

# Willow Avenue Community Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY224369
<b>Inspection date</b>	12 October 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Jim Bostock
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<b>Registered person</b>	Willow Avenue Community Nursery
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Full day care

## 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 CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Willow Avenue Community Nursery has been registered with Ofsted since February 2002. It operates from a purpose-built building consisting of four group rooms, a communal area, an office and staff room, kitchen and laundry facilities. The nursery is situated on a residential housing estate close to the city centre of Newcastle upon Tyne. The nursery serves both the immediate and wider areas surrounding the city.

The nursery is registered for a maximum of 56 children. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery supports children with learning difficulties or disabilities. There are children attending who speak English as an additional language. The group opens five days for 51 weeks a year and is open from 08.00 until 18.00 each day.

There is a manager, deputy and 11 nursery officers who work full time. All staff have early years qualifications and have opportunities to attend further relevant training. There are also three support staff consisting of a cook and two domestics. The setting receives support from an advisory teacher from the local authority.

At the time of inspection there were 58 children on the register. Nine received funded education, six of whom were aged three and three were aged four.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is outstanding.

Children thrive because staff follow highly effective procedures and practices which meet children's physical, nutritional and health needs. Staff are very proactive in helping children gain an excellent understanding of hygiene and a real desire to become increasingly independent in their personal care. For example, the children show an excellent understanding of why they need to wash their hands before snack as they explain that germs would make them ill. Children with particular health needs receive excellent support. For example, children with serious allergies have a written health plan and risk assessment which are agreed with parents.

Children can choose when they want to drink as they have easy access throughout the session from water dispensers in the playrooms. The provision of healthy meals and snacks is excellent. Children demonstrate exceptional social skills as they sit together to eat fresh fruit, vegetables and a range of freshly cooked meals. The older children are able to talk knowledgeably about foods which make them grow 'big and strong' and high levels of parental involvement in healthy eating projects contribute significantly to children's understanding of a healthy lifestyle.

Children develop and test their physical skills through stimulating daily indoor and outdoor experiences. Staff have a clear understanding of each child's stage of development which means the youngest are confident to try out new skills. For example, babies do yoga, and toddlers and older children do music and dance, and develop very good balance and coordination as they successfully use the slide, tunnels and exciting outdoor areas in all weathers. All children develop a positive attitude towards physical exercise. They also have many opportunities to explore their community from outings to the local park, supermarket, post office and library.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

The environment for children is safe and suitable for their use. The playrooms are colourful, inviting and have many photos of children and examples of their work to help them feel at home. Risks of accidental injury to children are minimised because staff are extremely vigilant and use risk assessments to reduce potential hazards, however, these are not kept in the main playrooms. In addition, difficulties with the video entry system on the main door compromise children's safety and security somewhat. This was immediately attended to when staff became aware of the situation. Staff have a good understanding of how to achieve a balance between freedom and setting safe limits, and of how to help the children develop an understanding of keeping themselves safe. For example, children know that they may slip on the wet slide and hurt themselves. They practice the emergency fire evacuation procedures regularly to help reinforce the importance of following safe practices. However, not all appropriate fire safety checks are completed regularly.

Children use an excellent range of high quality toys and equipment that are appropriate to their age and stage of development. Those attending with learning difficulties or disabilities are safe and fully included because of the sensitive adult support and well planned adaptations to resources and activities. Regular communication with parents contributes to children's safety.

Children are very well protected from possible abuse or neglect. Staff attend regular training in child protection, with managers having more intensive training, and are fully aware of the types of abuse and the signs to look for. They have an excellent understanding of the policies and procedures to follow if they have any concerns, and give high priority to children's welfare.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Children enjoy their time in the nursery and make excellent progress because staff are highly skilled and thoroughly understand the age and stage of development of the children who attend. All children arrive happy and keen to participate. Those who are new to the nursery settle easily because staff are sensitive towards their individual needs and the youngest children make progress because they are fully supported. Extremely close, warm and caring relationships increase children's sense of trust and help them to develop a strong sense of self. Early communication skills are superbly supported through high quality adult-child interactions.

Children begin to make sense of the world and express their ideas as they join in with a diverse range of exciting activities and experiences. For example, babies are animated as they blow bubbles, watching how they float, and are fascinated when they catch one. They make hand prints, play with large construction toys and dance to music. Toddlers are excited to play with musical instruments, learning to identify and make sounds and then sing a song to the sounds. For instance, they loved singing the 'hello song' where each child is named and they all greet and clap for each other. From this, they develop excellent self-confidence and relationships with others. All children are proud of their achievements. Staff use the 'Birth to three matters' framework expertly to maximise children's progress and they record this in development files which are shared with parents.

### **Nursery education**

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Children make excellent progress because staff have a thorough knowledge of the Foundation Stage. Every child has a keyworker who has a comprehensive knowledge of each child and their level of understanding. Staff use their expertise to provide optimal challenge to promote children's skills, interests and needs and build on this information to help them achieve as much as they can. Their use of questioning challenges the children's thinking, and the effective systems to observe, monitor and record children's achievements help them to identify the next steps in their learning. Staff provide a stimulating and imaginative range of planned activities that cover all areas and have clear intended learning outcomes. Children have access to a wide range of well chosen resources to support their learning and staff give careful attention to adapting activities to enable those who have learning difficulties or disabilities to participate fully.

