

Inspection of St Thomas' Nursery

St Thomas' CE Primary School, St Thomas' Road, St Annes FY8 1JN

Inspection date: 9 September 2025 - 18 December 2025

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	Outstanding
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children enjoy their time at the nursery and settle quickly with friendly staff who join their play. Children choose from a vast array of exciting resources and activities. They benefit from regular outings, such as beach school and sessions where they make unusual music and art. Staff support children to be curious, to seek out information and add depth to their understanding. For example, they teach children about plants that grow at the beach which can be cooked with. Children learn to use technology to support their learning. For instance, they view recordings of hedgehogs visiting their garden overnight. Children build firm foundations in their learning in preparation for their onward education.

Staff encourage children to make choices and to try new activities. Staff model positive attitudes towards learning and caring for the environment and resources. Children anticipate what is coming next and join in. Staff consistently remind children throughout of the rules and behavioural expectations. Children engage well and sit beautifully during activities, such as group time. Staff are engaging and involve all children. Children learn how to keep themselves safe in different environments. For example, staff teach children how to call for the coastguard at the beach in an emergency. Children learn to be mindful of and are kind to their friends with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Children learn positive values and the skills they need to thrive in life.

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

- Leaders plan an ambitious curriculum to help all children gain a good breadth of experience. Home visits help staff to understand the experiences that children arrive with and build strong relationships with parents from the outset. Staff plan for children's learning well and help them to make good progress from the start.
- Staff support children with SEND extremely well and are equally ambitious for all children. They work closely with families and other professionals to provide experiences which are tailored to children's needs. Effective monitoring and assessment help staff to quickly identify and narrow emerging gaps and help children to catch up where possible. Leaders are tenacious in accessing funding and support for children with SEND. All children make good progress from their starting points.
- Staff promote children's personal skills well and prioritise the skills they need to develop their independence. Staff encourage children to carry out tasks for themselves. For instance, children set the tables for lunch and wash their own plates after meals. Children enjoy mealtimes with their friends and staff, engaging in interesting discussions about their day. They develop essential social skills.
- Staff focus on communication and language throughout the nursery. Children

learn to love books, and staff engage them in lots of conversation to extend their vocabulary. Staff use various methods to promote communication with children who are less verbal. For instance, staff use objects of reference and simple signs. Children learn to communicate in different ways and develop confidence in their skills.

- Outdoor learning is a strength of the provision. Walks in the local area promote children's stamina and they spot letters and numbers while they are out. Staff support children to bend and stretch as they paint and make marks in outdoor areas. This approach helps to support children's physical development and overall wellbeing.
- Providers have a clear understanding of the local community demographics and how they support children from different backgrounds. Children learn about how people are different and similar and how to support each other's unique needs. Children learn about different cultures and find out about different celebrations.
- Leaders work closely with other early years professionals to inform positive change in the sector and to model high-quality practice. Leaders are reflective and are keen to adapt provision to promote the best experiences for all children. Leaders support staff well with coaching and mentoring. Staff wellbeing is a priority. This fosters high morale within the team, helping staff to enjoy and perform well in their roles.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts children's interests first.

Setting details

Unique reference number	309787
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10398777
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	40
Number of children on roll	32
Name of registered person	Craftdale Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP523999
Telephone number	01253 789445
Date of previous inspection	8 November 2019

Information about this early years setting

St Thomas' Nursery registered in 1999. It is independently managed and is located on the site of St Thomas' CE School in Lytham St Annes. The setting employs 11 members of childcare staff, 6 of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above. The manager holds a level 3 qualification, and the supervisor holds a level 6 qualification. The nursery opens Monday to Friday during term time. Sessions are from 8am until 5pm. The nursery provides government funded places for childcare and early education and accesses specific funding for disadvantaged children.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors

Amy Johnson
Michelle Highcock

Inspection activities

- The inspector viewed the nursery and discussed the safety and suitability of the premises along with the aims and rationale for the early years curriculum.
- Children and staff spoke to the inspector throughout the inspection.
- Leaders and staff spoke to the inspector about how they support children with SEND.
- The inspector observed interactions between staff and children.
- The inspector carried out joint observations of group activities with leaders.
- Parents shared their views of the setting with the inspector.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery.
- The inspection started on 9 September 2025. Inspectors returned on 18 December 2025 to gather additional evidence in line with Ofsted inspections and visits: Deferring, pausing and gathering additional evidence policy.

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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