

The Mrs. Williams Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	507886
Inspection date	18 September 2007
Inspector	Marie Thompson
Setting Address	Pinchcut, Clayhill Road,, Burghfield Common, Reading, Berkshire, RG7 3HP
Telephone number	01189 833412
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Registered person	The Mrs Williams Pre-School
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	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.

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?

Mrs Williams' Pre-school was first established in 1963 and moved to its present site in 1972. It is housed in a pre fabricated building within its own grounds, in the village of Burghfield Common, which is situated west of Reading. The pre-school is open to families from all sections of the community with most children at the present time coming from the village itself and surrounding villages, for example, Padworth and Mortimer. The premises consist of a playroom, a kitchen area, entrance hall, children's cloakroom and a secure outside play area.

There are currently 55 children from two to five years on roll. There are 32 children in receipt of nursery education funding. The setting currently supports a number of children with special needs and disabilities and who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school is open between 9:05 to 11:35 and 12:25 to 14:55 every week day during term times. Children can attend morning and afternoon sessions. A lunch club from 11:35 to 12:25 is offered in between the sessions.

An annually elected committee is responsible for running the pre-school and they employ a supervisor and five other staff members to work with the children. Three staff members hold

a childcare qualification which are equivalent to NVQ level II or above. The pre-school is supported by Teachers and Development Workers from the West Berkshire Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's good health is promoted effectively by staff that demonstrate a sound knowledge of the pre-school's health and hygiene procedures and attends appropriate training. Children have a clear awareness of their own needs and are developing independence in their personal care. Suitable hand washing facilities aid the children's development in hand washing and independence skills such as using 'Mr Soapy Soap' and paper towels from a dispenser. Children actively contribute to the development of the health and care routines such as tidying up and preparing themselves and the room for snack times and taking turns to serve the snacks to one another.

Children's healthy growth and development are met well as staff show a good understanding of their dietary requirements. The parents provide the children's packed lunches which are kept on the 'lunch trolley'. The staff advise the parents to put a cold pack in the lunch bag or to use an insulated bag so that the food stays fresh until lunch time. The lunch club is very well subscribed and all the children clearly enjoy eating their lunch together. It is a very social time but is always well managed. The children know that they need to eat their savoury food first and that they must wait until the majority of the children have eaten. The staff sit with the children and are aware that some children take longer to eat than others, so they allow all the children time to eat at their own pace. Children are offered a good variety of drinks and healthy snacks which are provided by the pre-school. The children have lots of fruit at snack time and occasionally bread and cheese. The staff encourage the children to try different food and some children were very brave and tasted pickle when it was offered to them. They know that they can ask for a drink when they are thirsty and during the summer months the staff put a small table with a jug of water and cups on outside so that the children can help themselves. Older children show confidence in pouring their own drinks and serving the food at snack time. Children are encouraged to help in the preparation and clearing up of snack time, which develops their sense of responsibility and pride in their surroundings.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children's safety needs are well met. They access a good range of toys and resources in a well planned child orientated environment, where potential hazards have been identified and minimised effectively. Good routines and gentle reminders help children learn about safety within the setting. Staff are vigilant of the children's safety at all times. The premises are very secure and there are good procedures in place to prevent unwanted visitors gaining access.

Children feel confident and secure in their environment through good deployment of staff working directly with the children. Staff's awareness of children's developing abilities helps to ensure appropriate safety measures are in place to avoid dangerous situations and minimise risks. All policies and procedures are individual to the setting and promote the children's safety and well being, supporting all to develop their full potential.

Staff have a good understanding of child protection issues and know how to proceed if they have concerns about a child in their care. They have attended relevant training and have supporting documents in place which serve as a good reference. This supports children's wellbeing. There are effective child protection procedures which promote and safeguard children's welfare within the setting.

Children's development and well being is effectively promoted through the well organised space. They access a good range of choice in toys and resources to develop their own ideas in their play and learning. The good range of safe and well maintained furniture, equipment and resources meets the varying development needs of the children attending.

