

Edna Thornton Pre-School

Church Hall, Vicarage Road, Tean, Stoke-on-Trent, STAFFORDSHIRE, ST10 4LE

Inspection date	14/05/2013
Previous inspection date	06/06/2011

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	2
	Previous inspection:	2
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		2
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		2
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		2

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is good

- Children are making very good progress towards the early learning goals, especially in their communication and language skills, social skills and physical abilities. They are very well prepared for the transition to school through activities which promote their ability to work as part of a group, listen to their friends and speak in front of others.
- Children enjoy the warm and welcoming 'home from home' environment where staff know them well. Staff skilfully weave learning into fun non-threatening activities, which means all children, including those who are less confident, are supported to extend their skills.
- The manager, staff and committee are very committed to developing a quality service. They gather information from children and parents to evaluate what they do and plan for the future. This means everyone feels valued and included in a setting, which is constantly striving for excellence.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Staff do not take every opportunity to extend children's already good self-care skills to fully consolidate their developing independence.
- There is scope to improve links with other providers to fully assess children's abilities in a range of environments to inform the planning of experiences for them.
- There is room to further improve the way staff's teaching skills are monitored to ensure their practice is helped to become exemplary.

Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are:

- scheduled at least once in every inspection cycle – the current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- scheduled at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities in the main playroom.
- The inspector held meetings with the manager of the setting and undertook a joint observation with her during the morning session.
- The inspector looked at children's assessment records and planning documentation and a selection of policies and children's records.
- The inspector reviewed the suitability checks for practitioners working with the children.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents and carers spoken to on the day.

Inspector

Sarah Rhodes

Full Report

Information about the setting

Edna Thornton Pre-School opened in 1991 and is run by the Edna Thornton Playgroup Committee. It is registered on the Early Years Register. The pre-school operates from one room in the church hall in the village of Upper Tean, Staffordshire. There is an outdoor play area available. The pre-school serves the local and surrounding areas and is accessible to all children.

The setting employs five members of childcare staff. Of these, four hold appropriate early years qualifications, three at level 3 and one at level 2. The pre-school opens Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday during school term times. Sessions are from 9am until 1pm, on Monday and Friday and 9am until 3pm, on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Children are able to attend a variety of sessions. There are currently 27 children attending who are in the early years age group. The setting provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. It supports a number of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To further improve the quality of the early years provision the provider should:

- extend further children's self-care skills, for example, by providing opportunities for them to serve themselves at snack times
- expand partnership working with other providers to obtain a fuller picture of children's next steps to support the planning of activities
- develop further the monitoring of the educational programmes and the quality of teaching by, for example, using regular observations and feedback on teaching practice to further enhance staff's skills towards excellence.

Inspection judgements

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

The pre-school promotes children's learning and development well. Staff cultivate a calm, warm and constructive environment, in which they provide challenging activities to stretch children's thinking. Parents praise the continuity in staffing, which means they really get to know the children and can plan activities to take account of each child's learning style. Staff support parents to provide information which informs their assessments and planning

for each child. They also provide information to parents about how they can link home with the activities the children are undertaking at the setting. For example, newsletters explain the activities that are happening and encourage children to bring in items from home, which start with the phonic sound they are exploring during circle time.

Staff build on the information they obtain from parents to get to know the children's interests and abilities through regular short observations. Where necessary they undertake long observations to fully explore children's next steps in their learning. These are linked to the development guidance from the document Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage to allow staff to track children's progress and make plans to extend their learning. However, they have not always been successful in gathering information from other providers about children's attainment in those other settings, to help obtain a fully rounded picture of children's development in all the settings they attend. The group ensures a summary of children's development is produced for parents in time for the progress check at age two. Any areas of concern that staff identify as potentially needing to be addressed with the help of external agencies are shared with parents so that the setting can fully support parents through any referral and assessment processes, which may be necessary. This level of assessment and planning ensures that children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are making good progress in line with their ability.

Next steps in children's learning are implemented through planning activities, which addresses individual children's learning requirements and often expands other children's learning at the same time. The staffs' intimate knowledge of the children means that planning to address children's individual needs is a real strength of this setting. They are very flexible in the activities they provide and are skilful in the use of a range of teaching methods to support children's learning in a low key and fun way. For example, on the day of inspection a child's key person arranged an activity to support a child's interaction with other children. She arranged for the child to undertake a survey about the other children's favourite fruits and vegetable. This activity caught a lot of the children's interest and allowed the child to interact with others in the safety of a structured activity. It also had the secondary learning outcomes with regard to writing, as the children recorded their findings, maths as they counted their results and knowledge of the world as they discussed the fruits and vegetables. Social development and communication skills are also used as they gathered the information and fed back the results of their survey at circle time.

Children are very well prepared for the transition to school through the structured circle time. They learn the key skills of listening to instructions, respecting and listening to the contributions of their friends and sharing their ideas in the wider group. Children confidently answer when their name is called, which supports their ability to answer the register when they transfer to school. The staff make the sessions fun, fast paced and engage all the children including those with additional needs. Staff reinforce children's understanding by being interactive. For example, during a session children identify a phonic sound, look at the written letter, and name objects and people whose names start with that letter and do some movement associated with it, such as, shaking like a jelly. Counting and colour recognition are also woven into the session so children can engage with the activity without feeling undue pressure.

