



## EARLY YEARS SERVICE

<b>School name:</b>	Thornton College
<b>Date and timing:</b>	12 <sup>th</sup> November 2024
<b>Name and role of school contact:</b>	Dr Louise Shaw, Head teacher Mrs Leiba Sablon, Head of Prep Mrs Emily Collins, EYFS Manager
<b>Name and role of EYS contact:</b>	Joanna Hobbs – Early Years Advisor
<b>Ofsted judgement and inspection date:</b>	ISI Excellent 21.10.2022

**Focus of Visit:** Universal introductory visit as change in Key Contact and Pre-Prep. Discussions and observations with Leiba and Emily. Feedback to both.

Safeguarding and welfare matters were considered by the Early Years Advisor throughout the visit. No concerns were noted.

The EYFS Manager is new to Thornton College this academic year, alongside appointment of new Head of Prep has enabled the provision across EYFS to be reviewed. The new team have settled well and within a short time implemented changes to benefit the girls. There is a clear vision for the department and accurate self-evaluation, which focuses on ensuring the outcomes for the girls are maximised.

The Curriculum has been developed to include more opportunities for specialist teaching, this includes Japanese, Dance, PE coaching and Computing. The Little Wandle Phonic schemes is embedded for Reception children and vertical grouping implemented. Weekly planning focuses on high quality texts, these build cumulatively throughout the prep school. Discussions included thinking carefully about the mixed pre reception and reception aged children and ensuring that planning allows for focus on the 3&4 years olds, ideas shared included the Book area and adding more books for them and the pre phonic activities planned when sessions attended, and terms varies widely as children join.

This academic year the class includes both Reception and Pre- Reception. A two-year rolling curriculum cycle allows for both age ranges to continue to experience new skills and knowledge.

Effective Early Years pedagogy is a mix of different approaches. Children learn through play, by adults modelling, by observing each other, and through guided learning and direct teaching. Observations and discussions noted that the timetable and routines of the day allow for this to be successfully delivered. The ethos of the Early Years matches closely the principles and practice of high quality early years provision.

- Teachers carefully organise enabling environments for high-quality play. This includes allowing time and space available for children to invent their own play, alongside joining in to sensitively support and extend children's learning. Observations today noted high quality interactions between support staff and children, they are playful in their interactions and find opportunities to skillfully scaffold learning. For example, added the large Numicon resource to support children to make 8 and the different combinations possible. They encouraged the children to add a ball to each hole, supporting children to gain an understanding of subitizing.
- All adults know the children well, they understand their interests, likes and differences. Most children transition during changes in routines quickly, those that are more reluctant are skilfully supported by adults to diffuse any potential reluctance.
- Children are considered as unique individuals and through group work and often individually with Emily, learning is guided and adapted to each girl's stage of development with a bespoke curriculum. This guided learning increases as the children get older.
- Planning for the learning environment both inside and out is based on reflecting the curriculum whilst also following the girl's interest and ideas. For example, the children plan what they would like set outside each week and adults adapt and ensure that there is always the possibility for challenge and skills development.

Further discussions included:

- The use of the outside grassed area and climbing frame. Re considering closing this to the girls in wet weather and adapt risk assessment accordingly. Developing self-regulation and executive function requires exposure to physical risk and challenge, the more children are encouraged to take measured physical challenge the more they are willing to explore cognitive challenge. [Early Years Evidence Store | EEF](#)
- The cultural capital of the girls and how to ensure opportunities offered support them to be independent and resilient.

Recommendations
<p>Useful links</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Early Years Networking Briefings   Early Years (buckscc.gov.uk)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">3 x SENCO liaison groups (termly)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Training and Qualifications   Early Years (buckscc.gov.uk)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Access to resources on the Early Years Service website</a></li> </ul>
Review Risk Assessment and use of grassed area in outside area to ensure girls can explore in all weathers.
Book area

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Add more quality texts for the pre reception age range.</li> </ul>
<b>Phonics</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reflect on the pre–Little Wandle Phonic curriculum for pre reception children. Consider the inconsistency of sessions that this cohort have and impact this has on entry to YR. Provide a bank of resources and activities, including nursery rhymes, that can be used consistently.</li> </ul>

*We also discussed the areas ticked below; summary of discussion may be recorded by the provider*

<b>Date of Next Visit:</b>	Date to be agreed for Summer 1 prior to EYFSP data submission
<b>Focus of Next Visit:</b>	Progress with EYFS as new Leadership settle and identify any areas of focus.

**Contact:** Early Years Service, Buckinghamshire Council  
Walton Street Offices, Walton Street, Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire. HP20 1UA

**Mobile:** 07920 831883 or 01494 475169      **Office:** 01296 387111  
**Email:** [Joanna.Hobbs@buckinghamshire.gov.uk](mailto:Joanna.Hobbs@buckinghamshire.gov.uk)    [earlyyears@buckinghamshire.gov.uk](mailto:earlyyears@buckinghamshire.gov.uk)  
**Web:** <https://earlyyears.buckscc.gov.uk/>

*Please note that a copy of this document will be stored electronically in our records.*