

# St Thomas's Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number**

135398

**Inspection date**

17/10/2011

**Inspector**

Carolyn Hasler

**Setting address**

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**Type of setting**

Childcare - Non-Domestic

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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*.

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## Description of the setting

St Thomas's Nursery School is run by a private individual. It opened in 1992 and operates from St Thomas's Church Hall complex. Children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area. The nursery is in a residential area of Oakwood on the outskirts of the London Borough of Enfield. It is open each weekday from 9am to 3pm for 38 weeks of the year.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 44 children may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 53 children aged from two years to under five years on roll, some in part-time places. The nursery caters for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

There are 10 members of staff, all of whom hold early years' qualifications to at least level 2. Senior members of staff hold Early Years Professional Status and Bachelor of Education qualifications. The nursery provides free early education for three- and four-year-olds.

## The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The nursery provides a safe, welcoming and inclusive service. Staff work successfully in partnership with parents overall to share information and meet children's individual needs effectively. Staff have been successful in introducing most aspects of the Early Years Foundation Stage into their practice, which helps children make steady progress in their learning and development. The management team are able to maintain a good level of continual improvement.

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

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

- keep a record of accidents and first aid treatment and inform parents of any accidents or injuries sustained by the child whilst in the care of the providers and of any first aid treatment that was given (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare) 18/11/2011

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

- increase opportunities for parents to contribute towards children's assessment records

- develop skills in observing, assessing and planning for individual children taking account of the Early Years Foundation Stage practice guidance
- improve key people's skills in engaging children in conversation and linking language with play and learning to improve outcomes for children in the six areas of learning

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

Key people involved in the safeguarding of children have good knowledge and understanding of their roles and responsibilities to keep children safe. Policies and procedures ensure key people have the information they need to follow. Interagency links are made with professional bodies where appropriate. The leadership and management team are secure in their knowledge of safe recruitment and maintain appropriate checks. Children's environment is risk assessed and a safe environment is maintained. However, there are weaknesses within records related to accidents, which on occasion are inconsistently maintained. For example, children's full names have not been recorded and parental signatures have not been collected to demonstrate parents have been kept informed. This breaches requirements. As this relates to documentation and not practice it has minimal impact on children.

There are a number of highly qualified key people working with children. The nursery has appointed designated roles for safeguarding and special educational needs and/or disabilities. They ensure that a first aider is on hand at all times. The staff team are well established and work well together to support the effectiveness of the service they deliver. The leadership and management team have developed their service adapting to the Early Years Foundation Stage. The nursery has a process in place for evaluating their service and has identified areas for improvement. For example, the nursery has recently invested in resources and has plans to develop the outside space to make it a friendlier place to play. Monitoring systems generally identify weaknesses and these are quickly acted upon. Issues raised at the last inspection have been met. The nursery is able to explain their evaluation of their nursery and on the whole it reflects the service children and their families can expect to receive.

Resources are varied, fit for purpose and support children's development well. However, accessibility to resources which enable children to explore information and communications technology is limited. The nursery uses both inside and outside space and children are encouraged to explore space freely. Techniques to engage and support children's development are inconsistently used. There are good examples of key people using resources well and engaging children in open ended questioning. In addition children are provided with time to respond. Equally there are other examples of key people not making the most of resources to engage children in meaningful dialogue around their games to extend their vocabulary. Key people collect information from parents based on children's interests and their welfare needs. This is not yet effectively valuing parents understanding of what their children already know. However, key people build a picture of what children can do through observations. They are successfully

identifying next steps but are unsure how to use this information to plan for children's individual needs.

Key people provide an inclusive service. There are systems in place to identify children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, these are effectively planned for. Where appropriate interagency partnerships are established to ensure children get the support that they need. Key people appropriately and actively promote equality and diversity. They help children understand the society they live in through introducing them to others' faiths and cultures. Key people provide children with resources to focus on and plan activities to encourage children's interest and awareness of others.

The nursery's relationships with parents and carers are highly positive and well established. Parents are able to access daily information and there is an open-door policy. Parents have access to information boards and receive regular news letters or emails to keep them informed about current interests. Parents' views are collected but it is unclear how these are used to influence the nursery's service delivery. Parents are encouraged to play a key role in settling in children. Prior information about focused planning encourages parents to contribute and support children's ongoing learning. Key people provide parents with end of year reports and a folder of children's journeys of learning while at the nursery. The nursery fosters good relationships with local schools, providing developmental documents to support the transition of children starting school.

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

Children separate well from parents and settle quickly into the nursery because key people work effectively with parents to support the transition from home into the nursery. Children build secure relationships with key people and this helps them feel safe. Their independence from adults is encouraged as they attempt most things for themselves. Children are caring and helpful towards others and manage their behaviour well. They are building friendships and engage in shared games and activities learning how to cooperate, take turns and negotiate with others. Their social skills are consistent to children who feel a sense of belonging and are confident and self assured.

Children engage in well established hygiene routines. Visual aides and practical tools in the bathroom areas support children's independence. Outside and inside spaces are set out to support physical activity and used well by children, who show lots of energy. There is a variety of physically challenging activities available such as climbing, building with large construction and playing with push-along buggies and scooters. Children contribute to snack time and are fully independent in choosing when they stop for snack and what they eat and drink. Drinks are on hand throughout their day and more able children pour these for themselves. The nursery works successfully with parents to promote healthy eating for lunches.

Children enjoy coming to the nursery, they have lots to choose from and can help

themselves from zoned areas. There are lots of conversations with children taking place throughout the nursery. Some of these are more successful in enabling children to listen to, absorb and extend their vocabulary within play. Children see letters and words all around them and are actively encouraged to recognise their own names written down. They have opportunities to explore mark-making with a variety of different materials which are readily available to choose from. Resources to support problem solving, reasoning and numeracy are varied and challenging. Children are engaged in their exploration, design and work out how things fit together. Sometimes they lack key people's support in engaging them in conversations involving mathematical concepts. Children have easy access to some forms of technology, accessing resources such as magnifying glass to look at play mini beasts. In addition there is a variety of props in the role play area to support their imaginary play. However, access to programmable or interactive resources is less accessible. Children are encouraged to be creative and there is a good balance of adult-led and child-led work displayed on the walls. Younger children particularly like the dressing up and role play area. Older children enjoy large-group adult-led exploration of music, sound and rhythm. Children are involved in planting and growing activities and have opportunities to observe the changes of seasons and weather. They generally make satisfactory progress in their learning because key people have a sound knowledge of how to support their development to help children achieve the skills they need for the future.

## 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	3
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

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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	3
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	3

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