

# Inspection of St Thomas' Playgroup

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

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Inspection date: 24 January 2020

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Outstanding</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

Children flourish and make strong progress in this nurturing and stimulating environment. Children have secure attachments with staff and show very good levels of confidence and emotional well-being. Staff have high expectations for children. They plan an extensive variety of enjoyable and exciting activities that capture children's interest and support their individual learning needs extremely well. For instance, children delight in dancing, singing and exploring musical instruments, along with a guitar during interactive music sessions. They also enjoy participating in junk-modelling activities and talk about their creations with growing confidence. They take pride in reading the beautiful handmade books that they helped to create, such as 'We're Going on a Bear Hunt'. This supports children's interest in storytelling and literacy extremely well. There is sharp focus on children's mathematical learning. Children enjoy a range of original activities that support their counting and use of mathematical language. For example, children enjoy threading and counting with cereal hoops and dry spaghetti. They also discuss shapes, lengths and sizes when exploring play dough and by weighing different toy cakes. Children behave extremely well and show good engagement and enjoyment. However, at times the noise level makes it difficult for them to fully concentrate and be highly focused on their learning.

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

- Staff plan an ambitious and interesting curriculum that supports children to gain new knowledge and skills. Children display positive attitudes towards learning and are very motivated.
- Staff are highly skilled at extending children's language development. For example, staff frequently model new language, question children and use descriptive words such as 'delicate' and 'fragile'.
- At times, the way activities are organised contributes to a noise level that makes it difficult for other children to concentrate on what they are doing. Despite this, children show that they are happy and enjoy their time at the playgroup.
- Partnerships with parents are a real strength. Parents take an active role in the life of the playgroup and express extremely high levels of appreciation and satisfaction. They state that staff show excellent commitment to their roles, planned activities are original and creative, and their children are flourishing.
- Staff regularly update their knowledge and professional skills. For example, staff were inspired by recent training to introduce a variety of interesting activities to develop children's imagination and creativity.
- Children have good opportunities to explore and learn outdoors. This was evident when children enjoyed experimenting with natural materials such as leaves, bark and mud in the mud kitchen. Staff skilfully extended their learning as they played and asked them about the different ingredients they needed to

make soup. Staff make learning extremely entertaining.

- Children have excellent opportunities to learn about different cultures and backgrounds. This was apparent when children enjoyed engaging in role play in a Chinese restaurant and learning about family traditions when celebrating Chinese New Year.
- Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities have strong support. For instance, staff engage in specialist training, work closely with other professionals and employ additional staff to meet children's personal learning needs. This helps the children to make very good progress in their development.
- Children are supported to learn about adopting healthy lifestyles exceptionally well. For example, the playgroup has recently received the silver award for Healthy Early Years from the Mayor of London. Staff use opportunities throughout the day, such as at mealtimes and during play, to teach children about the importance of being active and healthy.
- The playgroup leader is committed to ensuring that children benefit from a high-quality experience at the playgroup. There is a strong culture of reflective practice to constantly improve outcomes for all children. Furthermore, staff state that they receive good levels of support and work very well together as a team.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Recruitment processes are thorough and rigorous to help ensure the suitability of all staff. New staff undergo a detailed induction to ensure they understand their role. Staff are clear about their responsibilities to keep children safe and to protect the children in their care. They can identify different signs and symptoms that may cause concern about a child's welfare, and understand how to gain further help and support. Staff complete daily risk assessments of the hall and garden. The playgroup leader has gone to great lengths to ensure the security of the garden, for example by installing a new intercom system and high iron gates.

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

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

- review the arrangements of activities in order to provide children with better opportunities to fully concentrate on their learning and play.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	131742
<b>Local authority</b>	Islington
<b>Inspection number</b>	10138048
<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 3
<b>Total number of places</b>	26
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	26
<b>Name of registered person</b>	St Thomas's Playgroup Committee
<b>Registered person unique reference number</b>	RP907247
<b>Telephone number</b>	02073549347
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	21 June 2016

## Information about this early years setting

St Thomas' 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 five members of staff; of these, four hold relevant early years qualifications at level 3 and one is currently completing her level 3 training qualification. The manager holds qualified teacher status.

## Information about this inspection

### Inspector

Amy Mckenzie

## Inspection activities

- The inspector and the playgroup leader went on a learning walk and discussed the aims and organisation of the playgroup.
- The inspector carried out a number of observations and assessed the quality of teaching and experiences for children.
- A joint observation was conducted by the playgroup leader and the inspector to look at the learning opportunities for children.
- A number of parents' views were taken into consideration.
- A range of documentation was viewed, including staff suitability information and qualification certificates.

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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