



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 253443

DfES Number: 511347

INSPECTION DETAILS

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| Inspection Date | 09/10/2003 |
| Inspector Name | Katherine Powell |

SETTING DETAILS

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| Day Care Type | Out of School Day Care, Full Day Care, Sessional Day Care |
| Setting Name | St Thomas's Childrens Centre |
| Setting Address | Wyberton Low Road Boston Lincolnshire PE21 7RZ |

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

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| Name | The Committee of St Thomas's Children's Centre 1081559 |
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ORGANISATION DETAILS

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|---------|---|
| Name | St Thomas's Children's Centre |
| Address | Wyberton Low Road Boston Lincolnshire PE21 7RZ |

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 Children's Centre is a committee run provision which offers full daycare to children aged between two and a half to eight years. The provision offers a pre-school, breakfast and after school club and summer playscheme. The provision operates from a mobile classroom within the grounds of St. Thomas's primary school. The premises consist of a foyer, two playrooms, toilets, an office and kitchen area. There is an enclosed outside area which is used for outdoor play. There is a car park adjacent to the premises which parents can use when bringing and collecting children. The provision serves the local rural community and surrounding villages.

The children's centre is registered to care for a maximum of 30 children in the pre-school and 38 children in the out of school club and holiday playscheme. Children over the age of eight years are also cared for in the out of school club and holiday playscheme. The pre-school is open each week day during school term-time and offers two sessions each day from 09.30 until 12.00 and from 12.30 until 15.00. Children are able to attend a maximum of five sessions each week. There is no afternoon session on Friday. The holiday playscheme operates for the first three weeks during the school summer holidays.

There are currently 54 children on roll in the pre-school. Of these, 39 children are in receipt of nursery funding for three year olds. There are children attending who have been identified with special needs and all children speak English as their first language.

The provision employs 12 members of staff on both a full and part-time basis. Of these, 11 staff have completed recognised childcare qualifications and two staff are currently undertaking further training. There is also a bank of relief staff.

The provision is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance and Children's Links.

Staff at the pre-school have received teacher support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

How good is the Day Care?

St.Thomas's Children's Centre provides good quality care for children aged from 2 to 8 years.

Staff work well as a team and have a consistent approach to their work. This is achieved by a comprehensive range of policies and procedures which are reflected in day-to-day practice, regular staff meetings and good opportunities for staff training and support. Positive steps have been taken to minimise potential hazards within the setting and generally for activities that are conducted outside the setting. There is an effective support system in place for children who have been identified with special needs.

Staff make very good use of available space and resources and children have regular opportunities to engage in outdoor physical play. Sessions are well planned and children are able to freely access different activity areas. Staff are deployed effectively and have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. High staffing ratios are maintained at each session. Consequently, children are well cared for, receive good levels of supervision and feel secure.

Staff effectively promote children's learning in all areas by providing a wide variety of stimulating activities. They support and extend children's learning through use of questioning during practical activities and daily routines. Children are highly motivated and are actively encouraged to be curious and explore their environment. Children behave very well.

Staff plan an interesting programme of activities for school-age children. Children respond well to their ideas and suggestions and generally are able to make their own choices about play and learning.

There is a very good partnership with parents and carers which is fostered through a generally effective written and verbal communication process. Parents are kept fully informed about the provision and the progress their child is making and encourage children and parents to feel valued as individuals.

What has improved since the last inspection?

There were no actions or recommendations raised at the last inspection.

What is being done well?

- There is an effective framework in place to provide good support for children with special needs.
- Staff have developed very good procedures for communicating with parents. Useful information is included in the brochure and displayed around the setting and staff share verbal information about children's progress on a daily basis.
- In the out of school club children take part in a wide variety of interesting

activities. Staff respond well to children's individual interests and ideas.

- There is a comprehensive range of policies and procedures in place which are understood and fully implemented by staff.
- Staff have implemented effective systems for curriculum planning and assessment. These ensure that children receive a broad and balanced curriculum.
- Staff know individual children well and provide high levels of supervision during practical activities. Children's efforts are praised and valued.

What needs to be improved?

- operational procedures for the safe conduct of any outings provided;
- opportunities for children to further develop their independence skills at snack time;
- the written complaints procedure for parents.

