

Inspection of Thames Pre-School

Bath Road, Cricklade, Swindon, Wiltshire SN6 6AX

Inspection date: 9 December 2022

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

The provision is good

Children are happy and clearly enjoy attending the pre-school. Staff prioritise children's well-being. They know children extremely well and build positive relationships with families. The key-person system is effective, and this helps children to settle quickly. Staff encourage children to express their feelings and emotions. For example, they use stones with various emotions on, which help children to discuss how they feel.

Staff have high expectations of all children. They provide stimulating and nurturing environments, both indoors and outdoors. Children enjoy exploring their surroundings and following their own lead. For example, children use their imaginations and turn a cardboard box into a puppet theatre. They play cooperatively with their friends and are highly engaged in their play.

Children take part in regular forest school sessions in the garden. Staff encourage children to respect the natural world around them. Children clearly feel safe as they learn to carefully manage risks for themselves. For example, they are aware of how high they can climb trees and know staff are there to support them if needed. Children develop great independence and resilience. Young children show pride by taking their own wellies and outdoor clothing on and off.

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

- The manager has an ambitious vision for the pre-school. She involves staff in creating a personalised curriculum. This reflects the needs of children and the local community.
- Staff accurately assess children so that they set appropriate next steps for them. They plan activities that challenge children and build on what they already know and can do. Consequently, all children make good progress from their starting points.
- Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive additional support with their learning and development. The special educational needs coordinator is knowledgeable and understands her role well. She works closely with staff and other professionals to ensure children get the right help, at the right time. For example, children participate in a range of small-group activities that support their additional needs.
- Staff skilfully support children's communication and language development. They provide plenty of opportunities for children to sing nursery rhymes, both in children's play and as a whole group. Staff use basic signing to support children's early language skills. They provide lots of narration during play so that children can hear a range of language and vocabulary.
- Children are inquisitive and enjoy exploring a range of materials. Staff ask

children questions to encourage their critical thinking. However, some staff do not allow children enough time to process questions. Therefore, some children do not respond and staff answer their own questions for them.

- Staff meet children's care needs effectively. Children are familiar with routines, and this supports their self-esteem and self-confidence. Staff teach children about the importance of staying healthy and the impact this has on their bodies.
- Partnerships with parents are good. Staff share information regularly about children's progress. They support parents to understand how they can further support their child's learning at home. Children enjoy selecting books from the outdoor library to share with their families. Parents are pleased with the progress their children are making.
- Staff feel well supported by the manager and her deputy. The manager prioritises staff well-being and takes action to reduce staff workload. Staff complete regular training to support their professional development. They reflect on what they have learned and adapt their practice accordingly. For example, they have added small steps to their environments so that younger children can freely access things, such as the easel.
- The manager has a robust development plan and identifies areas for improvement. For example, she wants to strengthen the transition the pre-school has with the local school. The committee are active and supportive of the pre-school. They understand their roles and responsibilities. Collectively, staff and the committee strive to continually provide the best care to families and the local community.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are confident with the signs to look for that may indicate a child is at risk of harm. They all know the procedures to follow if they have any concerns about children's welfare. Staff are confident with what to do if they have concerns about staff conduct and know the whistle-blowing procedures. The committee understand their roles and responsibilities for safeguarding children. The manager ensures robust risk assessments are in place to keep children safe. These are reviewed and updated regularly. The manager and committee ensure that safer recruitment and a thorough induction process are in place.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- continue to strengthen partnerships with schools to further support children's transitions to the next stage in their learning
- ensure staff give children enough time to process their thoughts and ideas when responding to questions they have been asked.

Setting details

Unique reference number	199398
Local authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	10233562
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	30
Number of children on roll	35
Name of registered person	Thames Pre-School Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP905079
Telephone number	01793 750635
Date of previous inspection	1 March 2017

Information about this early years setting

Thames Pre-School registered in 2002 and is located in the grounds of St Sampson's Primary School, Cricklade, Swindon. The pre-school operates during school term time only. Sessions are Monday to Friday from 8:55am to 2:55pm. The pre-school employs seven members of staff. Of those, six members of staff hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 or above. The pre-school receives funding for the provision of free early education for children aged two, three and four years.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Amy Fedrick

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 her evaluation of the provider.
- The manager and the inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the pre-school and discussed the early years curriculum.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation of an adult-led activity with the manager.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector spoke to several members of the committee during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector spoke to several parents during the inspection and took their opinions into account.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of staff working in the pre-school.

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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