Children are excited to come into the nursery and start to play with the toys. They separate from their parents and carers extremely easily and settle happily into the day's events. All children are eager to learn, self-assured in their play and confident to try new experiences. They readily help each other, for instance, by choosing a younger child to help at meal times and all are keen to volunteer to serve food or collect dishes. They listen intently to stories when they confidently join in and predict what might happen next. They demonstrate excellent language skills at discussion time. For example, while making and painting a house they confidently talked about all the items they would find inside. The staff used this opportunity brilliantly to help explore children's understanding of these everyday things and to develop this knowledge. All children use marks readily to represent their ideas and older children are

very adept at writing their own names. Excellent use of visual symbols and sign language enables children with learning difficulties or disabilities to participate fully in the activities and make excellent progress. Because all children are introduced to sign language they are able to communicate with each other.

Children are very imaginative. They act out both real and imagined experiences, creatively using one object to represent another during role play. For instance, the children built and painted a make believe television from cardboard, choosing the colours themselves and act out their favourite programmes on it. They use small world figures to excellent effect, making up stories about the characters as they interact with each other. The youngest know their colours and all know and enjoy many songs.

All children learn how to operate computer equipment and are able to use this without adult help. They gain confidence in using number in their play as they sort 'compare bears' by colour, size and type and use counting confidently in many opportunities provided by staff. The three-year-old children are able to count to five and beyond, while four-year-olds are able to count to 10. They are developing an understanding of adding and taking away as well as using terms such as 'more than' and 'less than'. Their understanding of the wider world develops through a wide range of experiences. They celebrate a range of festivals and have visitors from the Sage for music, road safety, fire safety and police. Children's physical skills are significantly enhanced as they move confidently around the premises and skilfully use a range of large equipment. For instance, they all warm up before doing any outdoor activities, use push and ride toys and tricycles to move safely about and set up their own balancing exercise by building blocks into patterns and excitedly moving along the blocks. Their fine motor skills are developing as they use pencils, paintbrushes small tools and construction equipment effectively.

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

The provision is good.

All children are welcomed and play a full part in the nursery because staff value and respect their individuality and the family. Children with learning difficulties or disabilities receive excellent support from the caring, dedicated and knowledgeable staff, enabling them to fully participate in the activities and make very good progress. For instance, all staff have had training in Makaton and use it throughout the nursery to help children who have speech delay. They use it with all children as it helps even the youngest to communicate with each other.

Children's behaviour is excellent. Staff support the younger children in sharing and turn taking. Children readily help each other and staff by volunteering to serve at meal times, and look forward to getting their stickers for helping tidy up. They clap and applaud each other's achievements, and take pride in their own. Children's understanding of right and wrong is fostered as they readily respond to gentle reminders to take care of the resources and each other.

The children have excellent opportunities to learn about their local community and the wider world through visitors to the group such as a local road safety officer and police officer. Staff are very proactive in involving the children in the life of the community. For example, they encourage families to share their beliefs and customs so that children can celebrate them together. They celebrate Eid where babies and toddlers make cards. Children dress up in ethnic costumes and celebrated Christmas in the Polish way. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents speak very highly of the staff and setting. They say that their children receive fantastic care and that staff make sure they understand each child's needs and routines. Good information is available to parents. Noticeboards, regular newsletters and verbal discussions keep parents well informed about the setting, what their children will be doing and how they can be involved. Parents' thoughts and views are sought and these are valued and respected. Staff discuss with parents about how their child is progressing and developing. There are children's development files and information about the early learning goals of the Foundation Stage available for parents. However, the information, its accessibility for parents and their lack of involvement in the assessment process do not make it easy for parents to understand how it links to the progress that their children are making towards the early learning goals. This hinders their ability to be involved and complement the progress that their children are making.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The children benefit greatly from the good organisation, leadership and management of the nursery. The premises are well organised with space laid out to maximise play opportunities for the children. Clear policies and procedures are in place which work well in practice and are consistently applied to ensure the service operates smoothly and efficiently. All legally required documentation which contributes to children's health, safety and well-being is in place and is stored securely to maintain confidentiality. Fire safety checks, however, are not done as regularly as they should be.

Staff are very well led and work very well together as a team. There is a consistent staff team as the newest member of staff has been at the nursery for over two years. This ensures children are cared for by staff they know well. Staff are effectively deployed which ensures the children receive excellent support for their play and learning. Staff have an ongoing commitment to develop their knowledge and improve their practice through training. Activities are exceptionally well planned and presented. There are effective systems in place to ensure all staff are thoroughly vetted. They undertake extensive induction and training and there are very good staff to child ratios to ensure children are well supervised, safe and stimulated in their play.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is good. The manager is experienced, well qualified and well motivated to ensure continuous improvement through very good self-assessment. Regular communication in the form of meetings and discussions ensures that all parties are well informed. Staff are highly skilled and have an excellent understanding of the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage and how to apply this in practice to support children's development. They have identified how to improve the setting, for instance, by improving the information for parents to develop their understanding of the early learning goals, but have not yet implemented this.

Overall the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection the nursery was asked to continue to develop their policies and procedures. The nursery constantly reviews these in line with the National Standards and to provide very good information for parents.

## **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 the 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 CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION**

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

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

#### **The quality and standards of the care**

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- continue to improve safety by monitoring the door entry system and carrying out regular fire safety checks

#### **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):

- continue to improve parent's knowledge of the early learning goals, their access to children's development files and their involvement in the assessment of their child's progress.

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)