



Thurgoland Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	302870
Inspection date	23 February 2006
Inspector	Susan Kathleen Wormald
Setting Address	The Kids Centre, Halifax Road, Thurgoland, Sheffield, South Yorkshire, S35 7AL
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Registered person	Thurgoland Pre School
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day 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.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Thurgoland Pre-School opened in their current premises in September 2000. It operates from a single storey portacabin located within the grounds of Thurgoland Infant and Junior School. The Pre-School serves families from both the local area and the wider community.

Thurgoland Pre-School is registered for 26 children from 2 years to 5 years old. There are currently 55 children from 2 to 5 years old on-roll. This includes 25 children

who receive nursery education funding.

The setting supports several children with special needs. There are currently no children attending who speak English as an additional language.

The group is open from 09.00 until 15.30 for five days per week during school term-time, and children attend for a variety of sessions.

There are seven staff working with the children, five of whom have early years qualifications and two of whom are working towards these. The setting receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership, and also the Communication and Interaction Team based in Barnsley.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children learn the importance of good hygiene practice through daily routines. For example, children know they wash their hands after painting and before eating. Staff follow appropriate procedures to maintain suitable standards of hygiene, such as regularly wiping work surfaces and checking that the toilets are clean. They work cooperatively with parents to prevent the spread of infection by sharing the sickness policy and information about infectious diseases. All staff have current first aid certificates, which ensures that there is always someone on hand to deal with minor accidents and emergencies.

Children enjoy some healthy snacks such as fruit. However, they are not helped to understand why some foods are healthy and others are not and there are limited learning opportunities that promote an understanding of healthy eating.

Children are active and enjoy daily outdoor experiences. They are able to access the outdoor area throughout the day and this contributes to their good health. Children enjoy walks around the local area and outings, such as to Chatsworth farm. Older children successfully develop coordination and control in their movements as they manoeuvre bikes around the playground. They are developing skill in using a wide range of small equipment and tools. For example, children use scissors, glue-spreaders and threading tools to create patterns competently. Their hand-eye coordination skills improve through activities, such as planting seeds, painting, drawing and writing.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in secure, welcoming premises where staff generally follow some effective procedures, such as closely monitoring access to the building. Children are learning to keep themselves safe as staff teach them how to avoid injury. For example, wearing helmets when they ride bikes outside. Staff are

deployed well to ensure that children are adequately supervised at all times. They carry out daily checks and have a risk assessment procedure in place. However, this is not sufficient to make sure that children are fully protected as there is no system in place to record visitors.

Children enjoy a wide variety of good quality toys and play materials. Resources are well-organised and easily accessible enabling children to use them safely and to make independent choices about their play.

Staff generally have a good understanding of their responsibilities for protecting children and both the manager and deputy have attended recent child protection training. This contributes to safeguarding children's welfare. However, the child protection policy is not comprehensive, for example, there are no reference to procedures to follow if there are child protection issues regarding staff.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and secure and enjoy their time in the nursery. They are keen to participate and select activities independently. They make good progress in all areas of development because staff are knowledgeable and understand that children learn best when they are interested and engaged. Children take part purposefully in solitary play or play cooperatively with their friends, reassured by the presence of familiar staff who take time to get to know them and build trusting relationships. Children receive good levels of support from staff who observe children and know when to involve themselves in children's play and when to allow them freedom to explore at their own pace.

Children are able to access a wide variety of activities, which staff thoughtfully plan and prepare and which encourage them to develop skills and have fun. Children aged two to five enjoy a wide range of creative activities. They explore paint, sand and water freely and are absorbed in a variety of role play. They confidently make choices about their play, selecting resources independently from the interesting and varied range available. Children are developing very good communication skills as staff actively listen and skilfully involve children in conversations asking questions that extend their experiences and learning.

Nursery education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. This ensures that children progress well in all areas of development. Children are motivated to learn through well-planned experiences and activities which sustain their interest. They are learning to concentrate and have uninterrupted periods of time to explore their ideas and build on their learning. For example, they have free access to design and making tools and materials, which means that they find out what they can do with the resources and use them to develop their own ideas. Children's behaviour is very good and reflects the high expectations of staff and their use of effective strategies. Children play well together planning their own activities, such as building a train track, helping and supporting one another in its construction.

Children are confident speakers and good listeners as a result of staff's consistent interest and engagement in their play and conversation. They use language for a variety of purposes. They initiate conversations with each other and staff, they make their needs known verbally and recall past events. There are meaningful opportunities to practice writing for a purpose, such as when they write their name on an envelope. Children's imagination is successfully stimulated as they act out real and imaginary experiences with role play and small world resources. They are developing good counting skills and are introduced to number operations in focused activities. However, some opportunities are missed for them to attempt simple number problems in real situations. They are encouraged to predict and think for themselves during a well-planned activity planting seeds where they learn how plants grow.