The children have the opportunity to go outside and get some fresh air everyday. They enjoy riding around the trees on the trikes, climbing the large wooden climbing frame or playing in the Wendy house. The children like going for walks in the local community and sometimes visit the local library. On Pancake Day the children made a list of the ingredients they needed to make pancakes and walked to the local Co-op to buy the food. The children enjoy an annual trip with the pre-school and they have been to some super places such as, Child Beale, a river trip, Bird World, Wellington Country Park and the Action Farm. There are plenty of opportunities for the children to develop their fine motor skills and hand eye co-ordination because the pre-school has an ample supply of resources. For example, puzzles, construction, peg boards and matching games.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy their time at pre-school. They arrive happy and confident and quickly settle into the routine making their own choices about their play. There is a happy buzz of children involved in varied activities around the room. Children are interested in activities and involved in their learning. Practitioners know children well and talk to them about their family and what they have been doing at home. This interaction, and the implementation of a successful key worker system, helps to secure relationships between children and staff developing a strong sense of trust. The pre-school has a vast range of toys and resources to engage the children's interest and to offer a variety of challenges. The children enjoy a good balance between structured and free play activities. The quiet room offers them a lovely space to sit either on their own or within the group to look at books. It is beautifully decorated by the staff with paintings of the Gruffalo, numbers and letters.

Younger children develop very good communication skills as they contribute to group discussions and become competent learners. For example, they self-select activities such as puzzles and shape blocks helping to increase their manipulative skills. The children have lots of fun singing action songs such as 'Incy Wincy spider' and 'Twinkle, twinkle little star'. They are beginning to understand that they need to sit still in order to listen to the story, 'who's hiding in the house?' Children enjoy opportunities to express imagination through role-play. The staff extend their enjoyment and learning by re-inventing the home corner so that it becomes a hairdressers or a doctors. Practitioners talk about how each child is progressing and plan their next step for development. They recognise the value of play in a child's development and introduce a range of experiences, enabling all children to learn to play and work together in large and small groups as well as independently.

Children are adept in their physical skills. They move confidently between areas both in doors and outdoors. They have good co-ordination and awareness of others, particularly when riding

bikes and wheeled toys outside. Children take part in a wide range of activities in all areas of learning, which help to develop their fine and gross motor skills. They are able to control pencils, scissors and paintbrushes with a good range of activities to develop their manipulative skills. Children enjoy a good range of activities that are stimulating and well balanced for all ages. However, the toys are not rotated and different activities are not always available. The ladybird matching cards, the shape cards and peg puzzles were laid out for the children on two consecutive days and the children did not play with them at all. The children move very comfortably around the room from the sand play, to the play dough and they know they need to put on an apron to use the water play, which they are capable of doing.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children make good individual progress because practitioners have a secure understanding of how children learn effectively and use their self-chosen play to extend their learning. They adapt their questioning techniques, according to the age and ability of the child, and implement a varied range of teaching methods to introduce an exciting range of activities and experiences to all children. Practitioners encourage children to lead their own learning and this is successfully achieved by a well developed routine, with a good balance of child and adult initiated activities.

Children are eager to learn and concentrate well showing good perseverance with activities. They co-operate and negotiate roles, for example, when acting out their imagined ideas in role-play and value one another's ideas during the discussion at circle time. Children listen well to stories and are encouraged to interact with the story through discussion, questions and comments about the text and pictures. They are encouraged to bring items in for the interest table which correspond with the colour of the week which is orange at the moment. During circle time the children learn about the days of the week, the date and the weather. The staff use the whiteboard to write the information on so that children can enhance their knowledge through identifying the numbers and letters within the date and month of the year. Children independently use a range of tools when they play in the sand or with the play dough. They are able to roll, mould and cut the dough and pour the sand through funnels or into cups. The children enjoy and learn from some activities that allow them to explore and investigate. For example, bread making for Harvest festival, iced biscuits and mints at Christmas and chocolate nests with small Easter eggs in at Easter and pancakes on Shrove Tuesday. The children have lots of opportunities to take part in a variety of art and craft activities and clearly enjoy drawing with the shaped templates, free painting and tree rubbing. However, there are limited opportunities for the children to increase their ability to write independently. There are no note pads or pens in the home corner to encourage spontaneous emergent writing or a 'mark making' table which is consistently available to encourage the children to write and learn to form letters. There are some very nice, colourful posters around the room which show the alphabet and some which show a child sitting cross legged with the words 'good sitting' which help the children understand what is expected of them. However, there are limited opportunities for children to be aware of the written text because none of the everyday objects or play resources are labelled. Therefore the children are not able to learn to associate words with meanings.

