

Inspection of Thomas's Kindergarten

The Crypt, St Mary's Church, Battersea Church Rd, London, London SW11 3NA

Inspection date: 22 February 2022

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Inadequate

Leadership and management

Inadequate

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Outstanding

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is inadequate

Children's safety cannot be guaranteed because of significant weaknesses in risk assessment and child supervision while eating at snack time. This puts children's welfare at risk. Children behave well overall. For example, they listen attentively and show consideration for their peers. However, on occasions, children receive mixed messages from staff about appropriate behaviour. This means they do not learn to develop respectful attitudes in a consistent way.

Despite this, children benefit from a rich and varied curriculum and staff have high expectations for their learning. Younger children enjoy exploring frozen toy dinosaur eggs. They show good levels of curiosity and an understanding of scientific language. They also delight in participating in water play and show good number knowledge as they catch numbers. Furthermore, they have fun singing number songs, such as 'There are 10 in the bed', demonstrating a growing understanding of subtraction and different mathematical knowledge.

Older children are inquisitive learners. They show good knowledge about the weather and show their creativity when making wind sticks with colourful streamers. They also learn about different artists, such as Monet, and recreate paintings of flowers. In addition, children engage in a nature treasure hunt and count and compare natural resources, such as sticks and stones. Children show good engagement and enjoyment as they learn and play.

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

- Currently, members of the public are allowed to use a toilet directly next to the children's toilets when children are present at the kindergarten. Although some steps have been taken to ensure that these people are supervised by the church staff, several vetting documents for the church staff were not available at the inspection. This arrangement compromises children's safety.
- Staff do not give high enough consideration to the risk involved in allowing children to run around while eating outdoors. Children require higher levels of supervision during this time.
- At times, staff do not fully support children to understand about respectful behaviour. This is evident when children use chalk to draw on gravestones in the garden. This means children do not learn about appropriate conduct in a consistent way. Despite this, children listen to each other and show good skills of negotiation as they express their ideas and intentions.
- The arrangements for supporting children to settle in are highly effective. For instance, staff complete home visits to find out relevant information about children's interests, needs and current stage of development. This helps them to settle in with ease.

- Staff plan an exciting and broad programme of educational activities, which are well sequenced to take into account children's different ages. The planned experiences provide good levels of challenge to extend children's knowledge and skills.
- Staff closely monitor children's ongoing development. This is apparent when they complete assessments of their well-being and learning when they join. Staff regularly review the progress that they have made and it is evident that children are making good progress.
- Children's literacy development is supported effectively. For instance, older children show a good understanding of phonics and sounds as they play fun literacy games and match sounds to familiar animals and dinosaurs.
- Parents state that they are very happy with the provision. They discuss how they value the friendly and knowledgeable staff and vibrant learning that takes place. They also state that they feel involved in their children's learning and receive regular updates about the planned activities.
- Partnership working and information-sharing with other professionals are effective. For instance, children with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive good levels of support and a consistent approach to their future learning.
- Staff have regular opportunities to engage in professional development. For instance, they recently participated in training about further enhancing their outdoor learning provision and the benefits of the forest-school approach.
- In response to the COVID-19 pandemic and restrictions, leaders have considered ways to further involve parents in children's learning. Staff encourage parents to come into the nursery to celebrate different festivals and to read with their child. They complete lateral flow tests before entering the setting to help to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

The safeguarding and welfare requirement breaches mean that children's overall protection cannot be assured. Despite this, there are appropriate recruitment arrangements in place to check the suitability of the kindergarten staff. Furthermore, staff show appropriate knowledge about the signs and symptoms that may indicate a child is at risk of harm and how to report any concerns to gain more help. In addition, staff show an understanding of the importance of sharing information and working collaboratively with other professionals to support children's well-being.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

To meet the requirements of the early years foundation stage and Childcare Register the provider must:

	Due date

review the shared use of the kindergarten toilets arrangement in order to prevent unvetted people entering the setting to ensure children's safety	19/04/2022
improve child supervision during snack time routines to help to keep children safe	19/04/2022
ensure required documents are available for inspection. This is in relation to vetting information for the church staff members	19/04/2022
improve the way that staff teach children about respect and appropriate behaviour.	19/04/2022

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY405271
Local authority	Wandsworth
Inspection number	10138238
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	48
Number of children on roll	43
Name of registered person	Thomas's London Day Schools
Registered person unique reference number	RP910974
Telephone number	02077380400
Date of previous inspection	23 March 2016

Information about this early years setting

Thomas's Kindergarten opened in 1992 and re-registered in 2010. It is located in Battersea, London. The kindergarten is open from 8.45am to 3pm on Monday to Thursday, and from 8.45am to 11.45am on Friday, during term time only. The setting employs nine staff, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications. Of these, six staff hold qualified teacher status. The setting receives funding for the provision of free early education for children aged three and four years.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Amy McKenzie

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider 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 provider.
- The inspector and deputy manager completed a learning walk and discussed the kindergarten's vision and intentions for the quality of education.
- The inspector observed the quality of teaching and interactions with children and assessed the impact on children's learning.
- A joint observation of children's learning was conducted by the inspector and deputy manager.
- Parents and children's views were considered during the inspection.
- A range of documentation was viewed. This includes staff qualifications and children's progress documents.

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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