

Thorley Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Rachel Ruth Britten

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Type of setting Childcare on non-domestic premises

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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*.

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Description of the setting

Thorley Day nursery was registered in 2009. The setting is privately owned and managed, operating from a converted house in the Timperley area of Altrincham, Cheshire. Children are cared for within four rooms located on one floor. There is a secure area available for outdoor play. A maximum of 22 children aged up to five years may attend the setting at any one time. The setting is open five days a week from 8am to 6pm all year round with the exception of bank holidays. Children attend from the local community and surrounding areas.

There are currently 35 children on roll aged from 11 months to four years. All of these are within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The setting receives funding for nursery education. The setting is not currently supporting any children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, or children who speak English as an additional language.

The setting employs eight members of staff, including the manager. There are two members of staff who have Early Years Professional Status or Qualified Teacher Status. One further member of staff is qualified to a level 3 in early years and another to level 2. Two of the remaining staff are working towards a recognised early years qualification. The setting receives support from the local authority early years advisory team.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The setting successfully meets the needs of each child, recognising each child as an individual. All staff work together in the small setting and provide well for children's welfare and development, so that their overall progress is good. Outstanding resources are set out in an extremely welcoming and stimulating environment. Children are well safeguarded overall and they enjoy an outstanding healthy lifestyle throughout the nursery day. Partnerships with parents are good, based on verbal and written information sharing, and links are developing with other involved child carers. Self-evaluation tools, early years advice and training are utilised to identify and undertake improvements which build upon the settings already good provision.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- ensure that staffing arrangements are organised to meet the individual needs of all children, in particular, the under twos
- ensure that the key person develops a genuine bond with the child (and the child's parents) and offers a settled, close relationship, meeting the needs of each child in their care

- match the individual observations currently being made against the expectations of the early learning goals, and make summary assessments of progress to identify learning priorities and next steps plans for each individual child
- further develop joint work between parents and key workers to establish clear starting points, assessments and plans for their child's progress. Thereafter, make periodic assessments under the six areas of learning and involve parents in these, so that they can easily see how to continue their child's learning at home
- ensure that records demonstrate the checks made on staff having unsupervised contact, including the date of issue of the enhanced CRB disclosure; and notify all staff that they are expected to disclose anything which may disqualify them from working with children or affect their suitability to do so.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The setting safeguards children and promotes safety well. Staff are vigilant and employ robust registration, emergency evacuation, accident and medication administration procedures. The indoor and outdoor activity areas are regularly checked by staff using suitable risk assessments. These help to promptly highlight and rectify maintenance issues so that the environment and resources are in very good working order. Locked boundary gates and a locked, chained entrance door assure children's safety effectively, yet allow for frequent use of the outdoors and full use of the hallway as a quiet area. Outings are fully risk assessed. All records and documents, except staff contracts and appraisals, are available for use and for inspection, located accessibly in the nursery rooms. Policies and procedures are periodically reviewed and most are given to parents in the welcome brochure. However, complaints records are still based on the former day care standards, and the lost and uncollected child policies are not presently passed on to parents in the welcome pack. A number of staff have undertaken recent intermediate level safeguarding training and they are confident to identify child protection concerns, although they take some time to locate the current safeguarding children unit contact number. All adults able to work unsupervised with children are vetted, but some of the dates of their Criminal Records Disclosures are not recorded and there is no system to ensure that staff notify any matters which may adversely affect their continuing suitability.

Leaders and managers are skilled and able. They communicate their vision for implementing the EYFS with great enthusiasm and commitment. The leader with Early Years Professional Status provides an exemplar of good childcare practice throughout the nursery and supports staff and children very well. All staff meet weekly to plan together, based on children's observed needs and interests, and share new knowledge acquired from training. However, staff-to-child ratios require leaders and managers to be working directly with children at present, and on the day of inspection there were times when there were too few adults to meet the individual needs of every child. For example, a baby is unsettled after arrival and does not receive a soothing cuddle for about fifteen minutes because staff are

busy feeding breakfasts and changing nappies. Each child has a key worker and a second key worker, so that there is almost always a significant adult present to work with the child and talk with their parents and carers. In addition, all staff contribute observation notes to the key worker about individual children when a significant piece of progress is seen. However, children and staff move freely around the setting, exploring resources and covering one another's absences. While this practice is good for assisting children's confidence in the setting and with adults generally, children's progress is not outstanding because the deep, genuine and nurturing bond between key worker and child is not developed to the maximum. This means that key workers have less detailed knowledge of individual children's developmental stage and spend less time directly alongside them, providing input to really assure the most progress.