Children gain confidence in using numbers and compare the weight and size of objects, as they predict how many corks will fit in the cup in the water tray and how heavy the cups are when they are filled with sand. They confidently use good mathematical language within the action songs they sing such as 'Five fat sausages' or 'Five little speckled frogs' and they all count how many children are at pre-school each day during circle time. There is a very nice computer in

the pre-school; however, the planned opportunities for information technology are not consistently accessible to the children. They do not benefit from having telephones, calculators or mobile phones in the home corner or within general play to increase their understanding of different forms of technology within everyday situations.

Effective use is made of time and resources to provide children with opportunities to engage in physical activities, including outside play which includes opportunities to climb, balance and run, musical movement, and explore creativity using a wide range of media such as paint, water, and sand. The children have lots of opportunities to learn about their community and the wider world through activities, visitors and planned topics.

Practitioners observe and monitor children's progress regularly in a variety of different ways and this is used to identify individual targets for children to work towards each half-term. A realistic expectation of children and good individual knowledge helps them to consolidate their learning before moving onto the next stage. All the staff have a very nice manner when they are teaching or interacting with the children. They are very good role models.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children feel valued in the pre-school because the staff talk to the children and listen to what they have to say. The staff encourage the children to talk about things that are important to them and quite often allow the conversation to develop during story time when the children discuss the different colours their bedrooms are painted or what they have done at home. The children's work is beautifully displayed for them to see. The children enjoyed talking about what they have done over the summer holidays and brought things in from home that represented their holidays. This includes post cards from friends, photographs of them on the beach, leaflets from their days out and a pebble spider which was made in the holidays. The play and education provision is organised and monitored well to ensure children have access to the full range of activities, both in doors and outdoors. For example, all toys and resources are at child height and amenable to children; the home corner, dressing up and the book shelves which are indoors. The ride ons and play house, which are in the outside play area, provide the children with stimulating accessible activities.

Children arrive at the pre-school happy and confident. They are welcomed as they self register with the Velcro name labels and eagerly look forward to the days activities. Children's individual pegs and labelled cubby holes provide them with a sense of belonging as they store their pictures and personal belongings. Children learn about themselves and the wider world through planned activities and discussions, for example around a variety of cultural festivals, helping them to understand and value the similarities and differences between themselves and others. The children have learnt about many of the festivals because the staff have a year planner which shows the festivals throughout the year so they are able to plan activities in advance. The children have enjoyed learning about Eid ul Fitr, Diwali, St. David's Day and getting out the pre-school Chinese dragon for Chinese New Year. They are particularly looking forward to learning about Christmas and making lots of sparkly things to hang on their tree and taking part in the pre-school nativity. The pre-school has lots of resources such as dolls, flags, games like 'around the world' and posters saying 'Welcome' in different languages which help the children learn about different people and cultures. On a Friday afternoon a language teacher comes into the pre-school to teach the children French. At the end of the term and usually around Bastille Day the parents are invited into the pre-school so that the children can perform their songs in French, show their collages and art work they have been working on during the

term. In order to help the children remember some of the words they have learnt the staff have put a sign on the quiet room, ' la petite salle' and there is a poster on the wall to help them remember their colours and shapes, ' couleurs et formes'. The pre-school have welcomed visitors from the community from time to time, including the fire brigade and the ambulance crew. This positive approach fosters children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development.

Partnership with parents is good. Children benefit from good relationships and working partnerships with parents, which contributes to their wellbeing and the relationships they develop at the pre-school. Staff work well together with parents and carers to share relevant background information, play activities and children's specific needs. A clear and informative notice board with relevant, up to date information is accessible to all parents. The open door policy for parents to speak to staff on a daily informal basis works effectively. This is reinforced through newsletters and a parents 'profile' week when they are invited into the pre-school at the end of the term to speak to their child's key worker and to look at the children's progress records. Positive feedback from the parents demonstrated that they are very happy with the service the pre-school offers.

Staff are proactive in ensuring the needs of all the children are met and demonstrated a good knowledge of the individual needs of the children in their care. Staff offer good support for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. They adapt activities so that all children can experience a wide range of stimulating activities appropriate for their level of ability. The special needs co-ordinator and the manager demonstrate sound knowledge of the fundamental principals of the Code of Practice. As a result, staff work together with parents, carers and other professional bodies to organise the environment and plan appropriate activities to ensure the children take part at a level appropriate to their needs.

