



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 145822

DfES Number: 514400

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	23/11/2004
Inspector Name	Charlotte Jenkin

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Sessional Day Care
Setting Name	St Thomas Pre School
Setting Address	St. Thomas Church Hall York Buildings Trowbridge Wiltshire BA14 8PT

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	The Committee of St Thomas Pre School
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ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name	St Thomas Pre School
Address	St Thomas Pre School St Thomas Church Hall York Buildings Trowbridge, Wiltshire BA14 8PT

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality and standard of day care in accordance with the National Standards for Under Eights Day Care and Childminding; and that the nursery education for funded three and four year old children is of an acceptable quality. Inspection of nursery education also identifies strengths and weaknesses so that providers can improve the quality of educational provision and help children to achieve the early learning goals (elgs) by the end of the Foundation Stage. This inspection report must be made available to all parents.

If the setting has been inspected previously, an action plan will have been drawn up to tackle issues identified. This inspection, therefore, must also assess what progress has been made in the implementation of this plan.

Information about the setting

St Thomas's Pre-school is a long established committee run group held in the church hall of St Thomas's Church in the centre of Trowbridge. The group has been open for 35 years. It meets on all mornings except Mondays from 09:15 to 11:45, Friday afternoons 12:15 to 14:45 and Tuesday and Thursday afternoons 12:45 to 14:45.

The group accepts funding for three- and four-year-olds and there are currently 15 funded three-year-olds on roll. They support children with special educational needs and for whom English is an additional language.

There are 4 staff working in the group, all of whom have Early Years qualifications.

The group has use of a large main hall and a grassed area outside the hall for supervised outdoor play.

How good is the Day Care?

St Thomas Pre-school provides good quality care. Staff create a welcoming and child friendly environment for parents and children. Space is well organised into clear learning areas and children are confident in visiting these and exploring the activities on offer. Effective staff deployment means children are supported during activities and are well cared for. There is a good range of toys and equipment that is suitable for all stages of development.

Staff demonstrate a commitment to prioritising children's safety daily, although there are no clear procedures for taking children on outings. All accident and medication procedures and records are in place, although staff do not consistently promote suitable hygiene practices with the children. There are good arrangements to ensure staff are aware of children's dietary needs and these are well catered for. Snacks offered to the children are healthy. Staff have a good knowledge of child protection issues and these duties are shared with parents.

Staff plan a good balance of structured and free play activities that meet the needs of the children attending and cover most areas of learning. They know and respect children's individuality within the group and ensure all children can participate fully in the routines and activities. Staff support children with special educational needs and liaise with parents regarding their care and gain advice in supporting their development appropriately. Staff are very good role models for children and are calm and consistent in their approach to managing children's behaviour.

Staff gain detailed information from parents regarding the care of their children and respect their wishes fully. They receive detailed information regarding the groups policies, routines and curriculum implemented and have regular informal and formal opportunities to discuss their child's progress and view their records. All policies in the group are suitable, in order, and available for inspection.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last inspection the pre-school agreed to ensure there were procedures in place for if a child became lost or was uncollected, for if an allegation of abuse was made against a staff member and to include Ofsted's details on the complaints policy. They also agreed to gain written consent from parents for seeking emergency medical advice and ensure staff induction includes health and safety issues.

The group has reviewed all its policies and procedures and now include one for lost children, uncollected children and for if an allegation of abuse is made against a staff member. All staff have contributed to these and are aware of the content and they have been made available to parents. Ofsted's details are now included on the complaints policy and this is available to parents on the notice board. Registration forms now contain consent for seeking emergency medical treatment and parents know what will happen to their child in the event of an emergency. The long established staff team are all aware of health and safety issues, although a new induction procedure has been produced for if there are any staff changes in the future. The changes implemented have improved the welfare and safety of the children at the setting.

What is being done well?

- Staff plan a good balance of structured and free play activities that cover the areas of development and meet the needs of the children attending. Staff interact very well with the children and show great interest in what they say and do. Children, therefore, relate very well to staff and peers and are engaged in their play.
- Staff know and respect children's individuality within the group. They support children in visiting areas they are less confident in and tailor activities to ensure all children can participate in the pre-school routine fully.
- Staff use age appropriate methods for managing children's behaviour. They are very good role models for children and are respectful to one another and the children attending. They are calm and consistent in their approach and children's behaviour is very good.

- Staff gain detailed information from parents regarding the care of their children and respect their wishes fully. They receive detailed information regarding the groups policies, routines and curriculum implemented and have regular informal and formal opportunities to discuss their child's progress and view their records.

