



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 199398

DfES Number: 517242

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	27/02/2004
Inspector Name	Charlotte Jenkin

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Full Day Care
Setting Name	Thames Pre-School
Setting Address	Bath Road Cricklade Swindon Wiltshire SN6 6AX

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	The Committee of Thames Pre-School Playgroup
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ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name	Thames Pre-School Playgroup
Address	The Mobile - St Sampsons Junior School Bath Road,Cricklade, Swindon Wiltshire SN6 6AT

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

Thames pre-school has been in operation since 1984. In 2002 they moved to new premises in a mobile unit situated in the playground of St Sampson's Junior School which is in the town of Cricklade near Swindon.

The pre-school caters for 26 children from two years and is open during school term times from 09.00 to 11.30, Monday to Friday, and 12.30 to 15.00 on Monday and Friday afternoons. There is also a rising three session on Tuesday afternoons from 13:00 to 15:00 hours. Parents provide a packed lunch for children who stay for lunch, which is from 11.30 to 12.30 hours. Funded three and four year olds are accepted and there are currently nine funded four year olds and eleven funded three year olds on role.

Children are cared for in an activity room, which is sectioned into activity areas by furniture. Leading from this room is an entrance hall, office, staff room, toilets and kitchen. Children do not have access to the kitchen. Also leading from the main room are store areas and there is direct access to a garden at the side and front of the building. Occasionally the group use the school hall for physical activities.

A light snack is provided for the children.

The pre-school is managed by a parents committee. There are four staff working with the children and one part time kitchen assistant. Two staff hold the NVQ level three qualification and two are currently working towards childcare qualifications. Parents assist with the care of the children on a rota basis.

How good is the Day Care?

Thames pre-school provides good quality care for children.

There are effective procedures for appointing and vetting new staff, although not all committee members have the relevant checks. Staff attend regular training to update their skills and knowledge in child care. Staff create a child friendly and welcoming

environment for children and parents and the pre-school has a good range of toys and equipment.

Staff are fully aware of their responsibilities regarding children's safety and regular checks effectively minimise risks to children, although there are no procedures for local outings in place. Staff promote suitable hygiene practices through daily routines and accident and medication forms are in place, however these lack detail. Children help themselves to water throughout the session and staff gain dietary information from parents. Dietary needs and wishes are catered for and all staff are aware of children's needs. Staff have good knowledge of child protection issues and procedures.

Staff provide a good balance of free play and structured activities that cover most areas of learning. They show interest in what children have to say, listen to them and children are happy and confident. Staff have a good awareness of the equal opportunities policy and encourage all children to take part in all activities. They are very aware of the procedures for identifying and assessing children with special educational needs. Staff are consistent in role modelling politeness and good behaviour is encouraged through positive phrasing, to re-enforce the group's golden rules.

Very good information is given to parents prior to their child starting pre-school and they are given a detailed induction which covers the routines, curriculum and policies of the group. Parents know records are kept on their child's progress and parents are invited to contribute to reports and comment on their child's progress.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Not applicable.

What is being done well?

- Staff create a child friendly and welcoming environment with activities set out for children's arrival and space organised into clear learning areas, so children know where to access activities of their choosing.
- Children relate well to staff and peers, initiate conversations and play co-operatively together. Staff show interest in what children have to say, listen to them and they are happy and confident.
- Staff have a good awareness of the equal opportunities policy and encourage all children to take part in all activities, adapting them to suit individual children's needs.
- Staff encourage and role model good behaviour and politeness to the children consistently. They use positive phrasing to re-enforce the golden rules of the group and ensure children are sufficiently engaged in activities, therefore children's behaviour is very good.
- Children's key workers give parents a detailed induction prior to starting the pre-school which includes the routines, curriculum and policies of the group.

Staff write reports on children's progress and parents are invited to contribute to these and make comments on their children's achievements.

What needs to be improved?

- procedures for ensuring all committee members have the appropriate CRB checks
- arrangements for parents to acknowledge medication administered to their children to ensure their well-being
- procedures for taking children on local outings to ensure their safety.

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
1	Ensure all committee members are CRB cleared.
7	Ensure parents acknowledge medication administered to their children.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Thames pre-school is a good quality provision where children make very good progress towards the early learning goals in personal, social and emotional development and physical development, and make generally good progress towards the early learning goals in all other areas of learning. Children show confidence in selecting and carrying out activities of their choosing.

