

# Inspection of Thorns Pre-School

THORNS PRIMARY SCHOOL THORNS ROAD, BRIERLEY HILL, WEST MIDLANDS  
DY5 2JY

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Inspection date: 24 October 2019

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
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The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding

## What is it like to attend this early years setting?

### The provision is good

Staff warmly welcome children who arrive happy and quickly settle into activities. During morning registration, children are eager to take part as they learn to count, calculate and recognise shapes. Staff provide excellent first-hand experiences to help children learn about living things. For example, the on-site pond is used safely to help children learn about the life cycle of the frog. Children show a real fondness for stories as staff use popular books as a secure base to motivate them to learn. For example, children use animal masks and pictures of fruits as they act out a familiar story. They enjoy singing rhymes and songs, which are often linked to a topic and children's interests.

Children are eager to help and easily follow instructions. For example, they quickly wash their hands and settle down for their snack and enjoy conversations with staff. Children often show high levels of engagement and enjoyment during activities. However, on occasions, boys and girls are not as equally motivated by some of the mathematics and writing activities made available. Staff are inclusive in their approach and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported to help them take part in the experiences available.

### What does the early years setting do well and what does it need to do better?

- The manager supports the well-established and experienced staff team through a targeted cycle of supervision and training. The views of parents and children are valued and used effectively to help staff reflect on and extend their practice.
- Overall, staff provide a rich range of activities to engage children in learning and to help them make good progress from their starting points. Staff provide excellent opportunities for children to learn about the natural world and how to keep safe during the forest-school sessions.
- Staff regularly observe and assess children and plan for their next steps in learning to help them progress. However, staff do not always use this information precisely enough during their interactions with children to help them make the very best possible progress.
- Staff place a high priority on promoting children's communication and language skills and their listening and attention skills. They skilfully engage children during group times and story sessions through using a variety of visual aids and props to capture their interest.
- Staff place a clear focus on preparing children for school and provide a range of experiences to help promote their mathematical and literacy development. However, the mathematics activities are not always as popular with the girls, and the boys do not always show the same level of interest as the girls do in writing.
- Staff use a range of strategies to help involve parents in their children's learning.

For example, parents make good use of the discovery and book bags to help extend children's learning at home. The stay-and-play sessions and termly progress reviews are well attended and used effectively by staff to help teach parents how about they can support their children.

- The staff team prioritise closing gaps in children's learning and quickly identify any children who need additional support. The manager uses funding to help support children with SEND. For example, children benefit from additional staff who provide targeted interventions to improve their communication and language skills.
- Staff promote children's good health and physical development. They provide parents with useful information about good oral hygiene, healthy eating and the benefits of being outdoors in the fresh air. They prioritise physical activities well. For example, staff encourage children to use tweezers, pipettes, saws and nuts and bolts to help strengthen their fingers.
- Staff support children to be independent and take on additional responsibility as they vote to select who will be the helper of the day. They encourage children to identify and take controlled risks. For example, children understand the importance of keeping safe around the fire pit and how to use tools safely during the forest-school session. They behave well and learn how to be kind and respect each other.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Arrangements for safeguarding are effective. There are clear recruitment procedures in place to ensure staff working with children are suitable and their ongoing suitability is assessed at each staff supervision. Staff have a good understanding of child protection policies and procedures and benefit from ongoing training to keep their safeguarding knowledge up to date. The manager and staff conduct detailed risk assessments of the activities provided to ensure risk is minimised. For example, staff are vigilant about children's safety when they use the forest area. They help children learn about how changes in the weather can cause risks in their environment and how to manage them safely.

## What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- robustly use the information collated about children's progress to assist staff to provide the highest level of challenge during activities to help children make rapid progress
- provide a more motivating range of experiences that appeal to both boys and girls to help promote their learning even further in exploring quantity, weight, measurement and writing.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY243072
<b>Local authority</b>	Dudley
<b>Inspection number</b>	10116377
<b>Type of provision</b>	Childcare on non-domestic premises
<b>Registers</b>	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
<b>Day care type</b>	Sessional day care
<b>Age range of children</b>	2 to 5
<b>Total number of places</b>	18
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	29
<b>Name of registered person</b>	Thorns Pre-School Committee
<b>Registered person unique reference number</b>	RP905658
<b>Telephone number</b>	01384 818312
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	8 January 2015

## Information about this early years setting

Thorns Pre-School opened in 1989 and operates from a self-contained mobile building within the grounds of Thorns Primary School, Brierley Hill, West Midlands. The pre-school opens from 8.40am to 3.10pm each weekday. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. The pre-school employs four members of staff. Of these, one holds early years professional status, two hold a qualification at level 3 and one holds a qualification at level 2.

## Information about this inspection

### Inspector

Parm Sansoyer

## Inspection activities

- The inspector observed the quality of teaching during activities indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The inspector spoke with staff, parents and children during the inspection.
- The inspector completed a joint observation with the pre-school manager.
- The inspector held a meeting with the pre-school manager. She looked at relevant documentation and evidence of the suitability of staff working in the pre-school.
- The inspector took into account the views of parents.

We carried out this inspection 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.

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