What needs to be improved?

- the procedures for taking children on outings to ensure their safety
- the promotion of suitable hygiene practices with the children.

PREVIOUS COMPLAINTS (This section applies only to inspections carried out from September 2004. The complaint record relates to complaints from the last inspection or 1st April 2004 whichever is later.)

There are no complaints to report.

Outcome of the inspection

Good

CONDITIONS OF REGISTRATION

All registered persons must comply with all conditions of registration included on his/her certificate of registration.

As a result of this inspection conditions of registration have been imposed / varied / removed and a new certificate of registration will be issued.

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE NEXT?

The Registered Person should have regard to the following recommendations by the time of the next inspection

Std	Recommendation
6	Ensure there is a clear procedure in place for taking children on outings.
7	Ensure staff promote suitable hygiene practices with the children.

INSPECTION OF THE NURSERY EDUCATION PROVISION FOR FUNDED THREE AND FOUR YEAR OLDS.

How effective is the nursery education?

St Thomas Pre-school is a good quality provision where children make very good progress towards the early learning goal in personal, social and emotional development and make generally good progress towards the early learning goals in all other areas of learning.

Teaching is generally good. Staff demonstrate a generally good knowledge of the early learning goals through their good interaction with the children during activities and questioning of them to encourage their thinking. Staff plan a generally good balance of activities that challenge children well and short term plans show rotation of resources and children's participation. Focus activities have clear learning outcomes and staff have a very good knowledge of children's progress. Support for children with English as an additional language is very good, and for children with special needs is generally good. Children do not develop free expression in creative activities or develop independence in initiating their own play.

Leadership and management is generally good. The committee supports staff generally well and enables them to access good training and development opportunities. The well established staff team communicate well, work closely as a team and share all responsibilities of the group. Appraisals are well used and enable staff to reflect on their practice and develop confidence in identifying areas of strength and areas for future training. Evaluations are clear and well used. Long term plans are monitored, although this does not successfully identify gaps in the curriculum.

Partnership with parents is very good. Parents receive good quality information regarding the curriculum implemented, have easy access to activity plans and are kept up to date with the current theme for learning. Parents have both informal and formal opportunities to discuss their child's progress with staff, to view their records and contribute to or comment on them. Parents are involved with their child's learning.

What is being done well?

- Children in the pre-school are confident and happy and keen to explore the activities on offer. They form good relationships with staff and peers and play well together co-operatively.
- Staff plan a generally good balance of activities that challenge children well, engage their interests and help them make good progress in all areas of learning.
- Staff have a very good knowledge of children's progress with respect to the stepping stones. Observations of children at play are recorded, they show what children know, understand and can do and are clearly linked to the

stepping stones. Examples of children's work and achievements are kept and used to create a portfolio of their progress throughout their time at pre-school. These are used to inform future planning and help children move on to the next stage in their learning.

- Parents are involved in their children's learning. A successful parents rota enables them to see their child's play and learning in progress. Parents also receive ideas for activities to do with their child and support their development at home.
- Evaluations of activities are very clear in determining whether children achieved the learning outcomes of activities, link to assessments of children's progress and are used to assist with future planning.

What needs to be improved?

- children's free expression in creative development
- the monitoring of long term plans to ensure equal attention is given to all six areas of learning
- the organisation of the learning environment to encourage children's independence in selecting and using activities and resources and initiating their own play and learning.

What has improved since the last inspection?

St Thomas Pre-school has made generally good progress since the last inspection.

At the last inspection the pre-school agreed to improve learning for maths by introducing more activities for the children to record numbers.

Children show interest in numbers and recognise numerals, for example when playing on the computer. Staff have given children some opportunities to record number through activities and they are developing skills in this area. Routine activities and the learning environment do not regularly offer children opportunities to see numbers and link them to counting, prior to recording them.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children in the pre-school are confident and happy and keen to explore the activities on offer. They form good relationships with staff and peers and play well together co-operatively. They are confident speaking in a familiar group and in initiating interactions with peers, staff and unfamiliar adults. Children develop good turn taking and sharing skills and develop an awareness of right and wrong. They show concern for others and behaviour is very good.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Children use talk with confidence when talking during activities and about past events. They use a widening range of vocabulary, gestures and expression in their voices to clarify their meaning to others. Children attempt to write their names on their work and more able children write this independently. Children begin to recognise familiar words, for example names. Children have limited opportunities to engage in rhyming activities and to attempt to use writing for different purposes.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children show interest in numbers, for example when investigating tills and calculators. Children count up to 4 objects with confidence and more able children recognise some numerals, for example when playing computer games. Children use language to describe size, shape and position. They order objects according to length and copy simple patterns. Children have limited opportunities to re-enforce the concept of counting, linking counting to numbers and in comparing numbers.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