Staff find out as much as they can about children's interests from parents and by carefully observing children when they play. They make good use of this information to monitor children's progress to plan the next steps in their learning and further challenge. Varied teaching methods are used, which include a good balance of focused and freely chosen activities. Staff have a secure knowledge of the early learning goals and use this to plan a relevant curriculum which includes all six areas of learning. They have a clear understanding of how children develop as they build on what they know and consolidate their learning. Staff use open-ended questions effectively for example "What do you think happens if?" This encourages children to think for themselves and to use their imagination.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children have a strong sense of belonging and feel at ease in the nursery environment, fetching their own coats, choosing their own resources and making independent decisions about their play. Children's individual needs are met effectively as staff know the children well. Staff work closely with parents, sharing information and ensuring that children's particular needs are met. All children are able to participate fully because activities are adapted to meet their needs. Staff are proactive in ensuring that children with special needs and their parents have appropriate support and advice from relevant professionals.

Children know they are valued as staff listen attentively to what they say and ask questions about their experiences and interests. Children confidently share information about themselves and listen with interest when others share their news. Staff plan opportunities for children to be together in group times when for example, children are encouraged to talk about their favourite colours. Staff help children to feel good about themselves by showing them they value their attempts and achievements, such as when they help to clear away.

Children's behaviour is good and reflects the staff's high expectations. Staff make good use of effective strategies, such as a timer to demonstrate clearly how much time children have to finish their play. Children play harmoniously together, sharing and taking turns and working cooperatively.

Partnership with parents is good. Parents confidently approach staff and are very pleased with the progress their children are making. Staff keep parents very well informed about what their children are doing through good quality information. This includes newsletters, daily discussions and information displayed regarding planning. Parents also receive a fortnightly progress report, which includes a section "What to do at home" encouraging their involvement in their child's learning. Parents have opportunities such as open days for fuller discussion and parents and carers are encouraged to participate in meaningful ways such as working with the children in the nursery.

The children's spiritual, moral and cultural development is fostered.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children's care and learning needs are met through generally effective organisation of the nursery. There are adequate recruitment and vetting procedures in place to ensure that children are protected and are cared for by staff who are suitable to do so. However, roles and responsibilities of managers regarding the employment of staff are not always explicit and there are no clear procedures for informing Ofsted of changes. There is a suitable collection of policies and procedures in place covering the required areas. These are accessible to parents who also receive information regarding some policies in an information booklet. This ensures that parents are kept informed about the childcare.

Staff use their good knowledge and understanding of child development to create a child friendly environment. This is organised flexibly and creatively so that children can choose to access areas and resources offering different activities to extend their play and develop their independence. Staff are deployed well so children receive appropriate adult attention. Adults provide good levels of support enabling all children to participate in the activities. Good use is being made of the Birth to three framework to improve the outcomes for children and there are plans in place to further develop this area of the provision.

Leadership and management of the provision is good. There is a clear sense of purpose and direction. Clear aims for children's learning are shared with staff and work well in practice. Staff are supported and encouraged to develop their knowledge and understanding through regular meetings and good access to further training. The manager acts as a good role model as she frequently works alongside staff. She carries out regular appraisals, reviews work practice and identifies areas for development. There are effective arrangements to monitor and evaluate children's progress, identify gaps in their learning and act on these findings. There is a strong commitment in promoting an inclusive environment ensuring that children's individual needs are met well and enabling all children to take an active part in the setting.

Overall the provision meets the needs of the children who attend.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the previous inspection clear procedures have been put in place to record staff's attendance. This contributes to keeping children safe and meeting their needs. Visitors attendance is not recorded accurately although visitors are closely supervised. Managers have agreed that effective procedures will be put in place immediately.

The child protection and complaints policy are now included in the information booklet given to all new parents and the Ofsted poster giving details of how to contact Ofsted is clearly displayed. This ensures that parents are informed about the setting and the role of the regulator.

Staff have considered how to make more creative use of outdoor space. All children have free access to the outdoor area throughout the day. Staff plan activities for outside and children have the use of a wide range of resources.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since 1 April 2004.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made to parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

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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):

- ensure that there are clear procedures in place for recording when visitors are present and for informing Ofsted of changes
- ensure that there are robust procedures in place for recruiting staff.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- further develop the use of daily routines such as snack time to introduce children to simple number problems.

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