

# Thomass Kindergarten

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY240355
<b>Inspection date</b>	08 May 2008
<b>Inspector</b>	Tom Radcliffe
<b>Setting Address</b>	St Marys Church, Battersea Church Road, London, SW11 3NA
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<b>Type of inspection</b>	Nursery Education

## 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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).

## THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Thomas's Kindergarten Battersea, is an independent nursery school which is part of Thomas's London Day Schools. These are a group of family-run co-educational independent schools for children from the ages of two and a half to 13 years of age.

The kindergarten opened in 1992. It is open term-time only from 08.45 to 11.45. Once children are three, there are optional afternoon sessions focussing on hobbies such as football, ballet, computers and drama.

There are currently 49 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 40 receive funding for early education. Children come from a wide catchment area. The nursery currently supports children with learning difficulties and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The kindergarten is based in the crypt of St Mary's Church. There is access to the churchyard which children use as a play area which is also accessible to members of the public.

There are eight members of staff all of whom hold a Nursery Nurse or Montessori qualification. There is also additional specialist input from a music and gym teacher.

The school is an active member of the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP) and they attend training and receive support from an Early Years Advisor.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Staff have an excellent understanding of how young children learn and a very good understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum. Children face a stimulating range of interesting and challenging activities that they can select for themselves independently, select from those set out for them or work with adults on focussed activities. The setting skilfully ensures that there is a good mixture of adult led and child chosen tasks. Staff support the children very well at all times; their very effective interventions are based on their well founded perceptions of children's needs, for example, as children use wood working equipment, share stories or undertake writing activities. Children respond very positively to their learning and play environment and their excellent relationship with adults enables them to apply themselves to activities for long periods of time. During story time children make meaningful contributions to conversations. They enthusiastically use outdoor play equipment and enjoy making drinks with the help of adults. Staff make accurate assessments on the achievements of children as they play and undertake a large range of activities. Their careful observations in these circumstances augments information gained from focussed activities. All information is carefully collated and used to both inform parents and influence the future planning of activities. All staff take care to ensure that assessment information is used effectively and they also ensure all activities reflect the interests of the children. The setting enhances its provision with short adult led activities, for example, singing, music and movement, story telling and physical activities. Children respond very well to these enjoyable and well planned activities.

The atmosphere within the setting is excellent, purposeful and industrious. Children relate very well to each other as they play and talk together, share resources and ideas and patiently take turns, for example, as children use clay and the computers or discuss stories which stimulates their writing and spoken language. The nursery promotes children's independence as they select their own activities, decide how they spend their time and choose drinks and snacks. The children in the setting are excellent and very confident speakers, they thrive in a very language rich environment where spoken language is promoted, conversations are of a high quality and children's opinions and ideas are regularly sought. As a result children can express themselves well with the use of an ever widening descriptive vocabulary. In addition the children's own writing is promoted through extensive mark making opportunities, role play, labelling and when they use their own names on their work or on registers. Parents read stories to the children regularly, these enjoyable events show that children concentrate and listen to stories readily. The nursery extends the children's understanding of key mathematical concepts and ideas through a very effective use of appropriate equipment, problem solving and through conversations that arise from their work. As a result children play with toy money in a shop, use computers, sing number songs and work out who is the tallest child or which is the heaviest object. Children are given many opportunities to explore technology as they use computers, listen to CD players and use role play resources. They have a very good understanding of their community as they talk about their holidays and regularly visit places of interest in the locality. Children have access to an excellent range of activities that develop their physical skills both indoors and outdoors. In addition, children have good access to art, music and other imaginative

work as they paint, print, make models, experience music and undertake messy play. The setting supports children's learning very well in the Foundation Stage.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

The setting has very good methods of communicating with parents to ensure that all important background information is obtained and effectively acted upon. The setting ensures that it responds positively to all the information that it receives, this enables the staff to know the children very well and ensure that all the needs of the children are met, for example, where children use English as additional language or where there are individual special needs or specific behavioural considerations. Children with special educational needs make good progress in all areas of their learning as a result of the inclusive approach of the setting and the good links that exist between it and the parents. The atmosphere in all parts of the kindergarten is excellent. The positive play and learning environment is based on good relationships between adults and children. Children are responsible, mature, aware of their own behaviour and are engaged by what they do. Staff are very good role models; they manage children's behaviour expertly and they consistently set high standards of behaviour and expectations that children enjoy meeting. The setting uses resources that reflect positive images of diversity; these include dolls, photographs and written materials. The children have an excellent understanding of their diverse community and of the world, for example, in discussions and work based upon Nepal. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents value the high standards of care for all children, for example, where children have specific medical needs. In addition, parents enjoy all contact with the setting both informally and through its formal meetings, interviews and newsletters. The role of key workers in supporting these processes is very much appreciated by parents. Parents also consider that their children make good progress, are happy and are very well prepared for the next stage in their development. All parents think that the setting provides a comprehensive range of information which enables them to have a good understanding of its work, policies and procedures. This is enhanced by additional workshops and the open door nature of the setting.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The provider has established very robust recruitment procedures; these ensure that staff employed at the setting are suitable to work with children. All staff are well qualified and experienced and consequently have a very good understanding of how young children learn. Staff have regular access to important professional development and training and all undergo very effective periods of induction and probation. The setting has policies and procedures in place to ensure the effective and safe management of the kindergarten. Staff are deployed very effectively, resources are of a high standard and the accommodation is very child friendly, stimulating and very well organised. The setting successfully determines and fulfils the needs of children. Children's well-being and care are given very good attention, as they understand about healthy life choices, stay safe and achieve outstanding outcomes in a very enjoyable environment.

The leadership and management is good. The provider has a very clear understanding of the kindergarten's strengths and areas that require development. She leads a strong team that is

committed to children's development and shares her vision for ongoing improvements. All staff members conscientiously contribute to very effective planning and assessment processes and each positively contributes to an excellent learning and play environment. In addition, the provider builds on very secure staff development opportunities with regular and effective appraisals of staff performance. The provider ensures that the setting has a very good working relationship with parents and that the kindergarten is child-centred with all staff having a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

The last inspection made the recommendation that the nursery should review its processes and effectiveness of planning. Since that time the setting has improved its planning to ensure that all areas of learning are very effectively incorporated into children's daily experiences. In addition the nursery ensures that future learning experiences that the children have are based very firmly on what children have already achieved.

### **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 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.

## **THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE NURSERY EDUCATION**

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

### **WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?**

#### **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):

- develop the outdoor area to ensure that children's safety is maximised at all times.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)