



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 300781

DfES Number: 535069

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 23/09/2004
Inspector Name Trudy Scott

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care
Setting Name St Thomas' Church Nursery
Setting Address Nairn Street
Sheffield
South Yorkshire
S10 1UL

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of St Thomas Church Council

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name St Thomas Church Council
Address Nairn Street
Sheffield
South Yorkshire
S10 1UL

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' Church Nursery has been open in the present premises for over 24 years. It is owned by St. Thomas Church Council and has charitable status. It is located in the Crookes area of Sheffield and serves children and families living locally. The accommodation comprises of a hall within the church, kitchen and toilet facilities and a fully enclosed outdoor play area. The nursery have sole use of these rooms while in operation.

There are currently 40 children from three to under five years on roll. Of these, 26 three year olds and 12 four year olds are in receipt of nursery education funding. The setting currently supports a small number of children with special needs and who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery opens on Mondays to Fridays from 09:30 to 12:00, during school term times.

Thirteen staff work with the children. Over have the staff have early years qualifications and three staff are working towards a recognised early years qualification. The setting is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance.

How good is the Day Care?

St. Thomas Church Nursery provides good quality care overall for children aged three to under five years.

Organisation and management of the nursery successfully promotes very good team work. Staff are well-supported with effective induction systems, regular team meetings and further training opportunities. A comprehensive collection of policies and procedures underpin the day to day running of the nursery, although some paperwork lacks necessary detail. Good use is made of the available space and stimulating resources to provide a wide range of appropriate activities and experiences for the children.

Health and safety policies are consistently followed by staff, to ensure children are safe and well, indoors and outdoors. Staff actively promote good hygiene practice and encourage children to manage personal hygiene independently.

Children enjoy a balance range of interesting activities, which contributes to them making very good progress in all areas of their development. Activities are appropriately adapted for the age and stage of development of the children. Children and staff have very good relationships. Staff are sensitive to children's individual needs and interact skilfully with children to develop their confidence and self-esteem. The setting has a strong commitment to equal opportunities and ensures children with special needs are well-supported and fully included in the provision. Effective behaviour management strategies, consistently applied by staff, successfully promote very good behaviour.

Parents receive a warm welcome from familiar, approachable staff. Good quality information is provided for parents in a variety of ways. Systems for sharing information are successful in ensuring parents' wishes for the care of their children are respected.

What has improved since the last inspection?

not applicable

What is being done well?

- Team work is very good. Staff frequently access additional training and have regular opportunities to share ideas and review their work practice. This helps them develop a consistent approach to their work.
- Comprehensive health and safety policies and procedures are consistently followed by staff to keep children safe and well, indoors and outdoors. Children are helped to develop safe practice with discussion and explanation.
- Children and staff have very good relationships. Staff interact skilfully with children, talking and listening to them and showing interest in their activities and achievements. They use language such as 'fantastic' and 'brilliant' to show children how they value them. This helps children feel good about themselves and develops their confidence.
- Behaviour is very good. Staff help children understand what is expected by speaking clearly, telling them what they want them to do and support them in using language to resolve conflict. Children follow the good models of staff by showing friendliness, courtesy and consideration for others.
- There are effective procedures to ensure children with special needs are well-supported. These include clear individual education plans for the children and liaison with outside agencies and professionals to monitor and plan for progress. The expertise of parents is recognised and valued and they are fully included in all decisions about the care of their children.

What needs to be improved?

- the medication records to include a signed acknowledgement by parents when medication has been administered.

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
7	Ensure parents sign medication records to acknowledge when medication has been administered.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

St. Thomas' Church Nursery provides a happy, secure environment where children enjoy learning. This ensures they make very good progress towards the early learning goals.

The quality of teaching is very good. Staff use their secure knowledge of the six areas of learning and the stepping stones to plan an interesting curriculum. They build on what the children already know and successfully adapt activities for children who learn at different rates. They have very good understanding of how to help children learn through a balanced range of focused and freely chosen activities. Staff engage effectively with children to help them develop very good communication skills. Children enjoy many well-planned activities and topics which stimulate their curiosity. The priority given to personal, social and emotional development underpins learning in all other areas. The learning environment is organised effectively to promote independence and enable children to concentrate and persevere. Regular opportunities for physical play helps children develop confidence and control in their movements.

Staff regularly observe children and use this information consistently to plan the next steps in children's learning and provide challenge for more able children. They keep careful records which provide a clear picture of children's progress.

