

# Thorney Close Child Care Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

---

**Unique reference number**

318588

**Inspection date**

05/03/2012

**Inspector**

Julia Common

**Setting address**

Sure Start, Thorney Close Action & Enterprise Centre, 120  
Thorndale Road, Sunderland, SR3 4JQ

**Telephone number**

0191 553 4164

**Email**

[liz.clarke@sunderland.gov.uk](mailto:liz.clarke@sunderland.gov.uk)

**Type of setting**

Childcare - Non-Domestic

---

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2012

## 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

Thorney Close is one of several children's centres managed by Sunderland Children's Services. It opened in 1994 and gained children's centre status in 2006. The centre serves the local community and is situated in the Thorney Close area of Sunderland. A maximum of 60 children may attend the centre at any one time. The centre operates from five rooms and associated facilities and provides day care for children and babies aged from three months to five years.

There are currently 106 children on roll. Of these 23 children receive funding for early years education. The setting currently supports a number of children with special needs and who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens five days a week, all year round. Sessions are from 7.30am until 6.00pm.

Two part-time and 14 full-time staff work with the children. One member of staff has a Level 2 NVQ, and all other staff are qualified to NVQ Level 3. Three staff have, or are working towards, degrees and early years professional status. The setting receives support from a Qualified Teacher who works in the setting two days per week. The Nursery is currently working towards 'I Can' accreditation, has been awarded a 'Healthy Early Years' achievement and Positive Relationships Charter and uses an adaption of High Scope.

## The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are confident, secure and enjoy their time in the setting. Staff build strong relationships with their key children and families and value the uniqueness of the children. Their knowledge is used to support all children and effectively promote their good progress in all areas of development. Strong partnerships with other agencies are recognised for their importance in improving practice and meeting additional support needs. Effective links with parents and carers ensure they are well informed of their children's progress. Appropriate systems are in place to ensure children are protected and feel safe both in and out of the setting. Self-evaluation effectively identifies areas for development and clear steps are taken to improve.

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

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

- conduct risk assessments to ensure children are protected and cannot access the nappy bins.
- develop strategies to involve parents and children in future self-evaluation and improvement plans.

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

Well organised records, policies and procedures are implemented to promote children's safety and welfare. Accidents and regular evacuation drills are recorded appropriately and daily checks help to protect children from harm. Comprehensive risk assessments are in place and regularly reviewed. However, new nappy bins have not yet been risk assessed meaning they are accessible to children. Staff have a secure knowledge of procedures to follow and their responsibility to safeguard children from abuse. This is because of a sound induction procedure and commitment to regular staff training.

The robust recruitment and vetting procedures ensure that staff are suitable to work with children. A strong emphasis is placed on staff training and staff have five inset days per year to train and increase staff skills and knowledge. In turn, this has resulted in a number of improvements within the nursery and ensures that staff feel valued and motivated.

The nursery has systems in place for self-evaluation. All staff are involved in identifying strengths and weaknesses. During staff training, teams critically evaluated other rooms, created plans to make improvement and took photographs to document changes. Therefore, all staff have a good knowledge of their own and the setting's strengths and weaknesses. Action plans clearly show the timeframes, people involved, impact on outcomes for the children and evaluation. Extending self-evaluation to children and parents will further improve the outcomes and ensure all users' needs are valued. The nursery group employs a qualified teacher who works directly in the setting for two days per week. Her input working with the staff ensures they are striving to provide the highest quality care and education.

The nursery offers children a bright, inviting, secure and stimulating environment. There is a good choice of freely accessible resources covering areas of learning and promoting children's understanding of diversity and the wider world. The outdoor area is well resourced and offers further opportunities to promote independence and physical development. The staff team are positive role models for children. They are deployed effectively and strong key worker systems are established.

The nursery has very good links with other early years settings and schools that children transfer to. Schools are invited to attend children's exit interviews with the parents and key person where development and progress records are shared to ensure the transition is as smooth as possible. If teachers are unable to get to the setting staff will hold the meeting at the school. The setting has good links with the sure start centre and regularly take children to join in with play sessions.

The setting is fully inclusive and a highly effective equal opportunities policy supports the staff. A nominated person liaises with external agencies to support children and work with other professionals who come into the setting. Parents are kept well informed and feel fully supported and included in their child's

development. Highly effective partnership working ensures children who attend the setting receive the best possible support and feel fully included in the life of the setting. Staff work with health and other professionals to create individual education and care plans to ensure children make the best possible progress during their time in the setting. Staff work closely with sure start and children's services to provide essential respite and support to children and families.