Managers work closely with early years advisors and have used the Ofsted self-evaluation form to provide detailed information about how the setting operates. Leaders have implemented change and improvements which significantly benefit the outcomes for children. They have created a high quality, stimulating and welcoming learning environment where children can easily select and use a wealth of resources in a variety of ways to support learning under the six areas. They also provide good opportunities for choice, and increasing independence and participation throughout the routines of the day. Significant improvements in food and drink and outdoor opportunities have been provided. As a result, children's health and the resources are outstanding. However, systems for the assessment of individual children's progress under the six areas of learning are still underdeveloped and do not provide key workers or parents with a clear enough picture of children's individual progress over periods of time and what their next steps need to be.

The setting is highly committed to partnership with parents. Information about the setting and children's activities is current and attractively displayed in the entrance and in base rooms. Planning, photos, daily report sheets and observation notes in the child's individual record book are readily available, and key workers work hard to engage with parents informatively and sensitively about their child. Individual learning records and children's starting points are established with parental contribution of routine information, but an initial developmental plan is not made jointly with parents to clearly establish shared aims for the individual child's progress from the outset. Parents indicate high levels of satisfaction with the setting and their constructive feedback and ideas given through annual questionnaires are acted upon. Children's transition to school is facilitated and reception teachers visit the setting to liaise. The principle of consistent and complementary childcare through partnership working is understood, although no children are currently attending this provision and other childcare concurrently. In addition, no children are currently receiving specialist input relating to their particular identified need.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

Adults support each child's learning and development well, using the wealth of excellent resources and varied space. Children have a simple routine to their day and can choose to use resources in a variety of ways, both indoors and out. For example, 'communication friendly spaces' are comfortable corners where children can talk or rest. Tables and chairs are of suitable height, and lights may be dimmed to make babies' sleep areas more conducive. Comfortable chairs, sofas and rugs enable staff and children to cuddle, play alongside one another, and set out their activities. Personal, social and emotional development are prioritised through plenty of opportunities to talk to the group and take part in sociable meal times. Communication, language and literacy are fostered alongside this, through pictures and word labels, prompting children about hand washing or showing what objects are inside the baskets. Older children self-register, finding and attaching their name card to the chart and children can proudly display their art work and creations around the setting for all to see. They send postcards to the setting from their holidays and these provide an ongoing reference for discussion and consolidating memories about where they have been. Mark making is available in all rooms and outdoors, in age-appropriate ways, from easels to office sundries, play dough and sand. Clear glass doors, often propped open, shared toilet facilities and outdoor play areas all help children to know the setting layout and move around confidently. They can stay in touch with siblings and friends of varying ages and make comfortable transfers to the next room at their own pace.

Children's interests are followed in the activity planning and staff make time to listen to children's experiences outside the setting, so that all their learning can be built upon and consolidated. For example, a child's particular interest in horses was built upon with project work, and articles were brought in to develop children's knowledge of their use and care. Similarly, children's knowledge and understanding of the natural world and local community are being fostered through regular walking trips, for example, to the post box or to feed the donkeys. Children learn to observe what is around them, using senses of sight, hearing and smell. They behave safely as they cross with the lollipop man and watch where they are walking. Their concept of time and seasons is developing as they celebrate festivals such as Chinese New Year, and as they tend and harvest vegetables in the garden plot. Their knowledge of natural life cycles is developed as they observe caterpillars, cocoons and butterflies in the garden; they enjoy acting this out, using pieces of fabric as props. Natural, domestic and heuristic toys are used well. For example, babies play with the shiny stainless steel kitchen objects and choose objects to explore from accessible treasure baskets. Pre-school children have access to shells and various fabrics and materials which they can use for problem solving or creative activities. Problem solving, numeracy, and dispute resolution skills are developed as staff assist children in working out how to keep a tall tower standing, how to measure and pour drinks, or help children to find enough ride-on and push-along toys for everyone who wants one.

Children's health is extremely well provided for. They are highly competent and independent in taking care of their personal hygiene because staff prioritise

teaching them to use all the available provision for nose blowing, hand washing and drying and clothes protection. Children help to serve their own meals and drinks and are encouraged to be independent and have good manners and social skills from an early age. For example, babies are drinking from Doidy cups, rather than bottles or cups. They are learning how to peel half a banana and wipe their faces and hands afterwards. Pre-school children lay the table and pass the serving dishes to one another. They love to be active outside for long periods in the fresh air, and help to dry off the wet climbing and balancing equipment before they use it. They are active and creative, for example, dancing to rock and roll music or playing action games and songs. Children behave well and are eager to participate, cooperate, concentrate and try new things. For example, two- and three-year-olds confidently seek adult support to use the outdoor equipment, while pre-school children are intrigued with the computer software which allows them to see their reflection and make multiple images of one another. As a result, children's skills for the future are developing well. However, there are a few babies and one or two almost two-year-olds who are less well engaged on the day of inspection and are sometimes wandering between rooms without finding sufficient support or direction.

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

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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