

# St Thomas Pre School

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	145822
<b>Inspection date</b>	24/05/2011
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<b>Email</b>	
<b>Type of setting</b>	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.

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## Description of the setting

St Thomas Pre-school is a long established committee run pre-school group. It was first registered in 1993. It uses premises at the church hall of St Thomas's Church in the centre of Trowbridge. The group has use of a large main hall and a grassed area outside the hall for supervised outdoor play. . It meets on all mornings except Mondays from 9.15am to 11.45am, Tuesday and Friday afternoons 12.15pm to 3.30pm and Thursday afternoons 12.45pm to 2.45pm.

The pre-school is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and on both the compulsory part and voluntary part of the Childcare register. It is registered to provide care for 26 children aged from two to five years, with no more than 13 of these aged under three years at any one time.. There are currently 32 children on roll who attend various sessions. The group is in receipt of nursery education funding for three and four-year-olds.

There are five staff working directly with the children; two are qualified to level two and three staff hold a level three qualification.

## The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The pre-school successfully meets the needs of all children overall through recognising their uniqueness and provides a fully inclusive and welcoming service. Children make good progress in their learning and development as they enjoy their time in the group and are eager to be actively engaged in the choice of interesting play activities. Most required documents are available and, overall, children are well cared for in an environment where their safety is maintained.

The staff work in close partnership with supporting agencies and other providers to ensure that children's learning and welfare needs are met. Self evaluation is beginning to develop and in time will help ensure that plans for the future are well targeted to bring about further improvement to the provision and thereby the outcomes for children.

## What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- extend assessment systems to record children's next steps in learning, to clearly show their individual progress over time
- extend the systems for sharing information with parents to provide them with more feedback about their child's progress
- make all written policies and procedures available at inspection

## **The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision**

Children are well safeguarded as all adults left in sole charge of children are appropriately vetted. Policies and documentation reflect the good practice in the group, although not all documentation to assist in the effective operation of the pre-school is readily available for inspection.

Staff have a secure understanding of safeguarding issues and of the procedures to follow if they have any concerns about the welfare of a child within their care. Visual safety checks are completed daily and are ongoing so that the play environment is kept safe during the day through staff vigilance. Risk assessments are completed for the premises and for outings. As a result, children move freely and safely around the spacious hall and enjoy the set times for outside play.

Good ranges of high quality resources are attractively arranged, some of which children can access for themselves, such as craft and mark making materials from a mobile trolley.

The staff are well qualified and motivated to attend additional training to further develop their practice and outcomes for children. They work well together as a team, being effectively deployed to support the children's interests and ideas. This means that good use is made of each adult; each taking on an area of responsibility each session. The pre-school leader and staff are highly committed to driving improvement.

Self-evaluation is beginning to develop and other systems of assessment, such as providing parents with questionnaires is ongoing and helps the team to focus on any areas identified for improvement. Staff offer support to all children and help them feel welcome, regardless of their family background, race or gender, enabling an inclusive environment for each child.

Partnerships with parents and carers are good. There is good exchange of information between the parents and the group which enables staff to successfully meet children's individual needs. Some parents however, feel they would like more feedback about their child's progress. Ongoing information is shared through newsletters and accessible records. Parents speak highly of the quality of care their children receive and the caring attitude of the staff. Where children attend other registered settings, some links have been built with these providers. This is to ensure that all adults involved with the children contribute to the continuity of their learning and care.

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

Children arrive happily at the pre-school; warm reassurance from staff and freedom to choose activities help them to settle well. Children actively seek staff out to engage with them in their play. Children appear confident and have a strong sense of belonging to the setting. Children are highly motivated by the attractive range of activities and play opportunities that support all areas of their learning. They select toys and activities to use in their own way which supports their growing independence. For example, children independently choose from the range of mark making and craft materials such as dried pasta and drinking straws. They use tools such as scissors skilfully and proudly show the staff what they have made.

Children respond well to extending questions and set their own challenges. For example, they use magnifying glasses to look at and explore the features of small animals. They eagerly learn to pronounce the names of the creatures such as the salamander and cricket and experiment by repeating the words over and over again. Children become very independent to see to their own needs, such as toileting and personal hygiene.

Staff carefully plan activities based on their observations of the children's activity and their expressed interests. They have a secure understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage to support children's learning through their play. This means that all children make good progress towards the early learning goals. Their achievements are observed and recorded in learning journals, although children's 'next steps' are not always identified to give a clear picture of their individual progress.

The setting is committed to providing support for all children to achieve, and staff are aware of the need to utilise outside agency help where appropriate for any child with special needs or those learning English as an additional language. The setting celebrates a variety of festivals and events from all cultures.

Children's good health and well-being is effectively promoted in most areas. Their understanding of hygiene is actively fostered, for example, they independently access the bathroom area and wash their hands without being reminded before having their snack.

Children gain good skills for the future. They confidently make decisions and willingly take responsibility, for example, to tidy the play areas. The adults have a calm and friendly manner and are positive role models. This helps children to be polite and manage their own behaviour by, for example, negotiating roles in play with the puppets. Children benefit from the staff member's obvious enthusiasm and their close interaction and involvement in their play.

Their language development is well fostered as they talk with adults throughout the sessions. They gain good early reading and writing skills to recognise and write their names, as they are always encouraged to label their own work and highly

praised for their efforts.

## 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

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

### The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	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	2
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

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	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

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

Met