from a variety of sandwich fillings to suit all tastes. Staff limit children's intake of sugary foods and drinks, in line with the groups healthy eating policy, and water is freely available if children are thirsty. All staff are aware of children's particular health issues to ensure they meet children's needs effectively. One member of staff has a first aid certificate and provisions for treating minor injuries are close by to allow prompt action when children are hurt. Children have no outdoor play until new members are familiar with the rules and expectations regarding behaviour. This restricts children's opportunity to run around in the fresh air after being inside during the school day.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are reasonably safe from injury because the staff assess risks and review procedures to take account of new starters. Children usually receive clear explanations of why things are dangerous, in order to learn to keep themselves safe. As a result, they use equipment sensibly, positioning themselves carefully to avoid knocking into others. The floor is not clutter free, with marbles, shoes, blocks and other equipment left around as children play. The staffing level is minimal, and at times only one member of staff is on duty with the children. Never the less children move around competently at speed, successfully avoiding collisions and falls, and are relatively safe. Children learn how to clear the building in an emergency while they attend school during the day, and staff follow the same evacuation procedure after school to provide consistency for the children. The leader has a sound understanding of child protection procedures and updates her training regularly to ensure she can respond swiftly if she has concerns about a child.

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

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a wide range of relaxing activities such as board games, card games, construction, colouring, and cutting. They choose what to do on arrival and rapidly join with friends to play in small groups. All children move freely from one activity to another at will, and others accept them wherever they want to play. The children show interest in everything around them and young children frequently learn what to do by watching older children. Some laze around on mats and cushions to relax after school, sociably chatting with friends. Staff join in the activities and engage children in conversation to learn more about their day. All children are free to do something or nothing in order to unwind. They form a relaxed, harmonious group. With batteries recharged, several children begin play that is more active. For example, some skip alone while others try French skipping. Boys jump up and down excitedly when winning at table football, and some try kicking a ball around in a small corner. The size and make up of the group results in children having inconsistent access to outdoor play and space for team games like football or cricket.

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

The provision is good.

All children feel welcome and are valued as individuals. They generally receive the attention they need and patiently wait for help if staff are busy. Older children are very caring and consistently check that young children are included fairly. Children learn how to be kind to others and understand the impact of their actions because staff act as good role models and remind children how to behave whenever necessary. Children are considerate, sociable and very well behaved. Parents and carers appreciate the value of the group and are happy that their children make many new friends. They exchange information with staff informally through daily discussion to ensure care arrangements remain appropriate, and they find staff very approachable. Policies and procedures are available for parents and carers to read before their children start at the provision, and thereafter they are available on request. There is no designated notice board area for families to find information easily, and some contact information is missing. This limits the value of the policies and makes it difficult for parents and carers to seek advice if they have concerns about their children's care.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. Children's arrival and departure are well managed and documented to clearly indicate who is present. Staff complete the checking process as part of their suitability checks, and some have appropriate skills and experience to help preserve children's wellbeing and ensure they enjoy their day. Arrangements to cover for senior staff's absence are unacceptable as young and inexperienced staff, with no training or qualifications, are sometimes in charge. The daily routine is relaxed and flexible to suit those who attend and space is organised appropriately to ensure activities are reasonably well spaced out. Insufficient staff at busy sessions compromises children's safety and enjoyment in some measure, because a full range of indoor and outdoor activities

cannot operate safely. This results in children being restricted to indoor play. Staff sometimes work alone at the end of the session when numbers are very low, which goes against national standards, company policy and good practice. Some of the documentation is lacking in detail, which limits the ability of parents and carers to seek outside assistance if they have concerns about their children.

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

Not applicable.

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

There are no complaints to report.

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

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.

## **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):

- increase staffing levels to enable children to benefit from fresh air and outdoor exercise all year round
- ensure there are two members of staff on duty with the children at all times
- improve emergency staffing arrangements to ensure children are cared for by staff with appropriate experience, skills and ability
- improve documentation by adding dates of birth to children's personal information, including contact details in the child protection policy, and providing a complaints procedure which is made easily available to parents and carers.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)