Close partnerships with parents have been established by using a variety of ways to communicate and share information. Daily sheets inform parents of routine, activities and development. Notice boards display planning, nursery events and staff photographs and the full range of policies and procedures are available. Displays and resources such as 'I can talk' and treasure boxes offer parents advice and ideas on interacting with their children. A 'thought tree' displays parents and children's comments and makes them feel that they are valued in the setting. Useful information about children such as medical and dietary needs ensures that parent's wishes and children's individual needs are effectively met. Regular parents days are valued by parents and offer the opportunity for parents to discuss their child's development and feedback to the staff. Staff are developing ways to encourage parents to contribute more to the planning and their children's learning. Feedback from parents highlights how delighted they are with the care and support their children receive at the nursery and the progress their children are making, particularly in the areas of language and communication and social skills.

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

Children enjoy their time at the setting and staff provide a safe, caring, stimulating environment. Children and babies have developed trusting relationships with staff who they happily seek out for comfort and support. Staff gauge well the appropriate levels of support needed to encourage independence. At meal times older babies and toddlers are encouraged to feed themselves and use cutlery and beakers. Older children set up for lunch and serve themselves. All children are encouraged to use the bathroom and wash their hands.

Children access and enjoy a broad range of activities such as mark making, construction and role play which offer opportunities to develop skills such as problem solving and essential living skills. Creative and heuristic play in the under two areas offer sensory experiences as the children experience a range of textured resources including sand and water. Snack and meal times are social experiences. During lunch staff talk to the children about their food and how vegetables make you grow big and strong. As far as possible staff sit with their key children to further promote the strong relationships.

Children's health, safety and well-being is paramount. Regular outdoor opportunities ensure children are active. Healthy food is delivered to the setting from a nearby day centre and all dietary requirements are catered for. Choices of snacks and drinks means children are making healthy choices which contribute to their understanding of healthy lifestyles. Children are able to use tools such as

scissors and move around the setting safely because staff teach the children safety aspects and respect. Children follow routines well and are confident and independent. For example outdoors the children take off their wellingtons and put on their shoes before lining up at the door.

Purposeful observation and planning systems ensure that activities promote children's individual learning and good progress and the learning environment is organised and well-resourced. Observations of children's achievements and interests are recorded and staff are currently developing the use of next steps to ensure all children are given the opportunity to progress depending on their individual needs, abilities and interests. Progress records are clear and effective. They are used to collate information which is inputted into a central authority system and reports produced for the staff to compare the children in the setting's progress against the average. This information is used to determine improvement plans for the setting. For example a weakness in problem solving, reasoning and numeracy was identified and staff worked with their qualified teacher support to focus on this area and improve outcomes for children. Assessment procedures and clear information from parents determine children's starting points and monitor their progress to ensure any concerns or delays are identified quickly and referred appropriately.

Children behave very well in the setting because staff give clear explanations and set appropriate boundaries. Staff treat all children with respect, use manners and listen carefully which makes the children feel valued and boosts their self-esteem. Children are developing a respect for themselves and others because staff make good use of books, resources and activities such as books and displays. Diversity is promoted as children integrate fully and activities and resources are adapted to the children. For example visual aids are used to support a child with transitions between activities. Close links with schools ensure smooth transitions and transition procedures within the setting ensure children are confident and secure in room moves.

Children demonstrate an interest in numbers as they count to ten on their fingers and know that they are four and five comes next. Children talk about how many bikes and scooters they have at home and doing a clock puzzle a child can identify numbers up to seven. A child putting her shoes on can identify her left and right feet, and this is extended to left and right hands and eyes. In the digging area a child lifts up the stepping stones to search for mini beasts. He finds a worm and a staff member provides a lid to look at the worm and prompt discussion. Children have a good understanding of their wider world. Outdoors and child makes a cocoon with playdoh and knows that a butterfly comes out. Children are confident and display very good social skills. Babies develop their communication and language skills as staff talk and sing to them. Creative art resources such as paint, collage and junk modelling materials are available for children to explore freely. The nursery has good links with the community and regular visitors into the setting such as a community police officer helps children develop a sense of community and learn skills to keep themselves safe.

## 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	1
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	3

### The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
--	---

### 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

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)



## **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
--	-----