Children have lots of opportunity to play with letters and make marks, this means children are confident to experiment and delight in their ability to write their names. They enjoy the incidental challenges staff provide as they help staff to 'sorting out' the number line. Children grow in their ability for sustained thought because staff support children to think of solutions for themselves. For example, how they can make their tower of bricks more stable. Staff introduce children to other cultures through activities based around cultural festivals and national events to ensure they start to develop an understanding of the wider world. They make links and develop an understanding of the local community through activities at the local school and church. Children's imagination is well supported and staff provide fresh and exciting role play areas, such as, a large tented area.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children

The processes to help children settle into the setting are highly effective because the staff group is small and consistent. Children quickly build strong, warm and happy relationships with staff and other children and are ready to explore and learn. Those who are more reluctant or less sure because they attend less frequently are well supported by a strong key person relationship. Children's behaviour is very good. Staff help children think about other people's feeling and they learn to negotiate and cooperate with their play mates. Where children feel an injustice has been done, staff take children's feelings seriously and listen to what they have to say, this means they feel their opinion is valued. The 'how have I been today' board reinforces positive messages about behaviour and children remind others about the simple safety rules they need to follow.

Children have considerable access to physical exercise during pre-school sessions. They play with bouncers, balls and bats or develop their bowling as well as counting skills during skittle sessions. They undertake sports day activities such as, egg and spoon or sack races and learn about playing by the rules and not cheating. All children are able to enjoy and explore the natural environment through planned walks in the church yard or by using the schools playing fields.

Children's dietary needs are met though the provision of freshly prepared snacks and packed lunches that parents supply. Children are encouraged to bring in fruit to share with their friends at snack time which means children experience tasting a wide variety of things at each session. Children's self-care skills are developed through them managing their lunch boxes at lunchtime. However, staff do not extend this further at snack times to encourage them to serve themselves or pour their own drinks. Good hygiene practices are introduced to children, through every day routines and children grow in independence as they have easy access to toilet facilities which open off the pre-school room. This is good preparation for their transition to school. Children are shown how to keep themselves safe through discussions which carefully support them to think through how to manage risk. The layout of the rooms allows children to make choices for themselves from a range of equipment and children show confidence as they make decisions about their own play activities. Where children are identified as having additional needs the help and advice of other professionals is sought to ensure their well-being is maintained and their needs are met.

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

The children benefit from a setting which has a strong management structure and a committee who is supportive. For example, committee members who have particular expertise in health and safety matters ensure that health and safety procedures are regularly reviewed. Appropriate recruitment procedures and induction processes ensure staff's suitability is established when they are employed and reviewed regularly. Ofsted is always informed of changes to the committee or the manager so appropriate checks can be carried out. Children are also safeguarded through the implementation of clear policies and procedures which ensure staff can identify child protection concerns and take appropriate action to protect children. The building is secure, which ensures that children cannot leave unaccompanied and helps staff manage the entry of parents and visitors. Staff have a clear understanding of risks, and health and safety concerns are promptly addressed while still allowing children to learn to manage some risks for themselves.

Required policies and procedures are in place to help with the safe and smooth management of the setting. The pre-school staff and committee are committed to developing the service for parents and children. A culture of reflective practice which involves all members of staff, parents and children has been developed. The setting also draws on the expertise of the local authority advisor. A number of changes have been made over the past two years, for example, the extension in opening hours has benefited parents and children. Further improvements continue to be implemented. For example, annual appraisals are undertaken with staff and the small size of the team means the manager knows the key strengths of all her staff members. However, she is also introducing interim supervision sessions to drive improvement and monitor suitability between appraisals. The manager monitors room activities and the completion of observation files and assessments of children's progress to ensure no group of children is progressing less favourably than others. However, there is scope to further improve the way staff's teaching skills are monitored to ensure their practice is helped to become exemplary.

Partnerships with parents and carers are very strong. A range of communication methods are used, verbal exchanges are supplemented with newsletters and notice board displays which help parents support their child's learning both at home and at the pre-school. Policies are shared with parents to keep them informed of how the setting operates. They praise the ethos of the pre-school which they feel provides a 'home from home' with lots of activity and space for children to play. Partnerships in the wider context are used to develop the quality of education. The setting actively links with other professionals to help children with additional needs. The group is committed to their role in ensuring all children, regardless of ability, can access their provision. They realise the importance of early intervention for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, ensuring that services are in place to support a child when they transfer to school. The nursery has developed its links with some other providers of the Early Years Foundation Stage where children attend more than one setting and has been successful in developing links with

two schools the children often move on to. This helps provide continuity in children's provision and the smooth transition to primary school when the time comes.

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	Satisfactory provision is performing less well than expectations in one or more of the key areas. It requires improvement in order to be good.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement action. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be inspected again within 12 months of the date of this inspection.
Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Setting details

Unique reference number	218139
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	916476
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	2 - 5
Total number of places	20
Number of children on roll	27
Name of provider	Edna Thornton Playgroup Committee
Date of previous inspection	06/06/2011
Telephone number	07989198078

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance '*Complaints procedure: raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted*', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools

and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises, which are usually the childminder's own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

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 4234, or email 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.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2012