Leadership and management of the nursery are very good. Clear aims are successfully shared with staff and parents to ensure everyone has a positive approach to learning. There is a strong commitment to continuous improvement, reflected in the variety of relevant training accessed by staff and the very good progress made since the last inspection.

Partnership with parents is very good. Parents are well-informed about what their children are doing and learning in nursery. They spend much time talking with staff, who clearly value and respect their views. Parents are actively involved in their children's learning in many ways.

What is being done well?

- Personal, social and emotional development has priority in the curriculum and leads to children becoming confident, interested and self-motivated. This ensures they participate successfully in self-chosen and directed activities and provides a firm foundation for learning in other areas.
- Staff's secure knowledge of the early learning goals and very good understanding of how children learn enables them to plan an interesting curriculum which engages children and sustains their interests. Children enjoy many interesting and well-planned activities which stimulate their curiosity, such as observing caterpillars change to butterflies and chicken

hatch from eggs.

- Staff successfully engage with children to help them develop very good communication skills. They speak clearly to children, pitch questions at the right level and listen with interest to what children have to say. Children are encouraged to contribute in daily activities and routines by sharing information about themselves and what's important to them.
- The environment is well-planned and organised to promote children's independence and encourage them to concentrate and persevere. Children choose to play inside or outside and select their own activities and resources. They know they can return to activities during the session which gives them the freedom pursue other interests and concentrate on tasks of their own choosing.
- Parents are well-informed about the nursery aims and what their children are doing and learning. They receive good quality information about current topics and see curriculum plans displayed in nursery. Information from parents about what the children do and learn at home is valued and included in records of children's progress.

What needs to be improved?

- the range of opportunities for children to plan to use materials and tools to design and make for their own ideas
- the provision of further purposeful opportunities for children to record mathematical work, for example by tallying or drawing.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Very good progress has been made since the last inspection. The staff have introduced a number of effective measures to improve the systems for observing and assessing children, which were identified as areas for improvement in the last inspection.

A major factor has been the development of comprehensive record sheets which relate to the stepping stones and the early learning goals. Staff regularly observe children, both in planned activities and in their spontaneous play. The information is used consistently to plan the next steps in individual children's learning and ensure children are grouped appropriately for particular activities.

Parents are successfully encouraged to contribute to assessments by sharing their observations of what their children do and learn at home.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are interested, enthusiastic and self-motivated in nursery. They concentrate well when working independently or with others. Behaviour is very good and reflects the high expectations of staff. Children form good relationships with their peers and adults as they co-operate, share and show consideration for others. Children's confidence is increased by having a sense of belonging to the nursery. They willingly share information about themselves and listen as others share their news.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children are confident speakers and listeners. They engage staff and other children in conversations, taking turns to speak, and follow instructions correctly. They use language well for many purposes such as negotiating, describing and planning ahead. Children participate in rhyming activities and have frequent opportunities to practice linking sounds and letters. They enjoy books and sharing stories. They are learning to recognise print and are successfully developing their skills as writers.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children have very good counting skills, many count reliably beyond 10. They see numerals in the environment and often use number names in their play. They are developing problem solving skills as they work out how many children can play at each activity and have some opportunities to record their work. In a variety of focused and freely chosen activities, such as play with construction kits, jigsaws and baking, children are learning effectively about space, shape and measure.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children's investigation and exploration skills are effectively fostered in a range of well-planned topics and activities. They have good skills in designing and making as they use a range of tools and materials, sometimes planning to make their own ideas. They use everyday technology well in daily activities and operate a computer with varying degrees of skill. Children successfully increase their knowledge of their own community and the wider world in focused activities and daily discussions.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children move around independently and safely, successfully negotiating space and obstacles and showing consideration for the personal space of others. Regular opportunities for physical activity ensures children develop very good co-ordination and control. They receive appropriate challenge as they practise skills such as balancing and climbing. In planned activities, children learn about their bodies and how to keep healthy. Hand eye co-ordination is effectively fostered in many activities.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children explore colour in many activities, such as painting and selecting colours for icing for buns. They express their ideas and thoughts well in their paintings. They frequently access other media and materials to make collages and models. Children actively participate in singing sessions and enjoy listening to different kinds of music and real instruments. Imaginative play is well-developed as children play co-operatively and make up stories based on real life experiences.

Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately.

OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable and is of high quality. Children are making very 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

There are no significant weaknesses to report, but considerations should be given to improving the following:

- There are no significant weaknesses to report, but consideration should be given to improving the following:
- the range of opportunities for children to plan to use tools and materials to design and make their own ideas
- the provision of further purposeful opportunities for children to record their mathematical work, for example by drawing or tallying.

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.