

Thurleigh Pre-School

High Street, Thurleigh, Bedford, Bedfordshire, MK44 2DB

Inspection date	17/10/2014
Previous inspection date	15/06/2011

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	
	Previous inspection:	
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

- Practitioners know the children in their care very well. They have thorough knowledge and understanding of their learning and development and, as a result, plan activities based on children's interests and individual needs.
- Children's behaviour is excellent. Practitioners reinforce positive behaviour consistently and, as a result, children know what is expected of them and learn to play cooperatively with their peers.
- Practitioners' safeguarding knowledge is secure. They are fully aware of the signs and symptoms that would cause them to be concerned and who they should report their concerns to. Consequently, children's safety and welfare are protected.
- Practitioners work in partnership with parents and other providers to ensure that children's individual needs are consistently met, for example, by ensuring that children who need to access their provision are able to.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Practitioners do not always maximise opportunities to build upon conversations in order to improve learning and, as a result, children's critical thinking is not fully extended.
- Practitioners do not always support children to develop their understanding of safety measures by encouraging them to take risks in their play.

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 had a tour of the pre-school.
- The inspector observed children playing in the main room, having their snack and activities in the outdoor area.
- The inspector conducted a joint observation with the pre-school manager.
- The inspector checked the qualifications and evidence of suitability of practitioners.
- The inspector looked at children's assessments, planning documents, policies and procedures.
- The inspector took account of the spoken views of parents.

Inspector

Katherine Hurst

Full report

Information about the setting

Thurleigh Pre-School was registered in 1999 on the Early Years Register. It is situated in a classroom in Thurleigh Lower School in Bedford, and is managed by a committee of parents. The pre-school operates from one classroom and there is an enclosed area available for outdoor play. The nursery employs three members of childcare staff, two of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3. The pre-school opens Monday to Friday during school term time. Sessions are from 12.45pm until 3.15pm, with the option of a lunch club from 12pm to 12.45pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 16 children on roll who are in the early years age group. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-olds. It supports children who speak English as an additional language.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- maximise all opportunities to enhance children's critical thinking, for example, by skilfully questioning them during play
- promote further opportunities for children to learn about safety practices by encouraging them to manage appropriate risks and challenges.

Inspection judgements

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

Children arrive happily at the pre-school and move freely around the room choosing what toys they want to play with. Both the indoor and outdoor learning environments are well resourced and promote learning through play. Children particularly enjoy sensory play with pumpkins and they explore the different textures with their hands. There is equipment, such as wooden spoons, to mix the insides of the pumpkin, and children offer to make the adults 'pumpkin sandwiches'. Practitioners provide other sensory experiences continuously, including water play, sand play and a digging pit containing mud. Using various tools helps to improve children's physical development. For example, it builds up their arm and hand muscles to enable them to write. By using their senses to explore these materials, children learn about the world they live in and how it works. Consequently, this supports children's future learning of science in school.

Practitioners communicate effectively with children, which promotes their language development. They read children's chosen stories to them regularly and invite them to make comments about what they can see in the pictures. Practitioners encourage children to listen to spoken words and what letter a word begins with. For example, they learn that

spider begins with the letter 's'. As a result, this supports children's literacy development. Practitioners use appropriate language that children understand, which enables them to follow instructions. Children are supported to develop good communication skills. However, at times, practitioners do not always maximise opportunities to build upon conversations, such as by skilfully questioning children in order to improve their learning. As a result, children's critical thinking is not fully extended. Children who speak English as an additional language are well supported in their learning and development. Practitioners adapt activities depending on children's abilities and maximise opportunities to extend their vocabulary and understanding by introducing new words. For example, while reading stories, practitioners encourage children to repeat single words, such as 'owl' and they explain their meanings. Children learn that owls are birds, they are awake at night and what sound they make. As a result, the quality of teaching is good. Therefore, all children make swift progress given their starting points towards the early learning goals and are well prepared for future learning in school.

Practitioners work closely with parents and involve them in their children's learning in the pre-school. Parents are asked to complete an 'All about me' form so that practitioners are able to gain a comprehensive understanding of children's development and what their abilities are. Practitioners use this information, as well as the observations they have gathered, to evaluate children's starting points. Regular observations of children during adult-led and child-initiated activities enable practitioners to have thorough knowledge of children's learning and development. Practitioners assess children's learning using approved developmental guidance and understand what stage of development each child is working within. As a result, next steps are planned based on children's interests and learning needs. Parents are encouraged to support children's learning in the home. Practitioners send home 'wow cards' that detail what a child can currently do and how parents can enhance this at home. Consequently, partnerships with parents are strong and children's learning and development benefit from a continuous link between the pre-school and their home.

