

Thorns Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY243072
Inspection date	04/02/2010
Inspector	Fiona Robinson

Setting address	Thorns Road, Brierley Hill, West Midlands, DY5 2JY
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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*.

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.

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Description of the setting

Thorns Pre School opened in 1989 and operates from a self contained mobile building within the ground of Thorns Primary School, in Brierley Hill, West Midlands. There is ramped disability access to the building. A maximum of 18 children may attend the pre school at any one time. The pre school is open each weekday from 8.45am to 11.15am and 12:30pm to 3.00pm during school term times. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area and they are able to use the computer suite within the school. There are currently 21 children aged from two to five years on roll, all of whom receive funding for nursery education. Children who attend come from the local community. The group supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The group employs five staff. Four staff, including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications and another member of staff is working towards this. They receive the support of a teacher/mentor from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP).

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

The staff team are very effective at promoting the children's welfare and work hard to ensure they are fully included in activities. Partnerships with parents and the host school are outstanding and information is shared very effectively. The pre school offers an exciting and stimulating environment where children are keen to learn. The manager and staff have a very clear understanding of the setting's strengths and areas for improvement and there is an outstanding record of continued improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- developing the forest school provision in the outdoor area of learning.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff have an excellent knowledge of safeguarding procedures and work hard to keep children safe and secure. Comprehensive policies and procedures are fully implemented and there are robust systems in place for staff recruitment and vetting. The setting is kept very secure and there are appropriate arrival and departure routines for parents to follow when collecting the children. Risk assessments are carried out regularly and fully documented to ensure risks are

minimised. Children are supervised indoors and outdoors to ensure their safety and fire evacuation procedures are practised regularly.

Partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. Staff are open and friendly and feedback from parents is very positive. They say they are kept fully informed of their children's achievements and progress at a termly meeting with staff. They write comments on the review sheet and the 'Next steps' section is completed together by the key worker and the parents. Staff also value the children's views and the 'Child's voice' section on the termly review sheet which provides an opportunity for the child to tell staff what they have enjoyed doing the most. Comprehensive newsletters, the notice board and informal discussions keep parents well informed of topics, workshops and special events. The setting also benefits from excellent links with the host school and the use of the outdoor environment and the playground. There are also outstanding links with multi agencies concerning children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The pre-school is very well led and managed. Staff meet together regularly and demonstrate a shared commitment to the development of excellent practices. They clearly identify what works well and identify areas for improvement. Excellent progress has been made in addressing the recommendations of the previous inspection. In particular, staff build challenge into activities and children's progress is monitored carefully in their learning journeys. Staff actively promote equality and diversity and ensure all children are fully integrated in activities. Effective use is made of a wide range of resources and children achieve very well. There is rigorous monitoring of activities and target setting is challenging. Good self evaluation procedures are in place and staff value the views of parents expressed in questionnaires. Staff appraisals are carried out annually and they regularly access relevant training to improve their practice. Staff are developing the forest school provision in the outdoor environment.

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

Children have excellent opportunities to learn. Activities are very well planned and children achieve very well across all areas of learning. They enjoy learning through topics such as 'Winter Wonderland'. They access a wide range of resources outdoors and indoors to support their learning.

They are keen to experience the wide range of activities offered to them. They enjoy making a snow angel and shaping a snowman out of snow. They discover that some children have bigger feet than others as they make footprints in the snow. They learn how water changes into ice and create frosty leaf patterns on black paper. They show an interest in growing their own herbs from seed and like building towers and balance trails. They listen well to stories such as 'We're Going on a Bear Hunt' and like joining in with the actions. Most can count up to 10 and beyond and they practise their counting skills as they sing 'Five Little Men in a Flying Saucer'. They can write their own names and enjoy practising their letters in foam, sand and cornflour. Very good progress is made with linking sounds and letters and children are encouraged to look at books at home and at the pre-

school.

Children's behaviour is outstanding because adults have high expectations and are excellent role models. They cooperate very well when they play parachute games. Children's health is promoted very well. They are helped to develop a very positive understanding of healthy foods and taking exercise. Their independent skills are developed well as they help to prepare their own snacks and pour their own drinks. They enjoy making bread and shaping the dough into a hedgehog shape. They feel very safe and secure because staff ensure that the environment is kept very safe and positive. Children learn how to use equipment safely as they create collage pictures. They also benefit from talks from the fire service, the police and the builders on how to keep safe.

Children with special educational needs/and or disabilities are sensitively supported by staff. They have an excellent understanding of their individual needs. Festivals such as Diwali, Christmas and the Chinese New Year bring enrichment to the children's experiences. Overall, they are very well prepared for their next stage of learning in this stimulating, inclusive setting.

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?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

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

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	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	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
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The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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