

St Thomas Aquinas After School Project



St.Thomas Aquinas Combined School, St. Marys Avenue, Bletchley, MILTON KEYNES,
MK3 5DT

Inspection date

26 March 2015

Previous inspection date

24 March 2009

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

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision is good

- Children thoroughly enjoy coming to the after school project and staff plan a good range of activities which are based on their interests. Children state that they particularly enjoy the range of art and craft activities available to them.
- Staff complement children's learning in school by extending their knowledge of themes, such as 'The Ancient Mayans'.
- The manager is very organised. She is supported effectively by professional staff and the active committee members.
- The manager has implemented previous inspection recommendations, which demonstrates a commitment to improvement.
- The staff have a good knowledge of the safeguarding and welfare requirements and therefore, children's health, safety and security are promoted.
- Children are well behaved; they set the rules for acceptable behaviour and follow these in practice. They have good relationships with the attentive staff.
- Partnerships with parents and the school are strong and they speak highly of the after school project. There are consistent links to support children's care and learning.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- Staff do not always make the best use of resources in the outdoor play area to support children's interests and to provide more choices.
- The organisation of snack time does not fully encourage children's independence skills.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- enhance outdoor play experiences so that children have more choice and opportunity to follow their interests
- review arrangements for snack time to enable children to build on their independence skills.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities indoors and outside.
- The inspector had discussions with children, parents, committee member and staff.
- The inspector looked at the self-evaluation form and a selection of policies and children's records.

Inspector

Kim Mundy

Inspection findings

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend. This is good

The atmosphere is buzzing as children arrive after school and they are confident happy and relaxed. Staff are guided by the learning and development requirements as they plan exciting activities to enhance children's interests. Therefore, all children engage and have fun. Children enjoy many art and craft activities, such as making fantasy flowers and create their own pictures in the style of other artists, such as Van Gogh. Staff use good teaching skills; they know when to offer support and when to sit back and allow children to try things for themselves. Children enjoy being active outdoors, although, staff do not always make good use of resources in this area to provide choice and to stimulate children's interest. Staff organise different 'clubs', which rotate so that all children are able to join in. For example, children enjoy making pizzas in the 'cooking club'. Children care for living things as they plant herbs and feed 'Gary' the African snail. As a result, children extend their existing good skills in the after school project.

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

A member of staff is responsible for overseeing the children's time in the after school project and they are called a key-person. Children enjoy playing with their friends after school and they are very polite, kind and caring towards adults and one another. Children learn to take turns and share, for example, as they play card games. Staff support children's growing understanding of the importance of healthy eating and exercise. Children enjoy healthy snacks, although, staff do not fully extend their independence skills at this time, by for example, helping to prepare and serve food and drink. Good procedures for accidents and administering medication support children's good health. There is a very good range of resources and the children's play environment is attractive and enticing. There is space for children to relax in the book area and children have time to do their homework.

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

The manager leads and manages her team effectively. There are robust recruitment procedures in place and as a result, very enthusiastic staff are caring for the children. All staff have good knowledge of safeguarding and child-protection reporting procedures. The staff team, children and parents are involved in the self-evaluation process and their reflective practice results in continuous improvements. The manager uses effective systems to monitor staff performance and their professional development. Staff have good opportunities to develop their skills through training. All staff hold first-aid qualifications and keep up to date, for example, by implementing the latest food allergen requirements. Parents speak highly of the after school project stating their children are always excited to attend and they feel reassured by this.

Setting details

Unique reference number	141788
Local authority	Milton Keynes
Inspection number	841491
Type of provision	Out of school provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	4 - 8
Total number of places	60
Number of children on roll	36
Name of provider	St Thomas Aquinas After School Project Committee
Date of previous inspection	24 March 2009
Telephone number	01908 373977

St. Thomas Aquinas After School Project registered 1995. It operates from 3pm to 6pm during term time and from 8.30am to 6pm in the school holidays. The after school project has extended its service provision to include a breakfast club from 7.30am to 8.45am. All of the staff working at the After School Project hold relevant qualifications to level 3 and the manager holds a relevant level 5 qualification.

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