



Office for Standards  
in Education

## NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 134023

DfES Number: 582592

### INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 16/02/2004  
Inspector Name Jane Melissa Hull

### SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Full Day Care  
Setting Name St Thomas's Day Nursery  
Setting Address 40 St. Thomas Street  
Oxford  
Oxfordshire  
OX1 1JP

### REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of St Thomas's Day Nursery 2134060

### ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name St Thomas's Day Nursery  
Address 40 St. Thomas Street  
Oxford  
Oxfordshire  
OX1 1JP

## ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public 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 Day Nursery opened in 1986. It operates from a converted office building on two floors in the centre of Oxford. The nursery serves parents from around the Oxfordshire area as well as the local community. Priority places are given to employees of Oxfordshire County Council. The nursery is within easy walking distance of the railway station and major bus routes, including the Park & Ride services.

There are currently 58 children aged from 4 months to 5 years on roll. This includes nine funded three year olds and nine funded four year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting currently supports one child with special needs and four children who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens five days a week throughout the year, except for Bank Holidays and the period between Christmas and the New Year. Sessions are from 08:15 until 17:30 Monday to Thursday and 08:15 to 17:00 on Fridays.

Two part-time staff and 11 full-time staff work with the children. The majority of staff have early years qualifications to NVQ level three. The setting receives support from a teacher/mentor from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP).

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

### How effective is the nursery education?

The nursery education at St. Thomas' Day Nursery is generally good. Children are making very good progress in all areas of learning with the exception of mathematics where learning is generally good. Children are happy and confident and enjoy a varied range of opportunities both indoors and out. Children are learning to consider the needs of others and show care and compassion for each other.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Staff manage children well and provide them with positive role models in a caring and informal environment. Records of children's progress are maintained and the information gained is used to inform planning. The environment is organised to enable children to select some of their preferred equipment from a substantial range. However, children have limited access to programmable equipment. Staff care for children aged from two years which occasionally restricts the opportunities for the older children. Some staff miss opportunities to include mathematics in play situations and extend the general learning of the more able children.

Leadership and management is very good. The management team are clear in their roles and responsibilities and the manager regularly works alongside staff to lead by example and monitor the quality of teaching. Staff are encouraged to pursue their professional development and effective systems are in place to review the quality of education and share good practice.

Partnership with parents is very good. Parents receive good quality information about the setting and what their children are doing. Parents have regular opportunities to share what they know about their children and contribute to progress records. They enjoy contributing to their children's learning through various home-nursery links and contributing to topics and undertaking story telling sessions.

### What is being done well?

- Staff provide a warm and caring environment. Staff have high expectations for behaviour and children behave very well. Children are able to work in groups and take turns. They show consideration and compassion for each other and are learning that there needs to be agreed codes to work together.
- Staff make good use of the outdoor area. Activities are incorporated into the planning systems to ensure that children are involved in worthwhile activities which complement the indoor activities and topics. Children have regular opportunities to explore the local area and enjoy visits to museums, the river, cafes and the library.
- Children are making very good progress in communication, language and literacy. Staff encourage children to write for a variety of purposes. They display books well and provide comfortable seating to encourage children to

use books. Children enjoy stories and routinely seek out books for independent use, often enjoying reading them to each other.

- Staff are committed to working in partnership with parents. Parents are kept informed of nursery activities and enjoy opportunities to be involved in these. They have regular opportunities to formally discuss their children's progress and are encouraged to contribute to the records maintained by staff.
- The management committee of parents and senior staff work well together to monitor and influence standards within the nursery. Appraisal systems are in use to aid staff's development and to identify training needs.

#### **What needs to be improved?**

- opportunities for children to use programmable and I.T. equipment
- opportunities for children to use and practise mathematical skills
- learning opportunities for more able children.

#### **What has improved since the last inspection?**

Since the last inspection a special needs policy has been compiled which is consistent with current legislation and guidance.

## SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

### PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are confident, excited and motivated to learn. They are developing self-confidence and self-esteem in a caring environment. Children are learning what is right and wrong and show concern and consideration for others. They are learning that people have different needs and show respect for these. Children are developing skills in working in a group and taking turns. Children are developing skills in independence and personal care.

### COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children are confident communicators who speak out in a familiar group. They are able to concentrate and listen. Children are learning sign language and are confident in its use. Children are developing their writing skills and attempt writing for a variety of purposes. They are learning to link sounds with letters. Children enjoy stories and use the well-organised book area to routinely seek out books for independent use and enjoyment.

### MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are developing understanding of shape, size and quantity. They enjoy songs which develop awareness of calculation and are developing counting skills. Four year olds do not have sufficient opportunities to develop their competence in mathematics through play. Children recognise and create simple patterns and use mathematical ideas to solve problems.

### KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children are learning about the place in which they live and enjoy many outings. They build and construct with a range of materials and have opportunities to investigate and explore various materials and textures. Children are developing a sense of time but have limited opportunities to use programmable and I.T. equipment. They are learning about the beliefs, customs and cultures of others and mark a variety of festivals from around the world.

### PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are learning positive health practices relating to hygiene and healthy eating. They are developing confidence in movement and an awareness of space. They enjoy regular opportunities to travel under, over and through balancing and climbing equipment and manoeuvre bicycles well. Children are developing their fine manipulative skills, using a range of tools and equipment with developing competence and safety.

**CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children enjoy regular use of musical instruments. They use their imagination in dance, stories and role play. Children enjoy mixing colour and exploring shape and texture. They engage in daily free painting and drawing activities. Children are able to select some of their preferred equipment and materials when undertaking art and craft 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**

- Ensure that all staff make good use of opportunities to introduce mathematical language and concepts during activities.
- Provide additional extension of activities for children who are more able.

*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.*