

# Thorpe le Soken Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number** 203779  
**Inspection date** 13/05/2010  
**Inspector** Gillian Walley

**Setting address** Little Saints House, Rolph School Grounds, High Street,  
Thorpe-le-Soken, Essex, CO16 0DY  
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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

Thorpe le Soken Pre-school is committee run by the Trustees of Thorpe le Soken Pre-school. It opened in 1971 and operates from a demountable classroom. It is situated within the grounds of the local primary school. A maximum of 22 children may attend at any one time. The pre-school is open from 8:50am to 11:50am and from 12:00pm to 3:00pm on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays and from 8:50am to 11:50am on Fridays. All children share an enclosed outdoor play area. The pre-school works closely with the adjoining primary school.

There are currently 52 children aged from two years to under five years on roll many of whom receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local and surrounding areas. The pre-school is able to support children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who are learning English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs six staff. Five of the staff, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications and one member of staff is working towards a qualification.

## The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Thorpe-le-Soken Pre-school is an effective setting where all children make good progress because the manager and her staff plan exciting activities for them which meet their needs well and move them on in their learning. The pre-school is inclusive and supports children with special educational needs so that they make as much progress as other children. The new manager has established good partnerships with the adjoining primary school and other pre-schools. She has worked quickly with her team to evaluate the pre-school and they have identified and prioritised many improvements in an action plan, and as a result the pre-school's capacity to continuously improve is good.

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

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

- further develop the system for tracking children's progress so that the manager can compare the progress of different groups in different areas of learning
- set and review targets for children with special educational needs to further ensure they are well supported and make good progress

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

The pre-school is well led and runs very smoothly. The new manager and her deputy are a strong team and all the staff meet regularly to reflect on what is going well and what could be improved. This excellent self-evaluation is a continuous process based on the staff's good understanding of what best meets their children's needs and their outstanding capacity to drive improvement. For example, they have recently changed snack time and now invite children to have their fruit when they wish to. The staff now use this time to encourage the children to socialise and to talk about the fruit, colours and numbers. It also helps the children to become more independent, for example to cut their own fruit and pour drinks for one another. The lunchtime session has also been changed so that adults and children eat sociably together. The staff update their training frequently in areas which will help them to develop the activities they provide for the children and their learning, for example they have recently had training in teaching children about letters and sounds and in helping them to retell familiar stories. They are also improving ways they can encourage parents to support their children's learning at home.

The staff understand how to keep the children safe and are very vigilant. Doors and gates are kept locked, the outdoor area is secure and visitors are asked to sign in. Before each session the entire premises is checked so that the manager knows there are no hazards which might cause an accident, and there are additional risk assessments, for example for times when the children are going out of the school grounds. New staff are vetted appropriately and the children practise fire drills regularly so that they know what to do in an emergency. If a child is unwell, needs to be given medicine or has an accident two adults take responsibility and the parents receive a copy of the information so that they know what has happened. If parents are delayed and need another person to collect their child there is a secure password system in place. The manager and her team work closely with other specialist agencies to provide support for children who find learning more difficult so that they make good progress and their parents are reassured. However these children do not have individual plans showing their specific targets which would enable their key workers to monitor their progress more carefully.

The pre-school staff work closely with parents who have every confidence in the new manager and her team to provide their children with good opportunities to learn and develop in a happy and safe environment. They feel involved because they can talk freely to the staff whenever they wish to as well as during open afternoons, and they have a suggestions box. They feel their children make good progress, particularly with their social skills, knowing their sounds and developing early writing skills, because the staff know them and assess their learning so well. Parents receive regular newsletters and can find useful information on their notice board. They also receive termly reports about their children's progress and can always look at their records. They can tell the staff what the children have achieved at home so that the staff can build on this during the sessions.

There are good links with the schools which the children move to, particularly the

adjoining school, the children make visits and their new teachers visit them at the pre-school. This helps them to settle easily when they start primary school.

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

The children enjoy attending the pre-school because there are so many exciting activities for them, both in the classroom and the outside area. They particularly enjoy painting and collages, listening to stories, cooking and gardening. The children are growing many vegetables, they can talk about what is helping the plants to grow well and look forward to cooking and tasting the vegetables when they have grown them. They learn about living things, for example by watching chicks hatch or caterpillars turn into butterflies. The children develop their imagination by dressing up and they use puzzles to improve their understanding of numbers. They play musical instruments and can talk about the names of these and changes in the volume. They enjoy looking at books and also taking books home to look at with their parents. They explore textures by using play dough and through "messy play" and outside they make good progress in their physical development by climbing and riding vehicles. They develop their fine motor skills by learning to do up buttons and threading cotton reels on laces.

The children behave exceptionally well and are very polite because the adults praise and encourage them, and explain why good behaviour is important. For example, the children know that they do not run in the classroom because they might trip and hurt themselves or someone else. The children enjoy receiving stickers when they have been particularly helpful. The children are polite and they play well together, they share toys well and concentrate on their activities for long periods. The adults take very good care of the children so that they feel safe and develop their confidence. They ask the children questions to encourage them to explain their learning and to solve problems. They look for opportunities to extend children's understanding, for example by singing songs about the days of the week and the months of the year. They observe the children closely and keep very good records including photos. They also listen to the children when they say what they would like to find out about. They use this information well to plan activities and short teaching sessions which will move the children on to the next stage in their learning. They also use the information to track accurately and to compare each child's progress in different areas of learning, although they do not compare the progress of different groups of children or compare progress in different areas of learning. This would enable the manager to evaluate the provision more effectively and be sure it met the needs of all the children well.

The children have a strong sense of responsibility because they show concern for one another. They learn about people who have different customs by talking about special festivals which gives them an excellent appreciation of equality and diversity. For example, at Chinese New Year they tasted rice and noodles, they made a dragon, they made a Chinese restaurant in their role play area and a parent visited to show the children some Chinese clothes. The children understand that some children are not as privileged as themselves because they sponsor two children in Benin, and they talk about where in the world this country is. One

member of staff has responsibility for looking for ways to increase the children's understanding of how different people live.

The children understand how to avoid infection because they know when and why they wash their hands. They understand how to lead a healthy lifestyle because they eat healthy snacks and they grow and talk about a range of vegetables. They take plenty of exercise, making good use of the school field. They enjoy visiting local places such as the park, the supermarket and the local church.

## 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

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

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

<b>How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?</b>	2
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	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
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

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	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	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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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