



## Willow Tree Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	116736
<b>Inspection date</b>	05 March 2007
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<b>Registered person</b>	Countryside Nurseries
<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 Tree Nursery is one of six nurseries run by Countryside Nurseries. It registered in 1995 and operates from three rooms attached to Carrington Junior School, Flackwell Heath, Buckinghamshire.

A maximum of 25 children may attend the nursery at any one time. It is open all year round from 08:00 to 18:00. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 35 children aged from two to under five years on roll of whom 18 receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local area. The nursery supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language and they can support children with learning difficulties or disabilities.

The nursery employs eight staff. Five of the staff, hold appropriate early years qualifications and one is working towards a qualification.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children stay in good health as the nursery follows current environmental health and hygiene guidelines. The daily routine enables them to learn the importance of good personal hygiene and includes cleaning their teeth after lunch and washing their hands after playing in the garden. The reasons for good personal hygiene is also addressed through the varied topics. Children are encouraged to be as independent as possible, dressing themselves to go outside and taking themselves to the toilet. They have time for rest and relaxation for a period after lunch. Suitable arrangements are in place to enable children to have a sleep if required.

Children enjoy healthy snacks and meals, which offer a good balanced, nutritious diet including plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables every day. Meals are freshly prepared on the premises each day by the cook, who has a four week rotational menu. All special diets and allergies are taken into consideration when preparing the menu to ensure there is something for all the children. A jug of fresh water is available throughout the day with children having named cups to use. A selection of milk, juice and water is available for snacks and meal times.

Children experience a wide range of exciting physical activities both indoors and outdoors. They have a safe, fully enclosed outdoor play area, some laid to grass and some paving, which is used throughout the year. One corner has been set aside as the children's garden where they grow a selection of vegetables that are then eaten either as part of their hot meals or snacks. A specialist teacher takes a session of music and movement once a week for all the children and they have a range of equipment that can be used both outdoors and indoors, ranging from large climbing equipment and slides, to balls, bean bags and hoops. Very good use is made of old tyres to act as seats or for balancing.

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

The provision is good.

The very child centred environment is both welcoming and inviting for the children together with ensuring they are safe and well cared for. Comprehensive daily risk assessments are carried out, some at various times throughout the day, ensuring the environment remains safe at all times. Low displays of children's work have been covered with laminate sheets in order to protect them against damage, and respect the children's hard work. Children have access to a wide variety of activities throughout the day, most of which are pre-planned by the staff, however, some children took great pleasure in finding sticks, leaves and stones in the garden to add to the dinosaur terrain made in a builders tray. The furnishings have been well thought through to enable tables and chairs to be safely stacked away when not required, leaving maximum space for floor play. All toys and equipment are suitable for the age of the children in attendance and are checked for safety when they are used.

Staff assist children to learn about potential risks, especially before taking them out for a walk, through the good use of open-ended questions and group discussions. A clear policy for all outings is in place. Regular fire practices are held each term, but children who attend part-time do not necessarily experience these. Staff have a good awareness of the importance of safeguarding children and know the procedures to follow if concerned. This is backed up by a comprehensive policy.

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

The provision is good.

All children have their needs very well met through the activities and experiences provided. Staff have a clear understanding of both the Birth to three framework and the Foundation stage curriculum. These are very effectively used when planning experiences and activities for the children. The range of opportunities offered is both challenging and stimulating for all children, helping them develop their understanding and skills.

Children under the age of three experience a good varied experiential programme. They experiment using different methods of painting. During the inspection they found out the different ways they could paint using corn on the cob. Their work is valued and displayed in an eye catching way. One child drew the inspector's attention to her painting, and, although all the paintings looked very similar, was easily able to identify hers and talked about how she had created the picture. Children have a wide range of activities from which they can self select including the home corner, a small world activity, and sand play. They all have a very good relationship with their key worker and the other staff in the room, and receive as much individual attention as possible. The key workers know their children very well. All staff note any observations on a post it note and stick it on the board under the relevant Birth to three heading. These are then transferred to observation sheets and filed in the children's achievements folder. When placed in the folder staff note the next steps of learning for the children and highlight key experiences they want to offer. This information is then used when deciding on the plan for the following day.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. All children are very actively involved in their learning and experience a wide and varied range of topics throughout their time at the nursery. They develop confidence and an ability to work independently from the wide range of experiences offered. Their teaching is further enhanced by the good use made of a Montessori teacher who comes three times a week to run sessions for a small group of children at a time. All staff are skilled at developing children's knowledge and understanding through open ended questioning and discussion. They receive an appropriate level of support plus much praise and encouragement from the staff. Planning is clearly linked to the stepping stones and Foundation stage curriculum with regular observations made on all children. These are also written on post it notes and linked to the stepping stones to clearly show children's achievements. These are taken into account when planning for the next steps of learning, ensuring children always have activities to extend their skills and offer challenge. The children benefit from the integrated approach to learning together with their Montessori sessions, with all staff having a good

knowledge and understanding of both the Birth to three framework and the Foundation stage curriculum.