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

Practitioners are friendly and caring towards the children. As a result, children are content and enjoy their time at the pre-school. Practitioners speak to children respectfully and are good role models. They consistently reinforce positive behaviour and, as a result, behaviour is excellent in the pre-school. For example, children are reminded to share with others and have good manners. Children understand what is expected of them and learn to play cooperatively with their peers. Practitioners have developed an effective key-person system to ensure continuity of care. Some children attend the on-site school's nursery class in the morning and the pre-school in the afternoon. Consequently, children benefit from having the same key person in both settings and practitioners are able to provide high-quality care based on in-depth knowledge of children's individual needs. Children have strong attachments with the practitioners and feel safe in their care.

Practitioners work in partnership with parents to ensure that children's individual needs are met. During the settling-in period, parents are asked to share any relevant information and, as a result, children benefit from good continuity of their care needs. Practitioners

support children effectively during changes in their lives, for example, when a new sibling is born or during the transition from pre-school to school. They work with the parents to alleviate any concerns that they may have and with new settings to ensure that children feel secure. Practitioners use group times, such as circle time, to talk about the life changes that children are experiencing. This helps to extend their understanding of what is happening and supports them to manage the change. Practitioners encourage children to be independent and make choices about their play. Children are confident and motivated to learn and, as a result, are emotionally well prepared for future learning when they move on to school.

Children enjoy playing outside in the fresh air. They are encouraged to choose whether they play inside or outside on a daily basis. Practitioners regularly take children for walks around the school field and this enables children to exercise in large open spaces. Parents are encouraged to follow the school's healthy food policy and support this by providing nutritious food in children's lunchboxes. Children are able to go to the toilet independently and maintain their privacy. Practitioners supervise children appropriately and teach them to wash their hands correctly. Consequently, children learn how to be healthy and to manage their own hygiene. The pre-school has a wide range of good quality equipment and resources. Children are able to access toys independently, which are safe for them to play with. Practitioners reinforce the importance of playing safely to the children. For example, they explain to them that they must not throw sand as it may go into someone's eyes. However, on occasions, practitioners do not always support children to develop their understanding of safety measures by encouraging them to take risks in their play. As a result, children do not consistently learn how to manage risks and challenges independently.

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

Practitioners have a comprehensive understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and they meet all of the legal requirements. Consequently, children's learning and welfare are promoted at all times. Practitioners' safeguarding knowledge is secure. They are fully aware of the signs and symptoms that would cause them to be concerned and who they should report their concerns to. The safety of children is paramount within the pre-school and practitioners work hard to ensure that it is a safe environment for all children. Safeguarding policies are in line with the guidance set by the Local Safeguarding Children Board. Practitioners understand the importance of protecting children from the inappropriate use of technology and have good procedures in place to promote this. Daily checks of the resources and environment help to minimise any risks and the majority of practitioners have a first-aid qualification. This ensures that they can respond to accidents promptly and with appropriate knowledge. As a result, children's safety and welfare are continuously protected.

The pre-school has excellent staff retention and the majority of practitioners have been in post for at least nine years. New staff are required to read the pre-school's policies and procedures, and are supervised by the pre-school manager during their induction period. All practitioners are qualified and suitable to care for children. The pre-school manager

monitors the quality of teaching. Supervision meetings are held with each practitioner and the committee chairperson to discuss strengths and areas for improvement. Practitioners attend relevant training courses based on the needs of the pre-school and also their interests. For example, the pre-school manager identified that a greater understanding about how two-year-old children learn was required when they were granted funding for children in this age range. One practitioner recently completed a course called 'Play, care and development for two year olds', which enabled her to understand how to meet the needs of children in this age range. To build on this knowledge, the manager is planning to attend this training in the next few months. Consequently, training has a positive impact on the quality of teaching and children's learning is enhanced. The pre-school manager monitors the educational programmes to ensure that the learning and development requirements are consistently met. She has regular meetings with practitioners to discuss children's individual learning needs.

Since the last inspection, practitioners encourage children to contribute their ideas for activities. For example, they ask children what they would like to do at pre-school and include these activities in the planning. The pre-school manager evaluates practice effectively and encourages other practitioners, parents and children to be part of the process. Parents and children are given questionnaires to provide feedback regarding strengths and areas for improvement. This helps to support practitioners to improve the quality of their teaching and care for children, and demonstrates a commitment to continuous improvement. As a result, partnerships with parents are enhanced. Parents are happy with the care that their children receive and, in particular, they have noticed an obvious improvement in their children's speech and behaviour since starting at the pre-school. Parents are keen to recommend the pre-school to friends and family. Practitioners work effectively in partnership with other providers, for example, the school where they are based. They work closely with the Early Years Foundation Stage class teachers and, as a result, children's learning is enriched.

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. We re-inspect nurseries and pre-schools judged as requires improvement within 12 months of the date of 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		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. 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	219207
Local authority	Bedford Borough
Inspection number	865786
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	16
Number of children on roll	16
Name of provider	Thurleigh Pre-School Committee
Date of previous inspection	15/06/2011
Telephone number	01234 771252

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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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