

Inspection of St Thomas Aquinas After School Project

St.Thomas Aquinas Combined School, St. Marys Avenue, Bletchley, MILTON
KEYNES MK3 5DT

Inspection date:

12 February 2025

**The quality and
standards of early
years provision**

**This
inspection**

Met

Previous
inspection

Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

This provision meets requirements

Children look forward to their time at the club. They fully involve themselves in what the club has to offer and show high levels of engagement and enjoyment. For instance, children sustain their concentration and persevere as they colour, cut out and construct card houses. They independently select the resources they need and talk to staff enthusiastically about what they are doing. Staff create many opportunities for children to make their own choices and plan activities.

Staff support children's understanding of being healthy effectively. Children manage their personal hygiene well, understanding the importance of regular handwashing before mealtimes and after using the toilet. Staff provide healthy snacks, such as fruit and carrots. They use mealtimes to promote children's independence effectively. For example, children collect their own meals and drinks. They know the routines well, clearing away their own plates and cutlery, and lining up before joining in activities.

Staff are good role models. They support children to make the right choices and are on hand to praise children when they share toys and use good manners. Staff set age-appropriate rules and expectations, which support children's good behaviour and promotes their safety. Children chat enthusiastically to visitors, discussing their favourite activities and explaining the routines of the club.

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

- Leadership at the club is good. Staff have supervision and appraisal meetings, to discuss their practice and ways in which to engage children even more in their play. Staff are supported by ongoing supervision and appraisal, which helps them to manage their responsibilities effectively. Leaders ensure that recruitment procedures and training opportunities are in place to ensure all staff are suitable to work with children. They also implement good procedures to support those who are stepping up to a management role. Staff feel valued and supported, and are confident to raise any issues with the management.
- Staff ensure that children are safe at the club. They carry out thorough risk assessments of the indoor and outdoor environment. Staff deploy themselves effectively to ensure children's safety. They support children to take turns and remind them to follow the setting's rules. However, there are occasions accidents occur when staff do not consistently re-enforce the 'no running indoors' rule.
- Partnership work with the host school is well established and effective. Staff gather information from the school to ensure that all children's needs are met. This also helps to ensure continuity in children's care and learning between the school and the club.

- Staff appreciate that children have had a busy day at school. Indoors, children exercise their imaginations as they play in the hospital area or inspect models of teeth after brushing them. Children enjoy playing cooperatively on the games console or develop their literacy skills as they write and draw. Staff provide children with a range of opportunities to be active. For example, children have access to a large field where they can play ball games or climb on the climbing frame in the playground. However, there are times when the club does not provide children with daily opportunities to be physically active.
- Parents speak highly of the provision. They comment that their children enjoy their time at the club. Parents explain that staff know their children well, which helps children to settle quickly. There are effective systems in place to keep parents up to date about the club. For example, the online system used ensures parents are kept updated and can book sessions easily.
- The management team are keen to review the provision and make improvements to benefit the children. The views of parents, children and staff are taken into consideration. Since the last inspection, staff have ensured that children are fully involved in making choices and planning activities. Staff value children's contributions and this helps children develop a sense of belonging and involvement in the club.

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	141788
Local authority	Milton Keynes
Inspection number	10375911
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Out-of-school day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	4 to 11
Total number of places	60
Number of children on roll	55
Name of registered person	St Thomas Aquinas After School Project Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP517367
Telephone number	01908 373977
Date of previous inspection	9 May 2019

Information about this early years setting

St Thomas Aquinas After School Project registered in 1995. It is located in Bletchley, Milton Keynes. The breakfast club operates from 7.30am to 8.45am and the after-school club operates from 3pm to 6pm, during term time. There are five members of staff, four of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 and above.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Kate Robertson

Inspection activities

- The manager gave the inspector a tour of the club. They discussed how the club is organised and the play opportunities provided for children.
- The inspector spoke to the children and staff at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector consider the views of parents by speaking to several during the inspection.
- The inspector observed staff's interactions with children during activities.
- The manager took part in a leadership meeting with the inspector. The inspector looked at relevant documents, including the evidence of the suitability of the staff.

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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