

St Thomas (Jigsaw) Pre School

St Thomas Church Centre, St Thomas Road, BRENTWOOD, Essex, CM14 4DB

Inspection date

23/01/2014

Previous inspection date

Not Applicable

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

2

Previous inspection:

Not Applicable

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	1
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 very well cared for in a safe, stimulating learning environment. They are happy and confident because of the very strong bonds they have formed with the adults, particularly their key persons.
- Staff plan and provide a wide range of interesting purposeful activities which enable children to make good progress given their capabilities and starting points.
- The key person system is very effective in engaging parents in their children's education. Parents are very happy with the quality of care and learning opportunities provided for the children.
- The partners who make up the registered provider demonstrate good leadership and are passionate about improving the quality of the provision. Accurate self-evaluation enables them to identify priorities for improvement.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Some staff are less effective at times in questioning children further during activities to challenge and extend their thinking and communication skills.

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 and interacted with the children.
The inspector looked at the provider's self-evaluation form, children's assessment records, planning documentation, evidence of staff suitability to work with children and other documents.
- The inspector jointly observed story time with one of the partners.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to on the day.
- The inspector spoke to staff.

Inspector

Vicky Turner

Full report

Information about the setting

St Thomas (Jigsaw) Pre School was registered in 2013 on the Early Years Register. It is situated in the town centre of Brentwood, Essex and is managed by an informal partnership. The pre-school serves the local area and is accessible to all children. It operates from a hall within a church centre and there is an adjacent area available for outdoor play.

The pre-school employs 11 members of childcare staff. Of these, all hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2, 3 or 4 and one holds Qualified Teacher Status. The pre-school opens on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays, term time only. Opening times are from 9.10am until 3pm, and on Friday until 12.40pm only. There are currently 44 children on roll within the early years age range. Children attend for a variety of sessions.

The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. It supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language and 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:

- enhance staff questioning skills in order to challenge and extend children's thinking and communication skills.

Inspection judgements

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

Teaching and learning are good because staff have a good understanding of the learning and development requirements and the way in which young children learn. Staff make regular observations of children's progress and use this information to identify children's next steps and plan purposeful learning experiences for them. As a result, children make good progress in their learning and development. Planning is based around children's interests as well as topics to cover all areas of learning. All children have learning journals which are well documented and include photographic evidence, parents' comments, children's work and thorough observations showing what children can do and their next steps. New bar charts have recently been introduced to track children's progress more efficiently and these are being used well by the staff team.

Children are well motivated, eager to explore and ready to learn new things because the learning environment is stimulating and inviting. They engage in a range of interesting

self-chosen and adult-led activities. For example, they enjoy dressing up as various 'people who help us', select materials to make a collage and engage in small world imaginative play. Staff recognise when it is appropriate to engage in children's play and extend the learning. Children's mathematical development is well promoted as they count how many children and adults are present during registration. Number games and rhymes, such as 'Five currant buns' and number printing activities reinforce counting skills and number recognition. Communication and language skills are developing well through a range of songs, nursery rhymes and stories. For example, children join in with the singing and actions of 'There was a Princess long ago' and 'When Goldilocks went to the house of the bears'. Group activities provide good opportunities for children to express their thoughts feelings and experiences. Children listen enthusiastically to a well told popular children's story about the three little pigs. Imaginative use of puppets brings the characters alive and enthuses the children. This is supported by the staff including sound effects, effective use of voice and appropriate facial expressions. Children predict what might happen in the story, count the characters and talk about characters' feelings. They thoroughly enjoy this session as they all join in to 'huff and puff' and 'blow the house down'. Children show a good understanding of the story. Most adults model language well but some adults do not always make best use of questions to further challenge and extend the children's thinking and communication skills. Children mark make and develop good knowledge of letters and sounds. Circle time and snack times bring children together and are good opportunities for 'talking'. Children have access to a range of information and communication technology equipment. They demonstrate good mouse control and sustained concentration as they play various games that support number and pre-reading skills on the computer and the nursery's tablet computer. Educational programmes on the tablet computer can be accessed in other languages. Children learn about their own and others' cultures as they celebrate various festivals throughout the year.