Children learn in various ways, through whole group sessions, age appropriate and effective small group sessions, sometimes related to the Montessori method, and free independent play, enabling them to explore and experience the whole curriculum. Children are confident and make relationships with their peers, they also have very good relationships with all the staff. Children remain actively involved throughout the day, their language is well extended, with some children demonstrating an extremely good command of language and using words correctly. Their topics are taught in many different ways to enable the children to remember and retain information. One child, when making a volcano from sand, was able to describe the lava flow, using appropriate language.

Photographs, made into books, help children to recall special events. They recently had the opportunity to handle and touch reptiles and other small animals. This made quite an impact on many of the children as they were recalling these events whilst looking at the photographs. Children demonstrated a very good understanding of the world and various countries. One child was heard to say, whilst looking at the map of the world 'Gorillas come from Borneo'. Mathematical skills and phonic skills are particularly addressed during the Montessori sessions but also interwoven into the day. Children attempt, some very successfully, to write their name on their work and have many varied opportunities for using a variety of mark making materials.

Children demonstrate a good imagination when playing with small world toys and other children, creating their own imaginary games with the dinosaurs. The home corner is not always incorporated into the theme by changing its use to reflect something topical. Children have opportunities to learn about technology and simple scientific concepts. They have many opportunities for physical activities and learning about their bodies through the daily routine. Children enjoy singing songs and exploring sounds with a variety of percussion instruments.

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

The provision is good.

Children feel a very strong sense of belonging and involvement in the life of the nursery, with staff working closely with the parents to ensure their individual needs are met. Through the variety of toys, books, activities and topics, children find out about other traditions, religions and cultures, some of these made more personal as they have children attending the nursery from a number of different countries. The children play well together, happily sharing resources, and greatly benefit from the individual developmental programme that is in place.

Children with learning difficulties or disabilities can be supported and integrated in to the group. Children generally behave very well, with staff using a consistent approach to adverse behaviour and diffusing situations before they get out of hand. Children are well mannered and apologise if they have upset someone, they also use please and thank you at meal times. They enjoy being allocated special tasks for the day, like setting the table for lunch or giving out the drinks. Children are taught the difference between right and wrong and adhere to the rules of the nursery. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents is good. Children greatly benefit from the close liaison staff have with parents. They share information with the key worker daily, both verbally and on a written information sheet. A clear notice board in the entrance hall keeps parents aware of what is happening in the nursery. Newsletters are sent home regularly informing parents of the topics and other events planned. They have parents' evenings twice a year when parents can have a set time with their key worker to discuss their child's progress. They also have special events to which parents are invited, like the Christmas Concert. Parents value the communication links, ensuring consistent and supportive care is given to their child at all times.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children enjoy the inviting friendly atmosphere of the nursery. The manager ensures consistency throughout the nursery and the room leaders take responsibility for the staff in their areas. The area manager oversees all the nurseries in the chain, ensuring standards and consistency throughout. The corporate policies and procedures underpin the good standards of education and care offered and are fully understood and implemented by all staff. The registration system is clear and regular reminders are sent to parents asking them to sign their child in and out of nursery with a time, however, this does not always happen. A very clear recording system is in place for accidents and medication, and this together with the comprehensive risk assessment ensures children's safety and welfare.

Leadership and management are good. Children are extremely happy and settled in the well planned daily routine. The extensive variety of activities offered ensures the children are stimulated and interested and that they cover the entire curriculum over their time in the nursery. The planning is overseen by the manager and underpins the activities offered and the observations, together with the daily evaluation, assist the staff in planning the next steps of learning for all the children.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

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

Since the last care inspection a system of recording times of arrival and departure has been implemented. Whilst the majority of parents enter the time of arrival and departure clearly on the form, occasionally some forget. Regular fire drills are undertaken with the school. These are held once a term. As some children attend part time this means that not all children will have experienced a fire drill. These two, although partially met, remain recommendations to further improve the practice. A special needs coordinator has been identified and has attended training. She is currently working closely with the special needs advisor for support as she has only recently taken over this position.

There were no key issues identified at the last education inspection.

## **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**

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### **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):

- ensure all children take part in regular fire drills
- ensure the time of entry and departure are recorded against every child's name.

#### **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 use of the home corner, enabling it to become different places and integrating it into the topics.

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)