

# Inspection of Thatcham Pre-School

8 The Burdwood Centre, Thatcham, Berkshire RG19 4YA

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Inspection date: 30 June 2021

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Inadequate</b>
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Inadequate</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Inadequate</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not applicable

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

### **The provision is inadequate**

Children's safety is not assured within the pre-school due to significant weaknesses in safeguarding procedures. However, staff are effective in promoting children's learning and development. Children benefit from learning across all areas of the curriculum. They are confident communicators, recognise changes in their environment and recall and share their past experiences. For instance, they tell visitors that the sky is dark and therefore it will rain. Older children eagerly report that when it had rained the previous week, the garden had flooded and made the ground slippery.

Overall, children are happy, settled and demonstrate good levels of confidence and well-being. Most children are eager to come into the pre-school and quickly become engaged in play.

For most of the day, children are able to choose if they want to play inside or outside. Outdoor play experiences are a daily occurrence for the children. They develop good strength and coordination skills, for example as they dig in the sand, move wood around and balance across wooden blocks.

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

- The provider does not ensure that all staff have a thorough knowledge of child protection. Although staff have attended online training, leaders and managers do not robustly check that all staff understand the signs which might indicate that a child may be at risk of harm.
- Staff assess children's learning regularly. This helps them to find out what children already know and identify any emerging gaps. However, they do not always use the information gathered from assessments, to focus their teaching on what children need to learn next. For example, they do not consistently include children's specific next steps in planned activities.
- Staff are sensitive to children's emotional needs and anxieties, and know them well. For instance, staff recognise when some children need extra time to settle into the daily routine. They give children cuddles and encourage them to talk about how they are feeling.
- Children are learning how to become independent and are encouraged to try and do things for themselves. They display a positive attitude towards their learning. Children's behaviour is good, and they listen to instructions well. Staff encourage children to express their emotions and to think of ways of handling conflict amicably.
- Parents are complimentary about the quality of care and learning provided by staff and the manager. They comment that the staff are kind and caring, and say that they are well informed about their child's development.

- Staff provide focused activities to develop older children's pre-reading and writing skills. Older children learn to recognise letters of the alphabet and the sounds they represent. This prepares them well for the next stage in their learning. Parents say their children are well prepared for future learning, including starting school.
- Staff support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities effectively. They ensure that children receive the help they need swiftly and work in close partnership with parents and other professionals. Staff use any additional funding children receive successfully and specifically to enhance outcomes for the individual child.
- Staff act as good role models. They listen to children well, encourage their participation in activities and frequently praise them for their efforts and achievements. Children interact confidently with staff and other children and engage in interesting conversations with them. For instance, they recall past experiences, such as when the fireman came to visit the pre-school.
- Overall, children enjoy a good range of different experiences. For example, staff organise a make-believe building site in the garden. Staff encourage children as they pretend to be construction workers. Children confidently dress themselves in safety hats and coats and work together to move the materials around using a wheelbarrow.
- Weaknesses in staff training and supervision arrangements mean that gaps in staff's safeguarding knowledge are not identified or acted on swiftly. Staff do not have a secure understanding of the signs of abuse, including wider safeguarding issues, such as female genital mutilation and the 'Prevent' duty. This puts children's safety at risk.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

The provider has not developed consistently robust safeguarding procedures to promote children's safety, welfare and well-being. Managers do not provide staff with training that gives them a good knowledge and understanding of child protection. The provider does not check that staff understand the child protection procedures, including the signs that might indicate a child may be at risk of harm. This puts children's safety at risk. The provider has effective recruitment processes in place to help ensure that those working with children are suitable. The provider uses recruitment policies and procedures well to ensure that staff working with children are suitable to do so. Staff carry out checks on the environment and ensure it is clean and free from any potential risks. This helps to provide a safe environment for children to play.

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

**To meet the requirements of the early years foundation stage, the provider must:**

	<b>Due date</b>
ensure that all staff have an up to-date knowledge of safeguarding issues	02/07/2021
strengthen supervision to identify gaps in staff knowledge, with regard to safeguarding.	09/07/2021

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

- strengthen the implementation of the curriculum to help fully engage children in deep levels of concentration and motivation in their learning, specifically during group activities
- focus more on what children need to learn next and consider how to implement these into all activities.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY555048
<b>Local authority</b>	West Berkshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10143641
<b>Type of provision</b>	Childcare on non-domestic premises
<b>Registers</b>	Early Years Register
<b>Day care type</b>	Full day care
<b>Age range of children at time of inspection</b>	2 to 4
<b>Total number of places</b>	35
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	37
<b>Name of registered person</b>	Thatcham Pre-school Committee
<b>Registered person unique reference number</b>	RP524430
<b>Telephone number</b>	07831 611145
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not applicable

## Information about this early years setting

Thatcham Pre-School registered in 2017 and is located in Thatcham, Berkshire. The setting operates Monday to Friday, during term time only, between 9am and 3pm. There are currently seven staff who work directly with the children. Of these, five hold a level 3 qualification and one holds a level 2 qualification. The setting receives funding to provide free early education for children aged two, three and four years.

## Information about this inspection

### Inspector

Ingrid Howell

## Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider received since the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- The manager and the inspector completed a learning walk together to understand how the curriculum is organised.
- The inspector completed a joint observation of an activity with the manager and discussed the quality of teaching.
- Discussions were held between the staff and the inspector, to help establish their understanding of how to safeguard the children in their care.
- The inspector viewed relevant documentation, including suitability checks, evidence of paediatric first-aid training and public liability insurance.
- The inspector observed the quality of teaching during activities and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.

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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