Partnership with parents is a real strength. Staff work very closely with parents who contribute to their child's initial assessment and have regular opportunities to discuss their children's progress. The 'Sharing Sheets' provide good opportunities for parents to support and consolidate their children's learning at home. For example, the 'Brentwood sheet' supports children's knowledge of their local area. 'Wow' moments at home are shared with the setting and displayed on the 'Wow' tree. This boosts children's self-esteem immensely. Learning journals and assessment records indicate that the majority of children make good progress from their starting points. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are very well supported, and therefore, make good progress in their learning and development. Children for whom English is not their home language also achieve well. Play plans are in place for those few children who are not progressing as well as they could, to enable them to achieve and support their learning. All staff are trained in Makaton sign language which supports and scaffolds children's language and communication skills well. Children benefit from the skills and expertise of a part-time qualified teacher who ensures progression and school readiness through a range of planned activities.

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

Children are very well protected at the setting because staff are vigilant and have a very good understanding of how to keep children safe. Children are signed in and out as they are escorted to and from the toilets. The premises are secure and visitors' identity is thoroughly checked before they enter the setting. Children are warmly greeted by their adults who provide comfort, reassurance and care of the highest quality. Praise is used well to motivate and recognise children's successes. This has a most positive impact on their self-esteem and confidence. Very well-established routines mean that children settle exceptionally well and know exactly what is expected. As a result, children's behaviour is exemplary. They take turns and share. Children's independence skills are very well promoted as they hang up their coats, self-register, change into their plimsolls and settle down quickly to a self-chosen activity. They are happy and secure in their environment because of the secure trusting relationships they share with their adults.

The key person system is very effective in sharing information with parents regarding their child's learning and development. As a result, children's individual needs are well met. The setting has strong links with the local primary school and there are thorough arrangements in place to ensure a smooth transition onto school. Children are prepared exceptionally well as independent learners ready for the next stage of their education. Children's knowledge of the wider world is supported through activities that focus on the celebrations of various festivals during the year. Children enjoy a healthy snack of bread sticks, cheese and a piece of fruit, which are planned with full consideration of their individual dietary needs. They complete a 'Healthy' chart at home and participate in a 'Healthy Eating' week at the setting, to reinforce the importance of eating healthily.

Children's physical development is well promoted as they thoroughly enjoy playing parachute games and develop their balancing skills as they hop from one stepping stone to another. Regular walks in and around the local area provides children with plenty of fresh air and physical exercise as they use their senses to explore and investigate the natural world in their surroundings. For example, they go on listening walks, post letters and visit the library. Visitors to the setting also successfully enhance the children's learning. For example, fire officers visit the setting to support children's learning on 'People who help us'.

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

The partners who form the registered provider demonstrate strong leadership of the setting. They know and understand their role and responsibilities to meet the safeguarding and welfare and the learning and development requirements of the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. All required documentation is in place and safeguarding procedures and practices are rigorously implemented. Staff are thoroughly checked to ensure that they are appropriately qualified and suitable to work with children. All staff receive regular training and updates in all aspects of safeguarding including child protection. They have a good understanding of their responsibilities towards the children and understand the procedures for reporting concerns about children's welfare. Daily risk assessments of the premises ensure that children can play safely. Thorough induction processes ensure that staff are familiar with policies and procedures of the setting. Staff

performance is monitored through regular supervision, annual appraisals and staff meetings. This provides good opportunities to identify staff training needs and for staff to contribute their ideas to the development of the setting. Staff are encouraged to extend their knowledge and expertise by attending regular training. As a result, staff are not only well qualified, but well trained and supported in their professional development. Cluster group meetings provide good opportunities to share good practice with other local early years provision.

Strong partnership with parents means that parents are fully involved in their children's education. Daily discussions with parents and regular newsletters keeps parents well informed of the setting's activities and their children's progress. Parents are very pleased with the provision and comment that 'every child is valued as a unique individual. Time and care is taken to really understand what that child needs to flourish and grow.' Specialist support and advice from a range of external agencies enable staff to plan effectively to meet children's specific needs. For example, some children receive speech and language support. The partners regularly monitor the planning and delivery of the educational programmes, assessment procedures and children's progress. They have high expectations for their staff and are passionate about improving outcomes for the children. The setting's processes for monitoring its provision are good and take account of the views of staff, parents and children. Accurate self-evaluation of the provision has enabled partners to identify and prioritise areas for improving the quality of the provision.

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	Requires improvement	The provision is not giving children a good standard of early years education and/or there are minor breaches of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected within twelve months of the date of this inspection.
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 monitored and inspected again within six 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	EY465177
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	933014
Type of provision	Sessional provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	30
Number of children on roll	44
Name of provider	Carol Cowlard and Heather Adams
Date of previous inspection	not applicable
Telephone number	07757661339

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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.

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