



EARLY YEARS SERVICE

School name:	Thornton College
Date and timing:	15 th May 2025
Ofsted judgement and inspection date:	ISI Excellent 21.10.2022

Focus of Visit: Universal visit

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

The Reception & Pre Reception class is full of energy and enthusiasm. The girls show high levels of involvement in their activities. They are proud to show work they are delighted with, for example beautifully formed numbers or careful pegging of shapes to a board. These achievements are celebrated by the adults and their friends, this encourages the girls to try their hardest.

Recently, attention has been given to the book area and widening story telling opportunities. The new Yoto boxes are popular, girls collaborate and listen to the nursery rhymes together, they sing and dance along practicing the words. A range of stories are available, and the corresponding book is available to allow for them to turn the pages as they listen which adds more purpose to the learning. Additional books have been added for the younger children.

The Early Years Manager has developed the curriculum further with consideration to the younger age range. For example, regular pre phonic sessions offer opportunities to practise oral blending and segmenting. Additional attention is given to developing gross motor skills and crossing the midline. to develop the core strength of the girl in preparation for Reception. Discussions included the even younger ones, those that start in Spring and summer terms. In effect, at times there are three year groups within the class. Conversations included agreeing 'end goals' for them based on Communication and Language, PSED and Physical development. Where do we want them to be at end of the year to access the Pre- Prep curriculum? For example, settling and enjoying school and able to separate from carer confidently, enjoying a range of stories and beginning to listen and answer simple questions? The girls are now involved in planning for the outside area, they chose what they want and then this is enhanced, by the team, to support further development. The Early Years Manager reports this has had a positive impact in increasing the girl's independence, they make links in learning, and this enables the younger children to learn from the older ones.

The majority of the Reception children are forecasted to be at the expected level for all ELGs. One child has found phonics more challenging, and discussions included provision in Year One. In terms of self-esteem, it would be considered best practice for the timetable to enable them to remain with their peers and benefit from keep up sessions separately rather than joining Reception for daily phonics.

Since the last visit, excellent consideration has been given to enabling the girls access to all the outside area in all weathers. Alongside this, increasing opportunities for the girls to take appropriate risks and challenge have been considered. New additions include a woodwork area and large-scale construction area. The team have continued to reflect and develop the vision to enable the children to thrive. The girls are energetic, they clearly love the opportunities to be physically active and energetic. Challenging stereotypes is core to the ethos of this class, parents are included in this, and incredibly positive feedback received.

Self-evaluation is ongoing. Areas where the girls may have lacked previous opportunities are noted and inform planning. For example, additional dressing up clothes have been introduced as staff observed, children were not getting opportunities to dress and undress since Covid, as they now come in in PE Kits. The girls were unable to do their zips and buttons. Providing more dressing up has allowed them opportunities to practice.

Further discussions included:

- International teaching qualifications and checking if they are full and relevant, at what level in Early Years.
- Specialist teachers and ratios. Reference to the Statutory framework.
- Funded entitlement and access to funded hours without forced breaks.
- Nutritional guidance for Early Years.
- Numbers for 25/26 are low. Consider the offer to parents, including age of admissions to ensure you remain first choice prior to Reception. There has been an increase in funding for parents, with 30 hours available from nine months for working parents from September 2025, with each parent able to earn up to £100,000. Ensuring you attract these families without them going to competitors should be considered. Advertising locally and Bucks Family Information service. [Thornton College \(Independent\)](#) | [Family information service](#) | [Buckinghamshire Council](#) – consider adding more information to this page to highlight your distinct selling points.

Recommendations	
15.05.25 Review statutory guidance published April 2025. Implement changes as required.	
Useful links <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nutrition in EYFS Early Years Foundation Stage nutrition - GOV.UK • Changes in guidance to funded entitlement - this is info from us but also links to the statutory document. The Early Education and Childcare Entitlements Statutory Guidance Qualification checker Check an early years qualification - GOV.UK	
Consider end goals for the youngest – pre – pre-prep.	
Review Risk Assessment and use of grassed area in outside area to ensure girls can explore in all weathers.	15.05.25 Completed
Book area <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add more quality texts for the pre reception age range. 	15.05.25 Completed
Phonics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflect on the pre–Little Wandle Phonic curriculum for pre reception children. Consider the inconsistency of sessions that this cohort have an impact this has on entry to YR. Provide a bank of resources and activities, including nursery rhymes, which can be used consistently. 	15.05.25 Completed

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

Date of Next Visit:	Headline Visit September 2025 tbc
Focus of Next Visit:	Progress with EYFS as new Leadership settle and identify any areas of focus.

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