

St Thomas' Playgroup

St. Thomas's Road Play Group, 75 Monsell Road, London, N4 2EF



Inspection date

21 June 2016

Previous inspection date

6 July 2015

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
	Previous inspection:	Requires Improvement	3
Effectiveness of the leadership and management		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Outstanding	1
Personal development, behaviour and welfare		Outstanding	1
Outcomes for children		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision is outstanding

- Enthusiastic, greatly experienced and committed staff ensure that children receive a high quality early education. The learning environment is meticulously well planned and stimulating for all children.
- All children make rapid progress in their learning and excel in their development. Staff quickly identify children who may need additional support to close any gaps in their learning. Children are very well prepared for their next stage of education.
- Staff teach exceptionally well and support children to become clear communicators and mature thinkers. Children are keen to share their ideas and enjoy taking part in lively and engaging activities across all areas of learning.
- Children are taught to be highly independent and staff support them to take pride in their achievements, demonstrating high aspirations for children's accomplishments.
- Children are very happy and have strong bonds with their key person. They settle quickly and adults support their emotional and physical well-being exceptionally well.
- Leadership is aspirational with a clear drive to improve significantly since the last inspection. All previous actions and recommendations have been promptly addressed and all staff have a proactive and reflective attitude to their practice.
- Partnerships with parents and other professionals are remarkably strong. Successful collaboration ensures consistency in children's learning and experiences.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- enhance further checks on the progress made by different groups of children, to address any gaps in their learning so all continue to make rapid progress.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed teaching and learning inside and outside.
- The inspector spoke to parents to gain their views and experiences of the setting.
- The inspector spoke with children and staff at appropriate times during the inspection and held a meeting with the provider.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector looked at a sample of the children's learning records, staff observations and planning, and a range of policies and documentation, such as records of staff suitability checks and safeguarding procedures.

Inspector
Shana Laffy

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of the leadership and management is outstanding

Leaders and managers are highly dedicated. They have significantly raised the quality of the provision since the last inspection and the use of self-evaluation processes have enabled the staff to enhance the outcomes for children. Leaders regularly check the quality of staff practice to ensure remarkably high quality teaching. Staff have excellent opportunities to undertake continued professional training to keep their knowledge current, for example, through them becoming expert in their areas of interest. Although the arrangements for individual assessment are excellent, leaders and managers recognise that they could improve how they check the progress made by different groups of children to ensure all continue to make sustained and rapid progress.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is outstanding

Knowledgeable staff plan an extensive range of highly stimulating activities to meet the needs of children of all ages, inside and outside. Children are consistently engaged in meaningful learning experiences and staff skilfully help to extend their learning. Staff maximise opportunities to introduce new ideas to children. For example, children really enjoyed threading breakfast cereal loops onto spaghetti fixed in modelling materials, to help develop early counting skills and their small muscle control. Staff supported them very effectively by asking a range of questions. Staff reflect in detail on children's learning and share their observations and assessments with parents. Staff know their key children incredibly well and plan what they need to learn next very carefully.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are outstanding

Children thrive in the vibrant and highly nurturing environment. Adults support children to become confident and independent and they are curious to investigate the world around them. The key person system is highly effective and children feel secure, settle remarkably quickly and form strong bonds with staff. Children learn about the importance of living a healthy life and staying active. For example, they take part in weekly sports sessions to develop a range skills. Children's behaviour is exemplary at all times. Staff support even the youngest children to develop mature negotiation skills and strong friendships. Children understand what fairness means and how to respect others.

Outcomes for children are outstanding

Children are motivated to learn. They develop excellent physical skills and become confident and articulate communicators. Children have remarkable imagination. For example, they really enjoy making up and telling stories, which they then put into writing, to develop their early literacy skills. Children benefit from engaging activities that develop their early reading and develop many key skills needed for school.

Setting details

Unique reference number	131742
Local authority	Islington
Inspection number	1021767
Type of provision	Sessional provision
Day care type	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Age range of children	2 - 5
Total number of places	26
Number of children on roll	26
Name of registered person	St Thomas's Playgroup Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP907247
Date of previous inspection	6 July 2015
Telephone number	02073549347

St Thomas's Playgroup registered in 1994. It is situated in the London Borough of Islington. The playgroup is open from 9.15am to 3.15pm on Monday to Wednesday, and from 9.15am to 1.15pm on Thursday and Friday. The provider is in receipt of funding for free early education for children aged two, three and four years. The provider employs six members of staff; of these, five hold relevant early years qualifications. One member of staff has early years teacher status, and four members of staff have a level 3 qualification.

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