

Inspection of St Thomas's Day Nursery

40 St. Thomas Street, Oxford, Oxfordshire OX1 1JP

Inspection date: 13 November 2019

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

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children thrive and settle quickly in this exceptionally friendly, welcoming nursery. Their move from home to the nursery is tailored impeccably to the needs of each child and their family. Children develop incredibly secure emotional attachments to their key person and other staff. They play safely in a secure and stimulating care and learning environment.

Children have rich learning experiences that help them to develop skills essential for their future education. Staff use songs and rhymes well to develop children's communication and language skills effectively. Young children sing familiar songs, with actions and props, and are able to identify the sounds the animals in their songs make. Staff place high priority on the development of children's early literacy skills. All children choose to share books. They handle books carefully and delight in re-telling their favourite stories to adults. Staff model vocabulary well and ask children the meanings of more-complex words. For example, when reading a book about a squirrel, older children learn the meaning of new words such as 'spontaneous' and 'hibernate'.

The dedicated manager and staff share consistently high expectations for every child. They work very closely with parents. Staff establish exceptional partnerships with other professionals, such as speech and language therapists and physiotherapists. This helps them to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) superbly. For example, staff regularly liaise with professionals and parents to seek advice, review children's progress and set them challenging targets.

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

- Children's behaviour is exemplary. They play harmoniously together and understand the need to share and take turns. Staff give meaningful praise to children for their excellent behaviour and individual efforts, supporting them to develop a highly positive sense of themselves.
- Staff teach children very effectively about the importance of listening and following instructions in order to stay safe. Children not only follow their safety instructions in the indoor environment, but show full understanding of the impact of these on their own personal safety. For example, they explain, in detail, why the older children need to risk assess the garden each day and how they need to consider where to place equipment for the safety of their younger peers. Staff meet the care needs of children extremely well. Children show an excellent understanding of the impact of their behaviour choices on their own personal safety and that of their friends.
- The nursery is a rich hive of activity both inside and outdoors. Staff gather

detailed information about children and their families from the outset. This helps them to provide personalised settling-in procedures to ensure that all children settle quickly and are ready to learn.

- Staff prepare children for life, helping them to learn about respecting others and developing their understanding of the similarities and differences of their friends and staff. Children are given a range of rich experiences to understand how different people live and how they celebrate. They are frequent visitors to Oxford, accessing an array of local facilities such as the museums and markets.
- The manager monitors staff closely and observes them in their role. She makes suggestions as to how staff can improve their practice further and plans targeted training opportunities to help them to develop their knowledge and skills. Since the last inspection, staff have also had opportunities to learn from each other and share their skills and expertise through peer-to-peer observations. However, there is still scope for continuous professional development opportunities to focus even more precisely on raising teaching practice to the highest level.
- Staff promote children's physical well-being and their understanding of healthy lifestyles excellently. For example, children enjoy a range of high-quality meals, and staff place a strong focus on children's physical activity. Across the nursery, staff are calm and attentive role models who actively encourage children to understand how they can make healthy eating choices. For example, children are reminded to drink at regular intervals, and the staff have withdrawn all refined sugars from their menus to support children's excellent health.
- Staff use a variety of ways to promote children's communication and language development, including children who speak English as an additional language. For example, they share dual-language books with children and parents. In addition, staff recently completed sign language training and are using this to support their focus on developing the communication and language skills of children with SEND and those who speak English as an additional language.
- Staff develop exceptionally strong and positive relationships with children. This promotes an excellent sense of security and emotional well-being. Children form highly positive attachments and show great motivation. The excellent layout of the nursery helps to promote even the youngest children's independence and self-esteem to the highest level.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager and staff have thorough knowledge and understanding of the safeguarding policies. They know how to help keep children safe and protect their welfare. They all have a strong understanding of all requirements and documentation, such as the 'Prevent' duty guidance. All staff have attended additional training to ensure that their knowledge is current and well embedded. This includes training in relation to female genital mutilation. Staff discuss safeguarding routinely, such as in team meetings and at regular supervision meetings. All staff know who to contact to seek additional advice and raise and follow up any concerns.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- build on the good systems for staff supervision and support to further develop their skills, to help enrich the practice and raise the teaching to an even higher level.

Setting details

Unique reference number	134023
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	10108484
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children	0 to 4
Total number of places	40
Number of children on roll	44
Name of registered person	St Thomas Day Nursery
Registered person unique reference number	RP518093
Telephone number	01865249800
Date of previous inspection	19 February 2015

Information about this early years setting

St Thomas's Day Nursery opened in 1986. It operates from a converted office building on two floors in the centre of Oxford, Oxfordshire. The nursery is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education for children aged three and four years. The nursery employs 14 members of childcare staff. Of these, the manager holds an early years qualification at level 7, one member of staff has a qualification at level 6, three have qualifications at level 5, and five hold qualifications at level 3. The nursery is open Monday to Thursday from 8.15am until 5.30pm, and on Friday from 8.15am until 5pm, for 51 weeks of the year.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Amanda Perkin

Inspection activities

- The inspector carried out a learning walk with the manager through all areas of the nursery and discussed how the curriculum is organised.
- A joint observation was carried out by the inspector and the manager.
- The inspector took account of parents' views through written testimonials.
- A meeting was held between the inspector and the manager.
- The inspector looked at a sample of relevant documents, including evidence of staff's qualifications and their suitability to work with children.

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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