Children benefit very well from staff who adopt a consistent and positive approach to the management of their behaviour. They become aware of the pre-school's routines and procedures and know what is expected from them through response to the routine changes in the day. Children are given clear guidelines, know the routine well and are encouraged to take care of the environment. Children know right from wrong, they are sensitive to the needs of others, readily share toys and resources and co-operate with each other. The staff advocate positive reinforcement by giving the children stickers for good behaviour, being polite, sharing and helping in the pre-school which the children's respond very well to.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's care is enhanced by the pre-school's good organisation. Children's care and learning is reinforced by the effective deployment of staff and good leadership and management of nursery education. Staff working with the children are enthusiastic and consistently promote the children's well being in line with the comprehensive policies and procedures. The policies and procedures are reviewed and agreed annually by the staff and the committee members. All have been recently up dated, however, the written procedure for allegations made against a member of staff or volunteer is not fully completed. They demonstrate good knowledge and understanding for the Standards of Full Day Care and the Foundation Stage. All relevant documentation is in place and maintained to a good standard. It is stored in clearly labelled folders or in the filing cupboard where it can be easily accessed. The premises are secure and all parents and visitors are greeted by a member of staff. However, not all visitors are consistently signed in and out of the premises

Staff observes children's development and learning and keeps detailed records that help meet their needs. Children's records are openly shared with parents and their contributions valued.

Staff demonstrate a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities with relevant induction procedures and opportunities to receive further training available. The staff are very keen to attend regular training courses and have recently completed courses in child protection. All staff have a first aid qualification. This is used to help develop their skills in organising a provision that meets the children's needs.

Leadership and management is good. The manager is enthusiastic about the pre-school and early years, which results in a happy team who work effectively together where children feel safe and secure in their environment and make good progress towards the early learning goals. The manager and her team are dedicated to providing a good quality of early years care and education which is evident through its aims, good relationships with children and their parents and carers and has a positive impact on the children's learning. There is a good commitment to improvement, training and development of the staff, which enhances and maintains the very good care, learning and well being of the children. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the provider was asked to devise and implement a procedure to be followed if a child should become lost, make sure the outings policy contains sufficient detail, ensure that evacuation drills are practised with children at both morning and afternoon sessions and are logged, devise and implement a procedure to be followed by staff to help identify and support a child who may have a special need and a system to record any incident of physical restraint, ensure that the behaviour management policy includes all areas to meet the criteria in the National Standards, provide opportunities for parents to receive regular information on their children's progress, make available to parents a written statement that provides details of the procedure to be followed if they have a complaint, including the address and telephone number of the regulator and to ensure that the child protection statement includes the procedures to be followed in the case of an accusation being made against a member of staff or volunteer.

The provider has devised and implemented procedures to follow if a child should become lost, an outings policy, a behaviour management policy which meets the criteria in the National Standards, a complaints procedure which contains the address and telephone number of the regulator, Ofsted and the provider is in the process of completing a procedure which will be followed in the case of an accusation being made against a member of staff or volunteer. The evacuation drills have been practiced at regular intervals with children who attend the morning and afternoon sessions and recorded appropriately. A written policy is in place which details the procedure to be followed by staff to help identify and support a child who may have special needs and a system is in place to record any incident of physical restraint.

At the last nursery education inspection the provider was asked to expand the partnership with parents by improving the written information given about the pre-school and its provision and by providing parents with more opportunities to share what they know about their child and to be involved with their child's learning. The provider was asked to provide older children with more opportunities to be independent, to take responsibility for selecting own materials and resources, to recognise their names in print, to practice writing numbers and to have planned opportunities to information technology. They were also asked to continue to evaluate planning

systems to ensure that assessments made on children are linked to plans and take into account the needs and interests of all children.

The provider has expanded the partnership with parents by improving the written information given about the pre-school and by providing the parents with more opportunities to share what they know about their child and to be involved in their child's learning. Older children have been provided with more opportunities to be independent, to take responsibility for selecting their own materials and resources, to recognise their names in print and to practice writing numbers. However, the planned opportunities for information technology are not always consistently accessible to the children. The provider has improved the systems to evaluate planning systems to ensure that assessments made on children are linked to plans and take into account the needs and interests of all children.

These measures contribute to ensuring children's continued health, safety and wellbeing.

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):

- ensure that toys are rotated and different activities are available
- ensure a written procedure for allegations made against a member of staff or volunteer is completed and implemented
- make sure all visitors are consistently signed in and out of the premises

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):

- extend and develop opportunities for children to be aware of the written text through labelling and increase children's ability to write independently

- make sure the planned opportunities for information technology are consistently accessible to the children

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