

Inspection of St Thomas Pre-School

St. Thomas C of E Primary School, Astley Street, LEIGH, Lancashire WN7 2AS

Inspection date: 10 March 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
------------------------------	-------------

The quality of education	Good
--------------------------	-------------

Behaviour and attitudes	Good
-------------------------	-------------

Personal development	Good
----------------------	-------------

Leadership and management	Good
---------------------------	-------------

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good
--	------

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children beam with delight and show their excitement when they arrive in the pre-school each day. They are greeted warmly by the caring and nurturing staff team, who listen with interest to children's conversations. Days are filled with songs and stories which children enthusiastically join in with. They sing along and follow the actions of staff to traditional nursery rhymes and recall the next words in familiar books. Children show their imagination as they create pretend 'fruitcake and pumpkin pie' in the mud kitchen outside. They practise scooping and filling different containers. They make links to prior learning as they talk about making a 'witches brew' and recalling that 'we see witches at Halloween'. Children show their creativity during painting activities and as they make structures from toy bricks. They develop their balance as they walk along a beam obstacle course that they design themselves. Other children improve their coordination as they take part in ball games with staff. Children have lots of opportunities to run around and get out of breath. Children show their love of writing as they practise writing their names, and those of their friends, on clipboards.

During the pandemic, the pre-school supported families by providing learning packs on a regular basis. Due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the setting is providing children with even greater support in communication and language. They are also helping children develop their social skills, particularly with sharing and playing considerately with their friends.

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

- Staff mostly support children's developing independence well. Children self-select toys to play with, create their own games and help tidy away. Staff teach children to develop their own self-care, meaning that they know to wash their hands after using the toilet or blowing their nose. These are helpful skills in the preparation for the move to primary school.
- Staff provide children with exposure to a rich and vibrant vocabulary through the stories read and songs sung. Staff ensure that children have lots of time to think and respond to questions and to problem-solve when set challenges. This helps children to develop their own strong communication and language skills. There are though, some occasions where staff do not always pronounce words correctly to children in general conversation. This can confuse children who are developing their language skills.
- The staff team are complimentary about the support they receive from leaders. They receive regular supervision meetings, during which their own well-being is checked on. Alongside this, they discuss how best to support children's ongoing learning. Staff comment that they can access any required training to enhance their own practice. However, supervision arrangements are not yet targeted

enough to identify minor weaknesses in staff practice. For example, the manager does not always recognise when staff omit to encourage children to be independent.

- Overall, partnerships with parents are a strength of the pre-school and parents praise the staff team highly. They say that the pre-school 'feels like home' for their children. They describe how welcoming the staff are and how quickly they help children settle in. They comment that they can 'always ask staff for help and advice'. Parents also talk about how safe their children are at pre-school. They explain the staff team 'go above and beyond' in supporting children's development, particularly in building confidence.
- The pre-school staff teach children about healthy eating and healthy lifestyles. They do though, acknowledge that there is more to be done, for instance working even more closely with parents to make healthier choices when sending packed lunches to the setting.
- Leaders have, since the previous inspection, used information relating to children's development to ensure they have a clear understanding of the progress different groups of children make. This means that all children receive a broad and balanced curriculum and make the progress they are capable of.
- Children enjoy time with their friends as they sing along with staff and follow the actions to songs. They giggle with each other when they occasionally get the actions wrong or forget the order of the verses. If their friends become unwell, children check if they are starting to feel better, showing their concern for them. This shows children's emerging emotional awareness.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All staff have a sound understanding of their safeguarding responsibilities in the setting. They are alert to potential indicators of abuse and know where to report any concerns that may arise. They are clear about where to report any allegations made against colleagues, should such a situation occur. Staff and leaders are clear about their responsibility to whistle-blow should safeguarding concerns be disregarded. Accurate records are maintained of injuries to children, and any matters of concern are reported without delay. Staff know families well and are alert to changes that may increase the risk of vulnerability. Staff ensure that the pre-school premises are secure, which keeps children safe. Staff maintain up-to-date training in safeguarding, meaning that they have a sound knowledge of wider safeguarding matters, such as female genital mutilation and radicalisation and extremism.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- enhance partnerships with parents further, so that children's health is even better supported through healthier food choices in packed lunches
- provide staff with more incisive and individual feedback in order to raise the quality of education to the highest level.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY248592
Local authority	Wigan
Inspection number	10237612
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	37
Name of registered person	St Thomas Pre-School Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP521081
Telephone number	01942 263 533
Date of previous inspection	1 December 2017

Information about this early years setting

St Thomas Pre-School registered in 2002. The pre-school is managed by a voluntary committee. The pre-school employs four members of childcare staff. Of these, one holds an appropriate early years qualification at level 6, one holds an appropriate qualification at level 3 and one holds an appropriate qualification at level 2. The pre-school opens from Monday to Friday, term time only. Sessions are from 8.45am until 11.45am, and 12.30pm until 3.30pm. Children can also attend from 8.45am until 3.30pm.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Richard Sutcliffe

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 joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about their curriculum and what they want the children to learn.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- Children told the inspector about their friends and what they like to do when they are at pre-school.
- The inspector spoke to several parents during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of staff working in the pre-school.
- The manager and the inspector carried out a joint observation.

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.

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk

This publication is available at <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2022