

Thorngumbald Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	314749
Inspection date	18 March 2008
Inspector	Josephine Ann Northend
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Registered person	Thorngumbald Pre-School
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Sessional care

ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Thorngumbald Pre-school is managed by a voluntary committee. It operates from the Village Hall in Thorngumbald and has been registered for about 30 years, to care for 37 children under five years. There are currently 56 children on roll attending for a variety of sessions. There are 34 children who receive grant funding for nursery education. Children with physical disabilities or learning difficulties are supported within the setting.

There are 12 staff employed at the setting of these, seven have relevant childcare qualifications and three are working towards gaining an appropriate qualification. Two staff are also working towards gaining further qualifications.

The setting is open five mornings each week from 09.15 until 11.45 and they receive support from the local Early Years team.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm, clean environment. The effective implementation of the health policy, which includes sick children procedures, prevents the risk of spreading infection. Parents are aware of the policy in place. Clear procedures are in place for the recording of accidents and medication. However, the new system to record medication does not include parents signing to acknowledge the entry. First aid requirements are met, as there are always members of staff who hold a relevant first aid qualification on duty.

Children's physical development is supported well, with regular opportunities to play outdoors. Children use a wide range of equipment including tricycles, balancing beams, slides and hoops. They also have opportunities to take part in games and imaginative play outside. Children can rest or be active according to their individual needs. They are beginning to learn the importance of good hygiene through daily routines. Children are encouraged to wash their hands before snack and after using the toilet and they learn why they need to do so. Staff set a good example as they use protective gloves and aprons during nappy change procedures. This prevents the spread of infection.

Children begin to understand the benefits of a healthy diet through the promotion of healthy snacks. Staff are aware of and meet children's individual dietary needs. All children are offered fresh fruit each day. Drinks are available throughout the session and accessed independently by the children.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children move around freely while easily accessing a good range of safe, developmentally appropriate furniture and equipment. The equipment is clean and checked regularly to ensure that it remains safe for children to use. Many resources are suitably organised in child-height furniture to encourage independent access.

Policies are in place to support health and safety practices. There are clear lost and uncollected child policies in place and the security of the premises is good. The record of visitors is completed well and emergency evacuation procedures are displayed. A fire drill is practised with the children each term and children understand the system. Risk assessments are completed and most safety hazards have been minimised. However, an unprotected low-level electric socket is accessible to the children and poses a hazard. Children's safety is promoted well by staff, for example, they are reminded not to run inside.

Child protection procedures are in place which include the procedures to be followed in the event of an allegation against staff. The manager and staff demonstrate a sound understanding of the signs of abuse and their roles and responsibilities in the event of a concern. This means the welfare of children is protected.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy their time at the nursery, they arrive happy and settle well. The caring environment created by staff helps children feel comfortable and the close relationships they have with staff increases the children's sense of trust. Children are beginning to develop positive relationships with each other. Communication skills with children are well supported through good adult-to-child interactions. They encourage them to talk about what they are doing and sensitively support their language development.

Staff have a sound understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and are using it well to plan an interesting and varied range of activities and for the assessment of children's progress. This means children's personal, social and intellectual development is well fostered and supported. Activities and play opportunities are purposeful and developmentally appropriate resulting in children being motivated and interested. Children's self-esteem is developing as a result of the staff encouraging and praising them and valuing what they have to offer.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making good progress towards the early learning goals. They enjoy their time at nursery and achieve well because staff use their good understanding of the Foundation Stage to provide appropriate challenge for all children. A broad and balanced range of activities are planned by a designated member of staff with input from the staff team. The activities are planned well across all six areas of learning in order to meet children's individual learning needs. Assessment records which link children's progress to the stepping stones are in place, and are dated to show children's progress, however, they are not always completed regularly enough to reflect children's current position, but the information is available in daily diaries completed by staff. Staff use good questioning skills to challenge children and further extend their thoughts and ideas. They involve themselves appropriately in children's activities and offer good support and praise to them.

Children are confident in their play and learning, they are interested and concentrate well at chosen activities. They have good relationships with staff and are developing their relationships with each other and some children have formed close friendships with each other. Children are well behaved and respond well to requests from staff. Children talk about their own families and are developing a good understanding of other cultures and beliefs, for example, as the celebrate festivals. They learn about the local community through the use of interesting resources, visits and visitors to the setting and planned activities. They learn about the days of the week and features of the weather.

Children are developing good communication skills, they speak confidently and clearly; ask simple questions and initiate conversations. They are encouraged to talk about what they are doing. Their communication skills are supported well by staff, who use good questioning to support children's learning. Children are beginning to develop their writing skills in the mark making area; they hold pencils correctly and form recognisable marks and letters. Children enjoy books, they handle them well and turn the pages correctly. They listen and participate well at storytime, joining in with the story and predicting what will happen next.