Children investigate objects such as magnets, and comment on what they see, for example 'it's a magnet and it sticks to metal'. They observe change over time when growing plants and ask questions when exploring objects. Children show interest in construction materials and build and balance. They develop interest in ICT. Children have limited opportunities to select materials and resources and build and join, and routine activities are not utilised to develop children's sense of time.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children move freely and with confidence around the room and show good awareness of themselves and others. They move in a range of ways, for example crawling, running and jumping and have good opportunities to develop these skills, for example using obstacle courses. Children show increasing control using writing implements and tools. Children have limited opportunities to develop awareness of healthy practices with respect to hygiene and healthy eating.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Generally Good
Children use their senses well to describe what they see and feel, for example 'the orange is sticky'. Children enjoy singing and joining in action rhymes and explore the sounds musical instruments make. They imitate adults well and use available props to support their play. Children have limited opportunities to develop free expression through selecting materials and resources of their choice to communicate their own ideas through painting, drawing, modelling and collage activities.	
Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately.	

OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable and is of good quality overall. Children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals. The next inspection will take place in three to four years time.

WHAT THE SETTING NEEDS TO DO NEXT: THE KEY ISSUES

- monitor long term plans to ensure equal attention is given to all six areas of learning
- ensure the organisation of the learning environment develops children's independence in selecting and using activities and resources, so they can initiate their own play and learning, especially in creative development so children can freely express themselves and their own ideas, using materials of their own choice.

The provider must draw up an action plan within 40 working days of receipt of this report showing how the key issues detailed above will be addressed. The action plan must be made available to all parents and to the Local Authority if required. An evaluation of the action taken will form part of the next inspection of funded nursery education.

SUMMARY OF NATIONAL STANDARDS

STANDARD 1 - SUITABLE PERSON

Adults providing day care, looking after children or having unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.

STANDARD 2 - ORGANISATION

The registered person meets required adult: child ratios, ensures that training and qualifications requirements are met and organises space and resources to meet the children's needs effectively.

STANDARD 3 - CARE, LEARNING AND PLAY

The registered person meets children's individual needs and promotes their welfare. They plan and provide activities and play opportunities to develop children's emotional, physical, social and intellectual capabilities.

STANDARD 4 - PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

The premises are safe, secure and suitable for their purpose. They provide adequate space in an appropriate location, are welcoming to children and offer access to the necessary facilities for a range of activities which promote their development.

STANDARD 5 - EQUIPMENT

Furniture, equipment and toys are provided which are appropriate for their purpose and help to create an accessible and stimulating environment. They are of suitable design and condition, well maintained and conform to safety standards.

STANDARD 6 - SAFETY

The registered person takes positive steps to promote safety within the setting and on outings and ensures proper precautions are taken to prevent accidents.

STANDARD 7 - HEALTH

The registered person promotes the good health of children and takes positive steps to prevent the spread of infection and appropriate measures when they are ill.

STANDARD 8 - FOOD AND DRINK

Children are provided with regular drinks and food in adequate quantities for their needs. Food and drink is properly prepared, nutritious and complies with dietary and religious requirements.

STANDARD 9 - EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

The registered person and staff actively promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice for all children.

STANDARD 10 - SPECIAL NEEDS (INCLUDING SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES)

The registered person is aware that some children may have special needs and is

proactive in ensuring that appropriate action can be taken when such a child is identified or admitted to the provision. Steps are taken to promote the welfare and development of the child within the setting in partnership with the parents and other relevant parties.

STANDARD 11 - BEHAVIOUR

Adults caring for children in the provision are able to manage a wide range of children's behaviour in a way which promotes their welfare and development.

STANDARD 12 - WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS AND CARERS

The registered person and staff work in partnership with parents and to meet the needs of the children, both individually and as a group. Information is shared.

STANDARD 13 - CHILD PROTECTION

The registered person complies with local child protection procedures approved by the Area Child Protection Committee and ensures that all adults working and looking after children in the provision are able to put the procedures into practice.

STANDARD 14 - DOCUMENTATION

Records, policies and procedures which are required for the efficient and safe management of the provision, or to promote the welfare, care and learning of children are maintained. Records about individual children are shared with the child's parent.