

Thames Pre-School

Bath Road, Cricklade, Swindon, Wiltshire, SN6 6AX

Inspection date

03/12/2014

Previous inspection date

29/03/2011

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

- The staff are effective role models. The children are encouraged to be independent in a caring and supportive environment, so they behave well and feel emotionally secure.
- The educational programme is stimulating and exciting, and it offers a wide range of learning experiences indoors and out. This means the children enjoy learning and make good progress.
- Staff have a thorough knowledge of how children learn and accurately assess children's skills. Staff understand, and plan for, children's individual needs.
- Staff inform parents fully about children's progress and encourage participation in their children's learning, and this promotes consistency in learning.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Children do not have sufficient opportunities to use mathematical language during play and activities, to extend mathematical understanding and development.
- Staff do not develop fully children's awareness of diversity in people, to promote an understanding of similarities and differences between people in the wider world.

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 talked to parents, staff and children to gain their views.
- The inspector observed activities both indoors and outdoors.
- The inspector completed a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector looked at children's development records, and staff suitability to work with children.
- The inspector held meetings with the manager and committee chairperson.

Inspector

Helen Millard

Full report

Information about the setting

Thames Pre-School has been in operation since 1984. In 2002 it moved to new premises in a mobile unit situated in the playground of St Sampson's Primary School, which is in the town of Cricklade near Swindon. The pre-school caters for children from two years and is open weekdays during school term times. Sessions are 9am to 3pm, Monday to Friday. There are currently 43 children on roll. The pre-school receives funding to provide free early education for two, three and four-year olds. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register. The pre-school supports children with special educational needs. Children are cared for in an activity room, which has a separate two-year-old area. There is an entrance hall, office, toilets and kitchen. There is a secure outside play area at the back, a gardening area at the side and a smaller play area at the front. Occasionally the group use the school's hall, woodland trail and field. The pre-school is managed by a committee of volunteers. This includes parents of children at the pre-school, and members of the local community. There are eight members of staff; four qualified at level 3 and three qualified at level two. Additionally there is an office administrator.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- develop opportunities for children to use mathematical language during play and activities, to extend mathematical understanding.
- expand resources to extend children's awareness of diversity and to promote their understanding of different people in the wider world.

Inspection judgements

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

Children participate in activities eagerly and staff play alongside them, showing interest and enthusiasm. The staff know the children well, and activities reflect the children's interests and needs. The learning opportunities provided are wide ranging and interesting, and this motivates the children to explore, investigate and direct their own learning. This approach develops self-confidence, and encourages the children to think, speculate and problem-solve. Staff encourage and develop understanding by using stimulating questioning. This promotes learning across all areas, and equips children with key skills needed for the next stage in their learning.

The quality of teaching is good and staff provide varied learning opportunities both inside and out. The large outside play area offers children a wealth of learning opportunities, and

this is a significant improvement since the last inspection. For example, two children ran around on hobbyhorses having a race, climbing up and down the artificial hill and laughing. Such opportunities promote physical development and encourage cooperation and collaboration. Another group sat sharing a story with a member of staff, while three others played in the kitchen area. One child stirred water and mud in a saucepan making 'soup'. The member of staff entered into the role-play, praising the child and asking how they made it. Communication and language skills were developed, and textures and materials explored. The skilful way the staff extend learning through children's play makes it fun, exciting and stimulating. The staff have high expectations, and the depth and breadth of the educational programme ensures the children make good progress across all learning areas.

During a gardening activity, the children discussed which vegetables had been grown and which ones they had used to make soup. The children were encouraged to decide how to prepare the garden to grow vegetables next year. The member of staff ensured all children expressed opinions and children thought critically about what needed doing. Children are actively involved in their learning, and their thinking challenged and extended. As the children dug up carrots and cleared the area, and one child said, 'A mouse has eaten them'. Children were encouraged to think which animal would have eaten them, and this developed thinking for understanding the world. However, on occasions staff miss opportunities to develop mathematical thinking and understanding as fully as possible.