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 |
|-----|---|
| 3 | further promote children's independence skills at snack time |
| 6 | develop operational procedures for the safe conduct of any outings provided |
| 12 | include the address of the regulator (Ofsted) in the written complaints procedure for parents |

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

How effective is the nursery education?

St.Thomas's Children's Centre offers good quality nursery education where children enjoy learning through a range of stimulating activities. Effective teaching helps children make generally good progress towards the early learning goals.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Planning and assessment systems provide an effective framework to help children make progress. The key strengths in creative development are due to the emphasis given by staff to promoting children's creativity through music and craft activities. A wide range of tools and resources is provided to stimulate children's imaginations. Generally, staff promote children's learning well through careful questioning. However, opportunities are sometimes missed to extend children's understanding of addition and subtraction during practical activities and daily routines. Effective systems are in place to provide good support for children with special needs. Information on children's progress is regularly shared with parents.

Children are encouraged to express their ideas and thoughts verbally and to persevere with more challenging tasks. However, opportunities are sometimes missed to further develop children's awareness of writing for different purposes when engaging in role-play activities. Good standards of behaviour are maintained and children form effective relationships with each other and staff.

Leadership and management is very good. Strong leadership ensures that good early years practice is shared and areas for future development are identified. Further training for staff is valued and encouraged.

The partnership with parents is very good. Staff regularly talk to and share information with parents about their child's progress. Parents receive good written information about the educational programme and are encouraged to be involved in the children's learning.

What is being done well?

- Children's creative development is very good. Staff stimulate children's imaginations and foster creativity through a wide variety of craft and music activities.
- Staff work well as a team and provide an interesting range of activities, good role models and a stimulating learning environment.
- A very good partnership with parents is fostered through effective verbal and written communication. Parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their children's learning.
- There is a strong management structure which ensures continual development through staff training and appraisal.

- The planning of the educational programme effectively promotes learning in all six areas. The main focus for children's learning is clearly identified, staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities and assessments and evaluations are used to inform future planning.

What needs to be improved?

- opportunities for children to practise writing for a variety of purposes when engaging in role-play activities;
- opportunities for children to develop their understanding of addition and subtraction through practical tasks and daily routines.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Not applicable.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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| Judgement: | Generally Good |
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Children relate well to each other and have formed effective relationships with staff. They are motivated to learn and select resources independently. They work well both independently and in small groups, taking turns and sharing resources. Children behave well in response to high expectations from staff.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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| Judgement: | Generally Good |
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Children have learnt a range of familiar stories and rhymes and join in with enthusiasm. Through participation during story time children are learning the conventions of reading. Children are developing a wide vocabulary and are encouraged to express their thoughts and ideas verbally. Opportunities are provided for children to develop their small hand skills. However, children have limited opportunities to practise writing for different purposes when engaging in role play activities.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

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|------------|----------------|
| Judgement: | Generally Good |
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Children are able to count in sequence to ten and beyond and use number in everyday situations such as role play activities. More able children can recognise and record some numerals. They can recognise and name familiar shapes and create simple patterns using coloured beads. Opportunities are missed to develop children's understanding of addition and subtraction through practical tasks and daily routines.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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|------------|----------------|
| Judgement: | Generally Good |
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Children are keen to explore the natural environment and describe materials using their senses. They are developing their understanding of the uses of technology and use the computer to support their learning. They talk about their own lives and recount past and present experiences. Through topic work and discussion children are gaining an awareness of diverse cultures and beliefs.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

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| Judgement: | Generally Good |
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Children's small hand skills and whole body movements are developed through effective use of a wide range of equipment and tools, both indoors and outdoors. Children use the available apparatus with confidence and have developed good spatial awareness. They have discussed the importance of keeping healthy and eating a balanced diet and have described the changes that happen to their bodies when they engage in physical activity.

| CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT | |
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| Judgement: | Very Good |
| Children use a range of media to explore colour, shape and texture. They are encouraged to express their ideas freely through a wide variety of craft, music and role play activities. A good range of resources and tools is provided to stimulate children's imaginations. Children have learnt a variety of songs and have frequent opportunities to play a range of musical instruments. | |
| 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

- extend the opportunities provided for children to practise writing for a variety of purposes when engaging in role play activities;
- further develop opportunities during practical activities and daily routines to promote children's understanding of addition and subtraction.

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.