Teaching is generally good. Staff have a generally good knowledge of the early learning goals and all contribute their ideas to planning, which covers most areas of learning. Focus activities have clear learning intentions for children linked to the stepping stones. Staff encourage good behaviour by role modelling politeness and praising children for their achievements. They use positive phrasing and ensure children are engaged in activities. Children are not always grouped appropriately for focus activities which leads to gaps in assessments of children's progress.

Leadership and management is generally good. The committee is very professional and has clear roles and responsibilities and supports the supervisor closely. Staff communicate well and share responsibilities to ensure all staff become confident in leading activities in all areas of learning. Staff appraisals are effective in identifying strengths and weaknesses and training and development plans are put in place, although there are some inconsistency's in teaching methods. The pre-school are currently evaluating the nursery provision and have identified and developed plans for improving areas of weaknesses.

Partnership with parents is very good. Very good information is given to parents prior to their child starting pre-school and parents have a detailed induction by their child's key worker, which includes the curriculum, routines and policies of the group. Staff write reports on children's progress and parents are invited to contribute knowledge of their child's ability to these. Parents are involved in their child's learning.

What is being done well?

- Children develop skills in turn taking and sharing, help tidy up and work co-operatively to achieve this. They know the golden rules of the group and their behaviour is very good.
- Children have regular opportunities to develop control over clothing and fastenings in preparation for school, when they change for PE sessions.
- Staff plan detailed focus activities and question children to make them think, which is effective in extending more able children's learning.
- Staff encourage parents to be involved with their child's learning by suggesting topic related activities for them to do at home with their child, through regular newsletters.

What needs to be improved?

- opportunities for children to select their own resources for design and construction and for expressing themselves freely through collage;
- grouping of children for focus activities, to ensure all children are included, and observations and assessments of children's learning are recorded and used to inform their future learning;
- practical activities and routines to develop children's skills in linking sounds to letters and in solving simple mathematical problems.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Thames pre-school has made generally good progress since the last inspection.

At the last inspection the pre-school agreed to provide an area for a variety of resources to be made available to children to access and choose for themselves, and to allow a more child centred approach throughout all areas of learning, to provide a balance between adult lead and child initiated learning.

Staff encourage children to make choices in their play and plans have opportunities for developing children's skills in this area. Children can now access a range of writing equipment, craft materials, toys and maths games on a daily basis. Plans now allow children a good balance of free play and structured activities to allow children to initiate their own learning. Child participation in structured activities is not always monitored and therefore there are gaps in assessments of children's progress and the use of these to inform their future learning.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

children show confidence in selecting and carrying out activities and persist for extended periods at activities of their choosing. They sit quietly at registration time and develop the confidence to speak in group situations about their families and interests. They initiate interactions with staff, peers and visitors and demonstrate a sense of belonging in the pre-school, making attachments to members of the group. Children demonstrate a sense of pride in their achievements.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Children initiate conversations and take turns when talking to staff and peers, developing their listening skills. They use talk in imaginary situations when engaged in small world and role play. Children have regular opportunities to recognise their names through routines and have print available to them on displays and resources. Children make marks and more able children write their names, forming recognisable letters, There are limited opportunities for children to link sounds to letters.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children count through daily routines and practical activities, confidently. They initiate and request number activities, and more able children recognise numerals 0-9 when walking in the local environment. Children sing number rhymes and show an interest in number, although there are limited opportunities for them to develop their skills in solving simple problems through practical activities and routines. Children explore shape, size and quantity and use mathematical language to describe this.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

Children show interest in how things work when exploring stethoscopes, and investigate construction materials to build and balance. More able children operate simple computer programmes independently. Children talk about past events and remember significant events. They show interest in the world they live, and recreate scenarios through small world play. There are limited opportunities for children to select their own resources for design and construction.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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More able children respond to music by means of movement, and move in a range of ways with confidence. They show an awareness of themselves and others when moving indoors and outdoors. Children demonstrate confidence when using apparatus for climbing and sliding and are developing confidence when throwing, catching and kicking balls. They use writing implements and a range of tools with increasing control. They have regular opportunities to develop control over clothing and fastenings.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children explore colour when painting and choose colour for a purpose. More able children differentiate colour confidently. Children sing simple songs and imitate movements to music. They engage in role play based on first hand experiences and use available props to support their play. Children communicate their ideas through painting, when painting Chinese dragons, although there are limited opportunities for children to express themselves freely through collage.

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

- develop children's free expression through collage and design and construction opportunities, enabling children to select their own resources and use their own ideas;
- develop how children are grouped when taking part in focus activities to ensure children's participation is monitored, and observations and assessments of their progress is recorded and used to inform their future learning.

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.