Staff monitor children's progress through a thorough understanding of children's knowledge on entry to pre-school, regular observations and assessments. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Staff constantly discuss children's achievements and developments, and accurately identify next stages in learning. This means staff swiftly identify gaps in learning, and put effective interventions in place. There is constant communication with parents, and they feel informed and supported. The pre-school invites parents to be involved in sessions and events. For example, recently the pre-school invited parents in to read stories to children during a session. This developed a joint understanding and it means parents are actively involved and engaged in their children's learning. The committee are supportive and promote this partnership.

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

Relationships between staff and children are caring and nurturing. The children feel emotionally secure and the learning environment is varied and stimulating. Staff are good role-models, and they show a real interest in children's achievements which motivates children to succeed. For example, staff use the pre-school's 'sunshine tree' to recognise good behaviour and effort. This boosts children's self-esteem and confidence. The children also use it to praise each other, and this shows how it promotes respect and cooperation.

The staff encourage independence and enable the children to have control in situations. For example, children can decide when they require snack and they prepare their own food and help themselves to drinks. Children know when to wash their hands and they

understand risks, for example when using knives to spread butter on crumpets, and how to use the knives safely. This means the children are taking on responsibilities and they manage self-care effectively. As children prepared to go outside staff encouraged them to dress themselves, and they receive a certificate when they can do this unaided. This encourages competence at managing personal needs and the celebration of achievements, and prepares children well for the next stage in their learning.

Well-established routines mean children help to tidy away, listen attentively to instructions and participate in activities. The morning welcome song encourages children to listen attentively and participate in a group. This means the children are beginning to respect similarities and differences in other people and the wider community. However, this understanding is not developed as fully as possible as there is a lack of related resources. Physical exercise is an integral part of the learning and it is varied and engaging. The different outside environments are stimulating, well-resourced and engaging. The garden area promotes discussion of healthy lifestyles as children plant, grow and eat the produce. Such a variety of activities promotes children's all round development and well-being. Staff implement a successful system in which a child has a person special to them and this helps them form secure attachments. Close contact with other settings means transfer arrangements are well-organised and this helps to prepare children emotionally for the next stage in their learning.

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

The staff team work cooperatively and supportively, constantly discussing children's progress. They review provision and continuously strive to improve learning opportunities. Staff have a clear understanding of how to recognise children who may be at harm, and they understand the relevant procedures. This means staff protect children's welfare well. Staff understand and implement the safeguarding and welfare requirements thoroughly. The deployment of staff is effective, and communication between staff is aided by the recently introduced walkie-talkie system. The building is safe and secure, so children can play freely.

The manager uses a comprehensive staff induction process, for example more experienced staff support new staff members. The management team use a staff appraisal process to identify training needs, and address strengths and weaknesses of staff's teaching. Staff regularly discuss teaching and share training ideas, which means teaching standards and expectations are consistent. For example, all staff learnt 'sign along' to help children with specified needs learn effectively. This develops staff's understanding of how children learn, and ensures the educational programmes help children to make good progress.

The staff work well as a team. They plan activities around children's needs and interests. For example, children wanted the role-play area turned into a 'Hairdressing salon', and staff then planned a visit to a local hairdressing salon. Staff regularly discuss observations and assessments, and these inform planning. This is an improvement since the last

inspection. Records are checked and progress monitored, which ensures gaps in learning are identified, and if necessary support provided. This means gaps in learning are closing and staff are striving towards maintaining the highest levels of achievement.

There is a strong desire to constantly review and improve provision, with significant improvements made in the last two years. Undertaking improvement plans, the manager has set specific targets, and involved staff, parents and outside agencies. Regular parent questionnaires, and parent meeting times, maintain this close communication and parents' views are valued. These partnerships have a positive impact on children's learning and progress, and ensure a consistent and successful approach.

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	199398
Local authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	842115
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	2 - 5
Total number of places	37
Number of children on roll	43
Name of provider	Thames Pre-School Committee
Date of previous inspection	29/03/2011
Telephone number	01793 750635

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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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