Children show curiosity and persist for extended periods of time at activities. They show a good interest in their environment and living things, for example, they plant seeds, explore leaves and learn about tortoises, dogs and worms as they are brought into the setting. Children use

their senses to explore a variety of materials, for example, as they describe the texture of sand. They are developing some good self-care skills, for example, they learn to wash their own hands and put on their own coats, however, they do not have opportunities to pour their own drinks. They are developing some knowledge of health and bodily awareness, as they understand they need to wash their hands before eating but they do not fully understand why.

Children move around safely and confidently, they have opportunities to play games, climb, kick balls, use wheeled toys and balance on beams. They are developing good levels of hand and eye coordination as they handle small tools and equipment, such as paintbrushes and scissors. They demonstrate good spatial awareness as they complete jigsaws. Children are developing a good sense of space as they sit together on the mat at circle and storytime. Children use computers well, they control the mouse confidently and complete simple programs. They also use programmable toys, for example, they program a robot to move around and draw on paper. Children are developing their understanding of number and count reliably up to 10 and beyond by rote. They recognise some numerals; use simple problem solving in number songs and mathematical language in their play, for example, they compare the heights of their block buildings. Children are beginning to recognise and name simple shapes and are using size and positional language well.

Children use their imagination well in their play and enjoy role play. They sing spontaneously at times throughout the day and join in their favourite songs. They have regular access to musical instruments, use them rhythmically and enjoy moving to music. Children recognise and name many colours and mix them to create other colours. They enjoy creative activities, for example, as they created Easter bonnets, however, creative activities are mainly adult-led as children cannot freely access creative resources.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are warmly welcomed and staff ensure resources are readily available. There is a clear equal opportunities policy in place and children learn about the local community as they take part in some outings within the local area and receive visitors to the setting. Planned activities are undertaken and a good range of resources are available reflecting other cultures and races. For example, children have celebrated Chinese New Year. This helps increase children's awareness of diversity and develop a positive attitude to others. The staff's understanding of each child's needs is used well to encourage a sense of security and belonging. There are excellent systems in place to support children with physical disabilities and learning difficulties; the identified special needs coordinator has completed relevant training and the setting works extremely well with other agencies to ensure children are integrated well into the group and receive the correct support.

Children are well behaved and polite in response to the expectations of staff. There is a clear behaviour management policy in place which promotes the use of positive behaviour management strategies. Children are learning to share and take turns. Their understanding of right and wrong is increased through the gentle reminders they receive from staff. This means children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents is good. Children benefit from the two way sharing of information about their needs and daily routines. Parents information is displayed on a noticeboard, they receive a newsletter regularly and have access to the setting's policies and procedures. They receive written information about the Foundation Stage and are encouraged to become involved

in their child's learning at home, for example, as they use the book lending scheme. Parents are involved in the initial assessment of their child within the Foundation Stage curriculum and receive regular information about their child's progress.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Space is laid out to support play opportunities for children, which contributes to them being happy and settled. Children are able to move around confidently and independently. They initiate their own play and learning well. Adult-to-child ratios are met and there is a key worker system in place. Staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities. There are robust staff recruitment and vetting procedures and clear induction procedures in place. This ensures children's welfare is safeguarded.

Most of the required documents are in place and are stored confidentially. Policies and procedures are in place to support practice; they are shared well with staff and made available to parents to appropriately promote the welfare, care and learning of the children.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is good and promotes the children's learning. Most of the staff have early years qualifications and all staff have a sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum. The management promotes staff attendance at relevant training. The knowledge gained by staff is used to enhance children's care and welfare. A staff appraisal system is in place and is developing well. Regular staff meetings are held and the manager is able to identify the strengths and weakness of the provision. She is enthusiastic and a good role model to the staff team. She has a strong understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and promotes the achievement of all children. Consequently, children's progress towards the early learning goals is good.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider was asked to ensure parents have access to a written complaints statement and improve registration systems. A written complaints policy is now in place and is shared with parents. This means they are aware of the procedure to follow if they have a concern. The registration system has been improved and it now clearly shows the times of staff and children's attendance.

In relation to nursery education the provider was asked to improve the presentation of the book corners; ensure staff use mathematics in everyday activities and increase opportunities for children to use information technology.

The presentation of the book corners in both rooms has been developed, children now self-select books and make independent choices. Staff are now using mathematics in everyday activities, this means children are developing their understanding of number. They recognise some numerals; use simple problem solving in number songs and mathematical language in their play, for example, they compare the heights of their block buildings. Children now use computers well, they control the mouse confidently and complete simple programs. They also use programmable toys confidently. The use of information technology is recorded within planning and assessment records.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

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WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- make sure all low level accessible electric sockets are protected
- make sure medication recording systems include parents signing to acknowledge the entry.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- increase opportunities for children to develop self care skills including pouring of drinks
- develop opportunities for children to freely access creative materials.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education (HMI ref no 2599)* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk