

St Thomas's Childrens Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector

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Type of setting

Childcare on non-domestic premises

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

Please see our website for more information about each childcare provider. We publish inspection reports, conditions of registration and details of complaints we receive where we or the provider take action to meet the requirements of registration.

Description of the setting

St Thomas's Children's Centre registered in 2001. It is a committee run provision and operates from a purpose built building in the grounds of St Thomas' primary school in Boston, Lincolnshire. All children share access to an enclosed outdoor play area.

A maximum of 68 children aged from two to under eight years may attend at any one time. The setting admits children aged from two years to the age of 11 years. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are 142 children between the age of two to 11 years on roll, of whom 75 are in the early years age group. All sessions operate Monday to Friday, term time and during school holidays. Older children may attend from 8am until 8.50am and from 3.20pm until 6pm. Younger children may attend from 9.05am until 12.05pm and from 12:15pm until 3:15pm.

The setting is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is in receipt of funding for early education places. The setting supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

There are 10 members of staff who work with the children. Of these, 4 hold National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) at level 3, 6 hold National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) at level 2 and 1 of these staff members is working towards a NVQ at level 3. The setting receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children enjoy their time greatly at this setting, having made effective friendships and being well supported by knowledgeable and attentive staff. The policies and procedures are regularly reviewed and are mostly effective in protecting children's welfare. Highly successful working relationships with other settings and agencies are in place as a result of the exceptional commitment demonstrated by staff. Relationships with parents are good and support children's progress well. The setting has in place an effective means of measuring its effectiveness, demonstrating that there is good capacity for improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To meet the specific requirements of the EYFS, the registered person must:

- ensure the policy on giving medicines includes effective systems to support individual children with medical needs.

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To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- develop further the outdoor environment to offer children the freedom to explore and use their senses.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are well safeguarded as staff have a good knowledge and understanding of the comprehensive child protection procedures. Staff have completed child protection training and know how to respond if there are concerns over a child's care. Parents are made aware of staff responsibilities through the parents' handbook. The cohesive staff group are supportive of each other and work well as a team. Staff training is monitored, ensuring they gain in confidence and expertise. Staff vetting and recruitment procedures are prompt and thorough, ensuring that all staff are suitable for their role. An in-depth induction for new staff members ensures they clearly understand their roles and responsibilities.

Staff supervise children's activities well and are vigilant as children enjoy their activities. They advise children about how they should play safely, promoting their feelings of safety. Children's changing needs and learning preferences are met through the careful organisation of the wide ranging equipment. There is scope for children to enjoy outdoor activities and games that contribute positively towards their physical well-being. However, this area has been recently renovated and currently there are limited opportunities for children to explore and use their senses.

Staff ensure older children are safe as they are collected from the adjoining school and communicate very effectively with school staff regarding children's progress and welfare. The documentation, policies and procedures are regularly reviewed and are mostly effective in protecting the needs of the children that attend. However, the medication policy does not include an effective system to support children with medical needs, which is a requirement. The setting completes risk assessments and regular check lists, ensuring that the environment is safe.

Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language are very well supported. Staff are exceptionally committed to forging partnerships with additional agencies, so that children with additional needs access the support they require. Staff access a very wide range of support mechanisms, ensuring all children make good progress. Links with parents are good as they are kept well-informed about their children's activities through newsletters, home booklets the notice board and friendly relationships with staff. A good range of resources that represent different cultures and the wider society encourage children to become aware of the needs of others. Comprehensive improvement plans are informed by an evaluation of the effectiveness of the setting. Staff measure the setting's effectiveness through consulting with partner agencies, children and their parents and successfully drive forward positive

improvements.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

Children's learning is well promoted as they are supported by caring and committed staff. Staff are skilled in extending children's learning as they carefully present further challenges throughout their creative play scenarios. Staff ask children probing questions that encourage children to problem solve. Planning reflects children's individual needs and is informed by children's learning journeys, assessments and their own interests. Assessments track children's progress and contain evaluative statements and annotated photographs. These records document each area of learning and identify the children's next steps. Children communicate well with each other and confidently share information with staff and their friends. They recognise that their play is enhanced when they include others. They busily tidy away activities at the end of the session, taking responsibility for their environment. Children demonstrate good behaviour when they play with others and are considerate of their needs.

Children mark make as they paint the floor, chalk boards and walls with soapy water. They enjoy moulding with sand and use a range of tools to scoop and flatten the material. They use a range of three dimensional objects to build strong structures and use their number skills for a practical purposes. Children learn about the world around them as they fly paper aeroplanes and try hard to project the planes through a designated gap. They keep physically fit as they enjoy team games, and recognise that their heart rate increases after exercise. They have a good understanding of healthy eating as they access healthy snacks that include fruit, bread sticks, water and milk. Children also confidently clear away after themselves by arranging their cups and plates sensibly, ready to be washed up. Snack provision is available throughout the session, enabling children to continue with their activities. Children enjoy a positive, social experience as they eat with their friends and grow in independence as they butter their own toast.

Children become thoroughly engrossed in creative play opportunities and can choose to work alone or with groups of children. Staff work very closely with the children, supporting their play and being led by children's own ideas. Staff skilfully enhance their play with further ideas, promoting additional learning opportunities. A group of children create a shop environment in the home corner. They discuss buying food and how they will pay for their shopping. Staff extend this activity by joining in with their play and making additional suggestions. Staff have formed caring and supportive relationships with children and are always on hand to offer suggestions, thereby promoting their feelings of safety.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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