

Inspection of Thatcham Pre-School

8 The Burdwood Centre, Thatcham, Berkshire RG19 4YA

Inspection date: 8 November 2021

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Inadequate
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children are happy and secure, and enjoy the time they spend at the pre-school. They are motivated to explore the learning environment and make new discoveries. Children happily come into the setting and are greeted by warm and welcoming staff. The pre-school provides a secure foundation for children's future learning, and children make good progress. Children particularly enjoy the freedom to play and learn outdoors. They eagerly challenge themselves as they use a selection of resources that encourage them to be adventurous and physically active. For example, they explore different ways of climbing on and off apparatus, and act out familiar stories, such as when they pretend to walk through long grass and thick forests.

Children have a positive attitude to learning. They make choices about what they want to do and take part in activities to help build on their knowledge and skills over time. Staff have high expectations for all children. They are committed to providing high-quality, inclusive care and education for all children and their families. Staff support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities effectively.

Children develop the skills they need for their future learning. They are eager to explore, investigate and find things out. They show good levels of emotional well-being, are self-assured and develop good social skills.

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

- Staff make good use of observations and assessments to help plan for children's next steps in play and learning. They are effective at extending children's learning as they interact with them. For instance, during stories, they introduce new words, such as 'thick' and 'oozy', to describe mud. These positive learning experiences help to develop children's vocabulary and support their literacy skills.
- Staff skilfully adapt their teaching to meet children's individual needs. They encourage them to complete tasks for themselves and try different ways of doing things. This is observed when staff encourage children to persevere as they complete puzzles. Children soon work out that they need to match the colour on the board to the pieces. Staff praise children readily for their attempts and achievements.
- Overall, partnerships with parents are good. Parents report positively about how happy their children are attending the pre-school. Staff work closely with parents and gather information from them before children start attending. This enables them to find out what children already know and can do, and plan for their next steps. Staff ensure that parents remain continually up to date about their

children's ongoing care and learning. However, some parents report that they would like staff to provide more suggestions on how they can support their children's learning at home.

- Children behave well, copying the good role modelling of staff. Staff have a gentle approach and communicate respectfully with children. Children respond positively, listen carefully to instructions, and respond promptly to staff. For example, children quickly tidy up when asked, and sit down ready for a story.
- Children demonstrate good levels of imagination. During role play, they play together harmoniously with their friends and act out familiar experiences. For example, they pretend to iron clothes and care for the dolls.
- Children enjoy the time they spend outdoors. They show good physical skills as they climb and negotiate apparatus. They explore different ways of moving, such as climbing over and through tunnels. When children struggle to get in and out of the tunnel, staff encourage them to think about how they had previously solved this problem. Children persevere until they succeed. Staff praise children for completing the task without them. These positive interactions help children to build resilience.
- Overall, staff promote and encourage children to lead a healthy lifestyle. For example, staff ensure that children benefit from healthy snacks and plenty of fresh air and exercise. Children learn about the importance of oral health, through stories and activities that enable them to practice cleaning their teeth. However, there is scope for further improvement in working with parents, to ensure they are given clear and consistent messages about the importance of encouraging children to make healthy food choices.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have made positive changes since their last inspection. They have improved the quality of support for all staff to ensure they understand their role in safeguarding children fully. There is a strong culture of safeguarding children at this setting, which leaders have embedded well into their daily practice. Staff promote children's welfare and know when to take timely and appropriate action to further help a child in need. Staff are familiar with the procedures for reporting any signs of abuse or neglect, including those relating to wider safeguarding issues, such as the 'Prevent' duty and exploitation. Leaders ensure staff receive regular safeguarding training to keep their knowledge up to date.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- develop further the arrangements to share information with parents and to gather their views and ideas for improvement.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY555048
Local authority	West Berkshire
Inspection number	10202446
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	35
Number of children on roll	37
Name of registered person	Thatcham Pre-school Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP524430
Telephone number	07831 611145
Date of previous inspection	30 June 2021

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 five staff who work directly with the children; all hold a level 3 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 setting received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the setting.
- The manager and the inspector completed a learning walk together and discussed how the curriculum is organised.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager and discussed the quality of teaching.
- The inspector asked staff questions throughout the inspection to establish their understanding of how to safeguard children, and how they assess and plan for children's learning.
- The inspector observed the interactions between staff and the children, and considered the impact on their learning.
- The views of the parents were gathered through face-to-face discussions.

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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